

Earth's Birthday Project 2008-2009

- The Big Field Trip
- Calculating Carbon Footprints
- Earth Day Science Symposium
- The Big Gift
- Tying Them Together


educating children
ABOUT THE EARTH



PART 1:

The Big Field Trip



October –December: Peru

December-February: Brazil

March-April: Tunisia

Goals

- To learn about different cultures and natural environments through travel
- To develop an awesome website where we document our experiences in a quality way
- To use computer technology to interact with students in the USA
- To create relationships with students in the USA where we become their “field reporters”

What's the Use?

- Get students ready for the Earth Day Science Symposium
- Teach about the internet and web pages – URL, Links, Blogs, Tags, Searches etc.
- Collaborative Research – If we are investigating a subject you are studying in class, ask us some specific questions and we'll respond with a post: text, photos, video, audio – whatever the answer calls for
- Get Them Writing – Think of us as e-mail pen pals
- Reinforcing what students have learned in the classroom
- Enrichment Projects

Peru

- October 11th-18th in the cloud forests east of Tarapoto : this is a large area that has been preserved through international conservation efforts. It is known for its biodiversity and abundance of rare birds. Through “The Big Gift”, students can raise money to protect even more habitat in this region.
- October 19th-December 10th in the Northern Andes: Themes – Incan and Pre-Incan Americans, Mining, Folktales



Brazil

- December 10th – March 2nd in and around Salvador in the Bahia state:

Themes – Water and pollution, Catholic customs and rituals, Endangered Species: Sea Turtles, Colonization of the Americas and Slavery, Biofeuls



Tunisia

- March 3rd – Mid-May in Tunisia, based out of Tunis:



Themes: Ancient History: Carthage, Islam, the Arab Conquests, Water Conservation, Desert Adaptations

PART 2:

Carbon Offsets

- Students will learn about the carbon costs associated with their daily activities and the concept of a “Carbon Footprint”
- Students will learn about how forests take in carbon as they grow
- Students will calculate how much forest needs to be protected in order to offset their carbon footprint
- Students will calculate how much money they need to raise in order to offset their carbon footprint

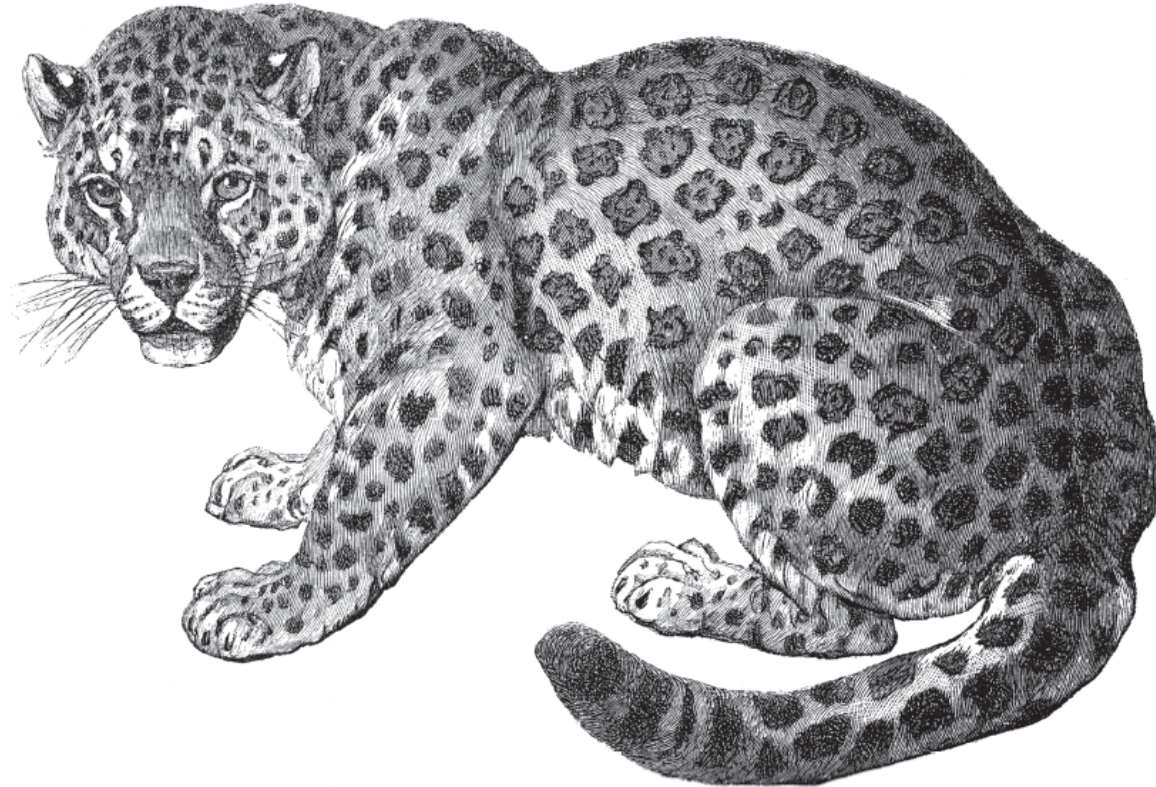


PART 3:



Earth Day Science Symposium

Rainforest



Just by doing the activity, you can help save rainforests!

