



Wildlife Watcher

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Scientists who study animals in the wild, in zoos, and in almost any setting, often use observation as a tool to understand animal adaptations, behavior and interactions. You can learn to use observation in the same way by practicing, even from your home!

If you can watch animals at a park, in your yard or during a trip to the zoo, these tools can help you! But even if you are at home, you can use the internet to observe animals! Some zoos and parks have webcams that let you watch LIVE video of animals at their exhibits. These tools can let you see how the animals behave even if you want to watch animals far away.

1. To find a list of live webcams, view the Wildlife Watcher website, and pick a species! Then follow the links to find live cams!

<https://www.conservationtales.com/wildlife-watcher.html>



2. Then select one of the observation data tables on the following pages. Feel free to try one, and you can even change the format if you wish to use a notebook or science journal to make your own data table. You can print the tables if you like!

Tips for watching webcams



- Remember that some cams are not on 24 hours a day. You may need to check a webcam at a different time of day.
- Be patient! Observing animals means spending time just sitting and watching. You may need to practice patience while you wait for animals to do something interesting.
- Practice! Your first observations will probably not be very detailed. Try doing the same observations at least 3 times, then see how your observations change!

Types of Data Tables

For all observations, you can use short “codes” for behaviors. (like “GRM” for “grooming”)

- **Format A** – Interval Observations – Every 5 minutes (or 2 or 3 if you like!), write a note about what the animals are doing. Short notes about behavior are fine!
 - This format is great for the first time you watch a species.
- **Format B** – Behavior Checklist – Make a list of behaviors you think you’ll see, and check off which ones you see every 5 minutes (or 2 or 3 if you like!). Leave rows to add new behaviors if you see any!
 - This format is best when you have noticed behaviors and want more details.
- **Format C** – Two-Column Open Observation – Write notes whenever you see something interesting, including a time. Observations in left column; put comments and questions in the right column.
 - This format may take more practice, and some ideas what you are watching for.





Observation Data Table – Format A – INTERVAL OBSERVATIONS

TIME (min)	OBSERVATIONS
0	
5	
10	
15	
20	
25	
30	

Notes and Comments

Key to Codes for Behaviors



Observation Data Table - Format B - BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST

Behaviors	0 min	5 min	10 min	15 min	20 min	25 min	30 min

Notes and Comments

Key to Codes for Behaviors



Observation Data Table - Format C - TWO-COLUMN OPEN

Observer _____ Date _____
Location _____

Time	Observation	Comments