

## **Activity #5: *The Tale of Chipilo***

### **Protecting our Wildlife-Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge**

Read the following information and answer the questions that follow.

Limestone hills, spring fed canyons, and open grasslands make up Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge, northwest of Austin. Its main purpose is to **conserve** the nesting habitat of the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler and Black-capped Vireo. Both of these birds are **neotropical** migrants that come to central Texas each year to nest. A neotropical migrant spends its winters in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, or South America. The bird flies north each spring to nest in the United States or Canada. While the Black-capped Vireo also nests in other states, the Golden-cheeked Warbler nests only in central Texas.

What does endangered mean? An animal is considered endangered when it is in danger of **extinction**. What can cause a bird to become endangered? One of the main causes is loss of habitat. When we build new houses and shopping malls, wildlife loses its home. Our National Wildlife Refuges try to protect species from extinction by providing them with the habitat they need to survive. The Golden-cheeked Warbler and the Black-capped Vireo are considered **specialists** in the animal world. They

have learned to adapt to a very specific niche in their habitat. Golden-cheeked Warbler nests are made from strips of bark from the Ashe juniper tree, cobwebs, and dried leaves and grasses and placed in a variety of tree species in woodland habitat. Black-capped Vireo nests are made from similar materials but often placed closer to the ground than warbler nests in a variety of tree and shrub species in shrubland habitat. Preserving habitats that include these trees help to ensure the survival of these birds.

Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge is home to these endangered birds and also provides habitat for hundreds of other plant and animal species. It currently includes about 23,000 acres and hopes to encompass up to 46,000 acres of Texas Hill Country. Thousands of visitors come to the refuge each year to enjoy the country and catch glimpses of these birds. While offering these recreational opportunities, this Refuge and all other National Wildlife Refuges are special places where “wildlife comes first”.

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**Multiple Choice Questions**

- 1) The author of this passage probably:
  - A) sees importance in all animal species
  - B) thinks the Golden-cheeked Warbler is more important than the Black-Capped Vireo
  - C) thinks national wildlife refuges are important to providing homes for endangered species
  - D) thinks we should not build shopping malls
  
- 2) Which of the following best summarizes this passage?
  - A) national wildlife refuges are places where “wildlife comes first.”
  - B) Balcones National Wildlife Refuge is home to many animals.
  - C) Balcones National Wildlife Refuge protects two endangered bird species.
  - D) Balcones National Wildlife Refuge is a good place to enjoy nature.
  
- 3) In the first paragraph, the word **conserve** means:
  - A) to use less
  - B) to save
  - C) to destroy
  - D) to be worthy
  
- 4) A **neotropical** migrant bird:
  - A) lives in Mexico, Central America or South America year-round
  - B) spends its summers in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, or South America
  - C) spends its spring and summer in central Texas
  - D) spends its spring and summer in the United States

- 5) One difference between Golden-cheeked Warblers and Black-capped Vireos is:
- A) Golden-cheeked Warblers nest only in central Texas, while Black-capped Vireos nest in other places in the United States.
  - B) Golden-cheeked Warblers are neotropical migrants, while Black-capped Vireos are not.
  - C) Black-capped Vireos nest only in juniper trees, while Golden-cheeked Warblers will nest only in oak trees.
  - D) Black-capped Vireos are considered specialists in the animal world, while Golden-cheeked Warblers are not.
- 6) In what ways are Golden-cheeked Warblers and Black-capped Vireos alike?
- A) They both nest only at the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge.
  - B) They are both endangered neotropical migrants that nest at the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge.
  - C) They both use the same nesting sites to raise their young.
  - D) They both are endangered.
- 7) What do you think **extinction** means in the second paragraph?
- A) loss of habitat due to building of homes and shopping malls
  - B) loss of home
  - C) a dangerous situation
  - D) when an animal species no longer exists on earth
- 8) What does the author think is the best way to help these birds?
- A) by educating children about their importance
  - B) by preventing the building of shopping malls and new houses
  - C) by providing habitat where the birds can live
  - D) by preventing the cutting of trees

- 9) What does it mean that national wildlife refuges are places where “wildlife comes first?”
- A) taking care of wildlife is their most important purpose
  - B) no visitors are allowed because it is only for animals
  - C) people and wildlife are equally important
  - D) there are no roads in a national wildlife refuge because it is only for animals
- 10) In paragraph 3 which definition below best describes what **specialist** means?
- A) a doctor who mostly becomes an expert in one area of medicine
  - B) animals that are considered to be very special creatures
  - C) when an animal has adapted to a specific niche in a habitat
  - D) Golden-cheeked Warblers only use bark from juniper trees to build their nest

**Answer Key Activity #5: The Tale of Chipilo–Protecting our Wildlife–  
Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge**

1. C
2. C
3. B
4. D
5. A
6. B
7. D
8. C
9. A
10. C

**Alignment:**

Grade 3 (red)

Grade 4 (blue)

Grade 5 (green)

Grade 6 (purple)

English Language Arts & Reading student expectations: 1(A-E), 2(A-C), 4(A,B), 11, 12; 1, 2(A,B), 9, 10; 1, 2(A,B), 9, 10; 1, 2(A,B), 9

Mathematics student expectations: 11(A)

Science student expectations: 7(C), 9(A,B), 10(A); 7(C), 9(A,B); 7(B), 9(A-D); 10(C), 12(E,F)

Social studies student expectations: 4(A,D), 17(C); 7(B,C), 9(C), 21(A-D), 22(A,B); 7(B), 24(A-D), 25(A,B); 3(A), 4(D,F), 6(B), 21(A-D), 22(A,B)