

World Gorilla Day:



Forage like a Gorilla

In this activity, kids will learn about gorillas and how they forage for their food.

Age: Children ages 4 - 7

Gather your Gear

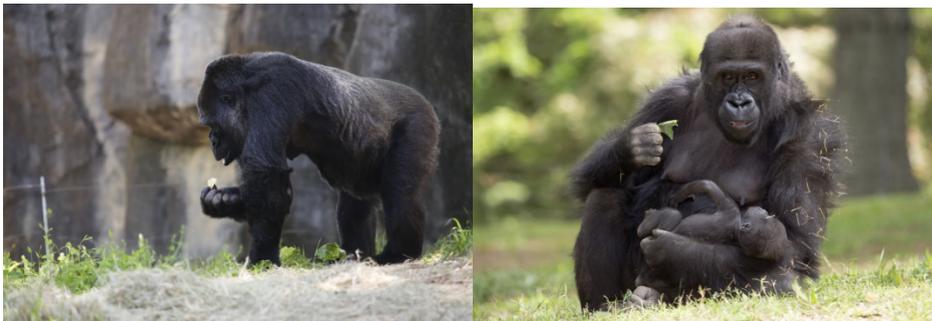
- Large plastic bin or kiddie pool
- Shredded paper, paper/fabric scraps, straw, leaves, strips of crinkle paper, etc.
- Toys/artificial food (you can use something else to represent food as well)

Get Ready *You can help your child make connections by thinking about concepts before the activity.*

Zoo Atlanta is currently home to one of the largest populations of western lowland gorillas in North America. Most gorillas live in family groups known as troops. These troops can consist of five to 30 individuals, although the average size is 11. The group is led by a dominant silverback male and contains several adult females and their young.

Gorillas are **herbivores**, meaning the majority of their diet is plant material. In the wild, western lowland gorillas feed on plant parts including seeds, leaves, stems, shoots, roots, and flowers; however, they prefer fruit whenever it's in season. Occasionally they will eat insects, such as termites or ants, as a supplement to their diet when they are readily available. Due to their dietary preferences, western lowland gorillas spend a lot of their time in and around trees, especially fruit trees. A large portion of a gorilla's day is spent foraging for food. One adaptation that gorillas have to make this task easier is their large, dexterous hands that allow them to pick up small, delicate objects. Like their hands, their feet have opposable thumbs and toes, making grasping and holding items even easier.

In this activity, you will practice foraging for food just like a gorilla!



Activity Instructions: Forage like a Gorilla

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- Fill the plastic bin/kiddie pool with the shredded paper, paper/fabric scraps, straw, leaves, strips of crinkle paper, etc. to create the forest brush.
- Take your toys/artificial fruit and bury them in the bin.
- Dig through the bin, moving the “forest brush” to find the fruit! This emulates how a gorilla will forage for its food. Notice how you use your opposable thumbs like a gorilla!

Recap *Have a conversation about what you saw/did and questions your child may have.*

- What species of gorilla lives at Zoo Atlanta?
- What is a gorilla family group known as?
- What do gorillas eat and how do they get their food?

Relate

What is your favorite food and where does it come from? Spend some time talking as a family about where our food comes from – grocery stores, farmers markets, and/or grown at home. Imagine that you are a gorilla and think about what it would be like to spend your day looking for food in a large forest.

Just like we enjoy the safety of our homes, gorillas rely upon their forest habitats for food, water, and shelter. One of the main threats to gorillas is habitat loss because of the mining of coltan. Coltan is a mineral that is found in electronic devices such as cell phones and tablets.

Recycle your cell phones! You can protect gorillas and gorilla habitat by recycling your old cell phone(s) right here at the Zoo! Recycling cell phones and other small electronic devices protects gorilla habitat by reducing the need to mine for coltan, which can be reused. We accept *any* kind of cell phone to be recycled with Eco-Cell. For each cell phone received, gorillas benefit in two ways: the threat to their habitat is reduced, and a donation is made to support the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International’s gorilla conservation and research.

It takes a team.... join ours

Help us save species by joining the “Zoo Conservation Corps” and raise awareness about wild animals, their habitats and why conserving both is so important. If your family members are on social media, post to show what you have learned, and use the hashtags #OnlyZooATL and #WorldGorillaDay so that we can see all your great work!

Want to know more?

- For more on World Gorilla Day and gorilla conservation, go to: <https://gorillafund.org/>

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- To learn more about cell phone recycling and Gorillas on the Line visit:
<https://zooatlanta.org/conservation-action/gorillas-on-the-line/>
- Visit Zoo Atlanta so see and learn more about western lowland gorillas!