

Be Gentle with the Forest...

The forest is home to an amazing array of plants and animals.

Each year, many people explore the forest. They come to hike, bike, hunt, fish, bird watch, or to just relax. Each time you walk in a forest you run the risk of disrupting animal's lives and damaging the forest ecosystem. However, if care is taken, damage can be minimized and enjoyment maximized.



 Walk — don't run. You may trip and fall in unfamiliar terrain if moving quickly. Mossy logs and tangled roots can easily trip you. Walking also exerts less pressure on any animals you might step on. Watch for snails and small animals that might be trampled along the trail.

 When you turn over a rock, do it gently, being careful not to crush any animal that is beside the rock or that moves suddenly as its hiding place is uncovered. It is generally better to move unattached creatures aside before you turn the rock back over again, as they will soon find cover; but if you do not think they will quickly seek shelter, put them under some leaves. When you leave, they will probably get along all right.

 If you do some gentle digging, make sure to fill in the holes. Don't dig more than an inch below the surface—and in small areas. Be sure to restore the area once you are done with your investigations

(Adapted from ADF&G "Tidepooling Etiquette")



Don't collect more than you really need or want. One leaf, or live specimen of a kind brought back to a laboratory may serve an entire class.



Avoid collecting altogether in highly sensitive or unique natural areas. Certain animals or plants that inhabit these sites may not be commonly seen in the same general region. **Never** take the oldest, largest or rarest individual.



Don't collect or disturb animals and plants in areas designated by law as biological preserves.



On a field trip, do as much studying as you can right in the forest. Take photos of specimens rather than bringing them back to the classroom. Bring field guides and hand lenses with you so you can identify the plants and animals in the field. It is often difficult to successfully return plants and animals to their homes once they are removed. It's always best to bring the absolute minimum number of specimens back to your classroom.



Make all the use you can of the collected plants and animals before they die. Do not let your collection become an end in itself. Some animals and plants can be preserved in such a way that their usefulness may be extended beyond the time they are studied alive.