

TEACHER GUIDE: Letter 3: Acorn Woodpecker

CONCEPTS COVERED

Plant community—oak woodland

Characteristics

Acorns

Animals that can be found there

Representative animal—acorn woodpecker

Characteristics

Defense

Getting food

Food chains and food webs

Migration

Photosynthesis

Poison oak

Identification

Avoiding it on the Reserve

Reserve history—

Luiseno Indians--use of Plateau resources

Trail manners

Use quiet voices

Why have a Reserve?

CONTENT VOCABULARY

- acorn—seed of the oak tree; important food source for Native Americans and animals
- birds of prey—birds, such as hawks, eagles, and owls, that hunt and kill other animals for food
- carbon dioxide—a colorless, odorless gas that occurs naturally in the atmosphere; formed during respiration
- chlorophyll—the green pigment in the leaves and stems of plants that absorbs sunlight for use in photosynthesis
- energy---the power or ability to make something work or be active
- food chain—A series of organisms within an environment in which each kind of organism in the series is eaten by another higher in the chain in its effort to acquire energy
- food web—a group of interrelated food chains in a particular ecological community
- larvae—the stage of an insect between egg and adult; grub

- migration—to move to a different area or region, especially at a particular time of year
- oak woodland—a community of plants where oak trees are the dominant plant
- photosynthesis—the chemical process by which a green plant changes sunlight, carbon dioxide and water into food
- tannic acid—a natural substance found in the fruit and bark of certain plants and used for tanning
- hides: had to be removed from acorns before the Native Americans could use them for food

OTHER WORDS TO KNOW

beetle gas insect shelter stuff (fill something)
 defend grind peck startle Visitor Center

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Can you remember three things about the acorn woodpecker?
- What plant community do acorn woodpeckers spend most of their time in?
- What kind of trees grows in this community?
- What do we call the seeds from these trees?
- The plant on the Reserve that people should stay away from grows in this community.
- What is it? What does it look like?
- What is photosynthesis? Can you explain how it works?
- Why can't people make food like plants can?
- What is a food chain?
- What would happen if we woke up one day and there were no plants? Why?
- Some birds migrate each year? What does that mean? Why do they migrate?
- Name two animals you might see signs of in the oak woodland.
- How do acorn woodpeckers defend themselves from predators?
- When the Luiseno Indians lived on the Santa Rosa Plateau they used things they found in their daily lives. What were some of the things they used and what were they used for?
- What did the Native American women have to do to the acorns before they could cook them for food for their families? Why?
- Animals hide when they hear you coming. So, if you hope to see animals when you are out on the trail, what do you have to remember to do?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

With your teacher's help, draw a diagram showing how an oak tree makes its own food. In your picture include what the tree needs (takes in) and what it gives off.

Draw a food chain. Remember to start it with a plant. Now, can you extend it into a food web?