For every class that does the symposium in 2009, the World Land Trust, Nature & Culture International, and the American Bird Conservancy have pledged a donation to purchase and protect one acre of rainforest, which will become part of the Podocarpus–El Condor Biosphere Reserve in Ecuador.

Your teacher's kit includes a Big Gift certificate to honor your students' participation and the donation it will trigger. Activate your certificate to protect an acre of rainforest at earthsbirthday.org/EDSS/activate or 800 698 4438!

9 | Poison Dart Frog
Deandrobates reticulatus



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Biodiversity and Connectedness

Each student receives a rainforest species card.

Students read information on the back of their cards to discover how the species is connected to other species.

The interconnectedness of rainforest species emerges in a class discussion.

Make a Rainforest Connections mural or bulletin board by placing cards in correct tier of forest. Students draw lines to connect cards in a web defined by food chains and symbiosis.

Working with the Data

Data Set
5

Beef Exports from Brazil

earthsbirthday.org

Data Set
5

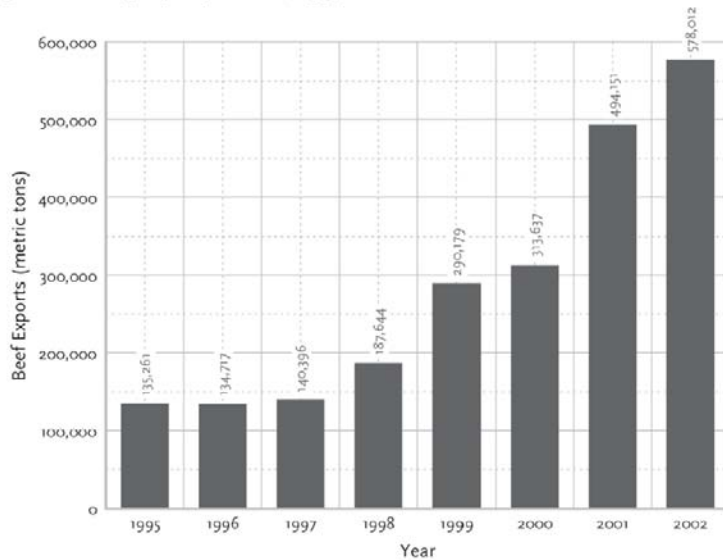
Beef Exports from Brazil

earthsbirthday.org

Data

Graph 5

Beef Exports from Brazil, 1995-2002



Additional
Data

- When the demand for beef increases, its price goes up and ranchers make more money selling it. They may increase the size of their ranches to grow more cattle and make even more money.
- In Brazil and other tropical countries, ranches are created from land that has been completely cleared of rainforest.
- One metric ton equals 2205 pounds.

1 | Earth Day Science Symposium: Rainforest



Guiding Questions

Definitions

- 1 What is an *export*?
- 2 What is *demand*?
(Look up these words in a dictionary.)

Data

- 3 What is displayed on the graph's x-axis?
- 4 What is the unit of measurement on the y-axis?
- 5 How much beef was exported from Brazil in 1996?
- 6 How much beef was exported in 1999?
- 7 How much beef was exported in 2000?

Conversion

- 8 Convert your answer to question 7 from metric tons to pounds.

Main Point

- 9 A trend is a change that happens over a long time and seems likely to continue. What trend does Graph 5 show?

Critical
Thinking

- 10 Based on all of the data, would you expect to see an increase or a decrease in the amount of rainforest in Brazil from 1995 to 2002?

Source: Kaimowitz, D., B. Mertens, S. Wunder, and P. Pacheco. n.d. "Hamburger connection fuels Amazon destruction: cattle ranching and deforestation in Brazil's Amazon." Center for International Forestry Research. www.amazonia.org.br/arquivos/103334.pdf (accessed August 5, 2008).

2 | Earth Day Science Symposium: Rainforest



GRAPH SKILLS: LITERAL and EVALUATIVE COMPREHENSION

PART 4:

The Big Gift

Since 1989, students have raised more than \$6 million to help purchase and protect thousands of acres of threatened rainforest and other Precious wildlife habitat through the Big Gift Program.

- 1. Complete the Carbon Footprint and Earth Day Science Symposium**
- 2. Set a goal**
- 3. Purchase bracelets for your class**
- 4. Create speeches, posters, etc.**
- 5. Sell bracelets for \$3 (or more)**



For every 1000 bracelets sold, \$1000 will go to the Masai and \$1000 will go to purchase and protect 20 acres of South American forest, removing 1 million pounds of carbon greenhouse pollution.

