

Explore how all living creatures and plants require **food, water, air, and shelter** to grow and thrive. A **habitat** provides living things with the right combination of these elements, according to their needs.

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### TRY THIS

#### *Exhibit: Discovery Woods*

Find microhabitats—small areas within larger habitats—around Discovery Woods. Microhabitats can be a fallen log, under a rock, a patch of tall grasses, or a clump of leaf litter.

- Do you see any evidence of creatures living in the area?
  - What types of animals or bugs do you expect to find?
- How does each habitat provide food, water, air, shelter, and/or light?

Look closely at the plants in Discovery Woods. What similarities and differences can you notice? Observe details like a plant's leaf shape and size, whether it is flowering or non-flowering (season dependent), and if it grows tall or stays low to the ground.

Practice **map reading** and making close observations as you navigate the trails found in the Great Hill Conservation Land.

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### TRY THIS

#### *Exhibits: Great Hill Conservation Land*

Use a Great Hill Conservation Land map to help you navigate Bessie's Trail, a short 0.4 mile loop that begins at the trailhead in Discovery Woods. (Maps available at the Admissions Desk). Look out for the Bessie's Trail tags on trees marking the path.

- For an additional challenge, use the map to identify the trails according to the tags of color found on the trees. Practice on Bessie's Trail, then consult the map to select an additional trail to follow. (Please note: It's important that accompanying adults also feel comfortable reading the trail map or have experience navigating trails.)
- Be on the lookout for natural landmarks, such as an interesting colored rock or a unique looking tree trunk, which can also be useful for navigation.

## **Dig Deeper**

### **Reflect and communicate**

Did you discover something new or interesting in Discovery Woods?  
Talk about what you discovered.

### **Make connections**

Visit the *Yes! It's Math! Gallery* and the *Math Balcony* to view examples of patterns in nature. Experiment with flowing water in the *Water Gallery* and think about human-made and natural phenomena that change, direct, or control the flow of water. Explore the properties of air in the *AirPlay Gallery*.

### **Explore more at home**

Continue asking questions, making observations, designing experiments, and predicting outcomes: Take a walk around your neighborhood and look for evidence of living creatures. Can you find any microhabitats? What sounds do you hear when you're outside? Make a map of your neighborhood. What details would someone new to the area need to find their way around?

*As you and your child engaged with the exhibits in Discovery Woods you may have explored concepts that are connected to the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Frameworks and taught specifically in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Grades 1 through 5, and 7.*