

HUMBER ARBORETUM ECO CENTRE



BIODIVERSITY



INTERESTING FACTS

- ✦ Did you know that there is no such species as a black squirrel, in fact the black fur of the Eastern grey squirrel is a great example of genetic diversity within a species.
- ✦ The Humber Arboretum is an amazing example of habitat diversity in the city. We have over 250 acres or 100 hectares of urban green space which encompasses 6 different habitats including Forest, Meadow, River, Ponds, Wetland, and Gardens.
- ✦ There are 17 known mammal species living at the Arboretum. These include red fox, coyote, white tailed deer, grey squirrel, chipmunk, muskrat, beaver, mink, cottontail rabbit, opossum, raccoon, least shrew, little brown bat, skunk, groundhog, meadow vole, and deer mouse.



COOL ACTIVITIES



ACCURATE ACORN

- ✦ Give each one of your students an acorn (you will have to collect some before doing this). Have them spend a few minutes “getting to know” their acorn using their senses of sight, touch and smell to discover ways that their acorn is unique. In small groups, the acorns are collected and mixed up. Each student must now find their own acorn.
- ✦ An alternative for them to try finding their acorn is to get the entire group into a circle and collect all of the acorns in a bag/hat. Randomly pass out the acorns. Each person receives an acorn, examines it to determine if it is theirs. If it is they keep it, if it is not, they pass it to the person on their right. Keep passing acorns until everyone has their own acorn. This is a great activity to show how offspring (seeds) of a species are different (genetic diversity).
- ✦ Note: You can use other materials aside from acorns including any type of cone from a conifer tree (i.e. pine cones) maple keys, or seashells/snail shells.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does the term “BIODIVERSITY” mean and give two examples of where it is apparent in the Humber Arboretum? (ANS: Biodiversity simply means the diversity of living things. This concept is becoming increasingly more important for students to understand because, due to development, we are destroying our diverse habitats which will result in a decrease of species diversity.)
2. How many different habitats are there at the Humber Arboretum? (ANS: There are 6 different habitats at the Arboretum. They are as follows: forest, meadow, river, ponds, wetland, and gardens.)
3. Increased development along the Humber Valley is causing a rise in the local deer population in the Arboretum. Due to this population increase, a very special plant to Ontario is disappearing from our forest. What plant is this? (ANS: The white trillium; our provincial flower)