Planning Your Time

Beginning of October: TheBigFieldTrip begins reporting from Peru

Late October: Look for TheBigFieldTrip orientation activity online

Beginning of April: Begin the EDSS and Carbon Off-Set activities

- 2 days for introducing activity/species cards
- 4 days for designing presentations
- 2 days to present
- 2 days to wrap it up

Remainder of April-Beginning of May:
Follow-up activities and fundraising
for the Big Gift



Tying it Together

Earth's Project provides you with lessons that meet grade level standards across the curriculum. Their instructions are clear and they provide all of the materials you will need. I encourage you to not only participate in the Rainforest EDSS, but to build a unit around it.

MATH: Save your Data and Graphing unit until the end of March and use it as an introduction to the EDSS

READING: Tie in read-alouds such as The Great Kapok Tree. Create a research project around rainforest species.

WRITING: Persuasive writing – have students take notes during the EDSS presentations. Use the facts to create a speech that will persuade students/family members that preserving South American forests is important because it ensures biodiversity and can off-set personal carbon expense.

ASSESSMENT: Students use notes to answer an open-ended essay question such as “What is threatening South American forests?” or “How can I off-set my carbon emissions?”

Our Bracelets

by Neda Vesselinova

Hi, my name is Neda. My friends and I are selling bracelets for \$3 each (or more if you would like to donate).

You are probably wondering why you should bother to buy these bracelets, for they may look like plain, old, normal ones. But they are not!!! These bracelets are made by African Maasai women. But why? The African elephants are endangered because they need migration corridors to be able to travel from one national park to another at different times of the year. To be endangered means that the species are close to extinction, and when they become extinct they will not longer exist on our planet. Think of that---no more elephants!!! To pay for these corridors, Earth's Birthday Project sends beads to the Maasai women. They make them into the bracelets that we are now selling. But the money will not go to the elephants only; some will also go for education of Maasai people.

The Maasai are an indigenous African group that lives in Northern Tanzania and Southern Kenya in the Great Rift Valley in East Africa. The Maasai speak a language called Maa. They respect the ecosystem in many ways. For example, they do not farm. Instead Maasai herd cattle. They also do not bury dead bodies but leave them for scavengers to eat. The people believe that it will spoil the soil if you bury the bodies. Maasai also have a very healthy drink that is made of cow's milk and blood. Cattle are their main food source.

To the Maasai, money is nothing. They trade with cattle and their beaded works. But since they have no money, they have neither schools with proper education nor medical care. Because of this, most children die either at birth or in their early years. That is why their babies are named at the third moon of their lives, or at about three months after they are born. Education is important because it gives people the power to learn new things and to be able to defend themselves from the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments. These governments are taking away their land!!! The Maasai people have been living on their land for hundreds of years!!! The Maasailand is about 500 sq. miles, and 60% of it has been taken away. Why? Because the governments give the land of Maasai people to ranchers, farmers, and cities!!! The governments even made the Maasai pay for the water they use. Since they do not have money, only very wealthy Maasians can afford water. The rest are left to die of thirst. If you buy a bracelet, one

dollar will go to Maasai schools, one will go to the Maasailand, and another will go to support conservation of the migratory corridors of African elephants.

The African elephant lives in Central, Western, Eastern and Southern Africa. Most elephants live in national parks but their population is receding because they are killed by poachers. The poachers are people who hunt animals illegally. Poachers kill elephants for their tusks and meat. The tusks are made of ivory, which is very valuable. For example, the ivory is used to make expensive works of art, pool balls, and piano keys. Elephants also get culled, which means they are given a drug that leads to a never-ending sleep (or death). Governments do this when overgrazing occurs, in other words when elephants eat all the vegetation in an area.

The elephants and the humans in Africa don't like to share territories so elephants live in areas where humans do not. Throughout the seasons, the elephants migrate from one area to another to search for food and water. Migration is when an animal, fish, or bird walks, swims or flies, to another place for a certain time each year because of seasonal changes. The routes the animals take are called migratory corridors. But the migratory corridors are interfered by the always-expanding human civilization that builds roads and cities. So the corridors need to be protected! For every bracelet you buy or sell, some of the money will go to protect the land along the migratory corridors from future development.

The only locations where the elephants are protected are within national parks and the Maasailand. The Maasai respect all creatures and will not do any harm to the elephants. The Maasai and the African elephants have been neighbors and have lived in unity for many years now.

Thank you for contributing some of your time to learn about this serious matter. Tomorrow I will come again with more bracelets. If you would like to donate and buy one or more bracelets, let your parents know. The bracelets are \$3 each at least, but you can contribute more because these are really donations. We will also send a flyer giving you all the necessary information.

Once again, thanks!