Wildlife Camera Trap Activity

Read the "How to count snow leopards?" comic strip explanation how the Snow Leopard Trust deploys remote camera traps to learn more about snow leopards in the wild. After reading with your children, you can help them build their own camera trap. This can be done inside or outside.

How to count snow leopards?

Materials Needed:
- Cardboard: tissue box, shoe-box, tea or cereal box, or any other scraps of cardboard
- Tape
- Markers or crayons
- Rope, string, or yarn
- Poster, eraser, or journal for documenting your research

Activity:
- Build your own camera trap.
- Build your camera trap:
  - Find materials around the house such as an empty tea or cereal box, or any other scraps of cardboard
  - Temporarily secure the cardboard to:
    - Trap
    - Mismatched or copies
    - Rope, string, or yarn
    - Poster, eraser, or journal for documenting your research

Place your camera trap:

- Where would you put the camera trap?
  - Wasting food: house - somewhere an animal needs to get food
  - Scratching box: house - somewhere the animal goes after it marks their territory
  - Sleeping perk - kitchen - somewhere that the animal sits down to sleep
  - Den or cave: house - somewhere the animal might sleep
  - Hunting perch: kitchen - somewhere that the animal goes to look for food
  - Scratch/spray: bathroom - somewhere that the animal goes often to mark its territory
  - Watering hole: faucet - somewhere the animal needs to get water to drink

How should you set your camera trap?
- Find a rock or stick out of the way, or tie it up on a branch.
- Set the camera to be low to the ground.
- Set the camera to ON

How do you set up your camera trap?
- Place your camera trap:
  - Just place the box on the ground and you are done!
  - Tie the cardboard together - have someone hold the camera while you tie it together
  - Set the camera to ON and walk away - great job!
- Modify the placement: If you only get the top of your head in the photo or just the feet, then find a small rock or stick or leg to adjust the direction the camera is pointing
- Test the camera height - have someone be the snow leopard (or fox, ibex, pallas' cat) and crawl in front of the camera.

Modify the placement until you get a photo where you can see the entire animal.
- Tie the camera on and make sure it is pointing in the correct direction.
- Place your camera trap:
  - Place you camera trap: house
  - Place your camera trap: yard

How to count snow leopards?
- Set the camera traps to help us learn more about the animals and how we can help protect them. Once we get photos, we need to record information about each of the photos and determine how many "individuals" we are seeing. (And how many pictures of snow leopards on the camera, we need to determine if those photos represent different individual cats). For example, if we have 10 pictures of only 1 individual cat, maybe we are seeing 2 different individual cats with 5 pictures each. We have to look very closely at each photo to see if we can tell apart and see if the photos are the same or different cats. You can do this on your own.
- When did you capture on your camera trap?
- For the photos where you can see the entire animal, draw them and see if you can find distinguishing characteristics that make it different from others. For example, does it have a scar? Does it have a small nick on the wing, or something. Draw it!
- Maybe one photo shows just a strange body part like the tip of a tail, the edge of a bird's wing, or something. Draw it!
- Maybe one photo is only of some mysterious feet - can you identify the feet - draw it!
- Draw some "lower quality shots" - maybe on one photo, the animal was too close to the camera and all you can see is one eye or just fur - draw it!
- Did you get quality photos of the entire animal's body?

Draw the photos of each of the animals you think you captured.
- Take two: the cardboard has someone be the snow leopard (or fox, pallas' cat) and crawl in front of the camera.
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Find more fun and educational materials on our website at

snowleopard.org/learn

Send us your data!

Parents/Carers: - If you are comfortable sending us a photo of the homemade camera and the completed activity, we would love to see them. Please send to

snowleopard.org

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Thank you! We hope you had fun with this activity. Thanks for being part of our snow leopard team!

Illustrations and text by Koustubh Sharma. Activity design and layout by Jennifer Snell Rullman and John Klees.