

# Trail Camera Curriculum



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## Part I: Overview of Workplace

In 1998, Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo opened Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park and Wildlife Safari. This unique 440 acre park, located in Ashland Nebraska, focuses on promoting wildlife education, conservation, and enhancing the understanding of North American animals. Amazing sites include: Bison Outlook, Elk Meadows, and Crane Meadows Viewing Tower.

## Part II: Workplace Focus

The Wildlife Safari Park has a major goal of increasing and enhancing the public’s understanding and appreciation for native wildlife. For this reason, I am creating trail camera curriculum to help schools, the Wildlife Safari Park, and community members collect data on the species around them. Knowing what wildlife are present can help begin the process of conservation and knowledge about these organisms.

## Part III: Introduce the Problem

Educating the general population on native species can improve human-wildlife interactions and increase conservation efforts. But, it can be difficult for students and community members to know the wildlife around them. Animals are easily spooked, come out at night, or are camouflaged in spectacular fashions.

- How do we observe, describe, count, and understand native animal species?
- How do we instruct educators on how to use trail cameras in their curriculum?
- What type of wildlife lives near or around students’ neighborhoods, homes, and schools?

## Part IV: Background

Students need a couple skills to better understand the wildlife around them. These skills include:

- Efficient trail camera placement
- Setting up a trail camera
- Uploading photos to a computer
- Navigating field guides
- Designing experiments
- Analyzing photo data

To create this curriculum, an understanding of Next Generation Science Standards and Nebraska Science Standards was necessary.

## Part V: Workplace Solution

Staff members researched how, where, and what trail cameras are the best. While creating curriculum, an identification of which NGSS and Nebraska State Science Standards link to this program. Finally, trail cameras were set-up at the park and nearby schools to determine the native species visiting the park.

## Part VI: Educational Pathways

Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park and Wildlife Safari has a wide variety of jobs focused on animal care to improving conservation efforts. Many of the employees and volunteers have plenty of undergraduate and graduate level science classes under their belt. One of the best ways to earn a job at the zoo, however is to have lots of similar job experiences. Because of this, plenty of people start out as interns or volunteers, hoping to gain experience to one day earn their dream job.