



Sarah C Campbell

Photographer

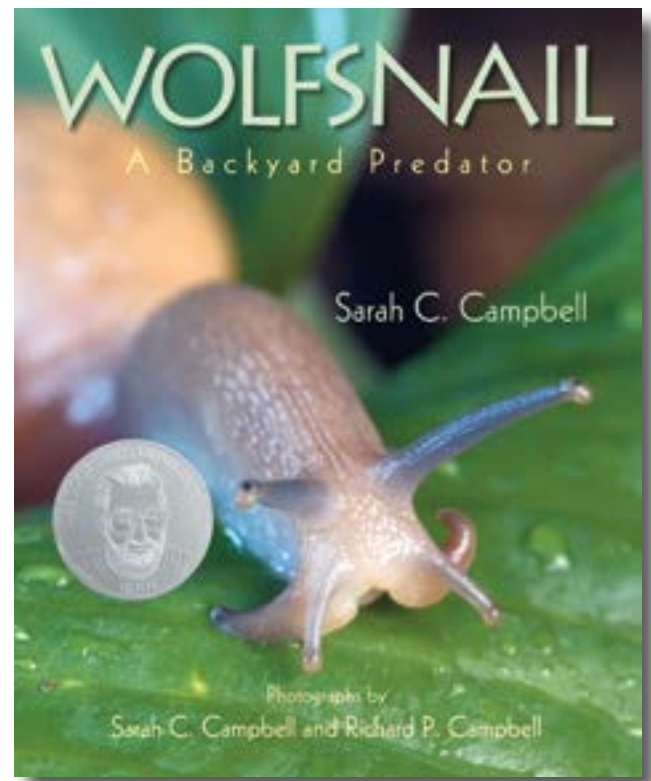
Author

Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator Teachers' Guide

ON A WET SPRING DAY, a wolfsnail wakes up hungry. Faster than an ordinary snail, it glides up a green plant. But the wolfsnail is not looking for leaves.

This snail is a meat eater, and it is hunting other snails. Follow the wolfsnail as it overtakes and devours its prey.

Stunning photographs and a fact-filled story deliver a closeup look at a day in the life of a tiny, and unexpected, predator—the seriously slimy wolfsnail.



Introduction

The element of surprise is a powerful tool in teaching and *Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator* is a book that will hook your students into science with an unusual, and irresistible, character. This day-in-the-life story, illustrated with stunning, close-up photographs, touches on the themes of:

- the diversity of life;
- external characteristics of animals;
- predator/prey relationships;
- the food chain;
- ecosystems; and
- the life cycle of snails.

This teacher's guide begins with "Introduction to Snails," a series of classroom activities using garden snails. You may also use wolfsnails, which are only found in the 12 southeastern states and can be harder to find. These activities are designed to meet curriculum objectives in science.

The guide also includes two lesson plans for using the book to meet language arts objectives. These are "Telling Stories Through Photographs," a caption-writing activity, and "Using Photographs to Prompt Story Writing," which comes with a reproducible activity page. Finally, the guide includes a coloring page.

Introduction to Snails

Snails are wonderful animals to bring into the classroom. Students quickly get over their “Yuck! Slime!” reaction. (Make sure you have enough snails for each student to have one to hold; you may want to work with a small group of students at a time.)

Materials:

1. snails (Gather snails at least a few days before you plan to begin your lessons because dry or cold weather can cause them to go into hiding. Snails are easy to keep in plastic containers. They need moisture (a damp paper towel will do) and some leafy greens. Of course, if you have wolfsnails, you'll need prey snails, too.)
2. magnifying lenses
3. pencil
4. paper
5. colored pencils, markers or crayons
6. transparent surface (so students may observe how the snail moves its foot from the underside).
7. baby powder

These basic questions will get students started in developing observational skills:

- What kind of thing is a snail?
- How does a snail move?
- How and what does a snail eat?

Ask students to locate the parts of a snail (shell, foot, tentacles, eyes, head).

Ask students to draw a snail.

Ask students to place the snails on a sheet of construction paper. After the snail has left a noticeable trail or trails, sprinkle some baby powder over the trails on the paper. Do snails crawl in a straight line?

Ask students to place some lettuce leaves on a clean surface. Ask them to place a snail near the lettuce. What happens when the snail gets to the lettuce leaf?

Telling Stories With Photographs

Write Your Own Caption

(an activity for older elementary/middle school students)

1. Gather magazines with high quality photographs: National Geographic, Smithsonian, Ranger Rick, etc.
2. Cut out 8-10 photographs (enough to provide one for each group). Trim captions apart from photographs. Set aside the captions. (You will be using them later.)
3. Introduce the idea that photographers tell stories through photographs. Many students have heard the saying, "a picture is worth 1,000 words." Ask if your students agree. Ask them to explain why.
4. Divide students into groups. Assign the roles of recorder and spokesperson for each group.
5. Ask each group to write a one-sentence caption for one photograph.
6. Ask each spokesperson to stand, display the photograph, and read the caption.
7. Read the published captions to the class and ask them to match the published captions with the photographs.

Using Photographs to Prompt Story Writing

Photograph Stories

(an activity for students in elementary grades)

1. Gather magazines with high quality photographs: National Geographic, Smithsonian, Ranger Rick, etc.
2. Make photocopies of the accompanying story page.
3. Tear out some pages containing large, compelling photographs. (Pictures of animals are particularly good).
4. Ask students to choose a photograph, cut it out, and glue it to the accompanying story page.
5. Here are some options for the kinds of writing students can do:
 - a. Ask students to write a story about the photograph
 - b. Encourage them to write down the details they see in the photograph.
 - c. Encourage them to imagine what happened right before the photograph was taken or what happened right after it was taken.

Write your own story. Cut out a photograph from a magazine. Glue it in the large square.
Write a story about the animal, person, or thing in the photograph.

(place photograph here)

By:

Wolfsnail

Euglandina rosea



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