



Time Needed

30 initial minutes

A few more minutes every hour

Materials You Need

Plate

Fruit

Journal

Pencil

Phone, tablet, or Chromebook

iNaturalist

Something to sit on

Things to remember:

Wear sunscreen

You might want insect repellent

Check yourself for ticks when you finish

Elon Explorers: Competition for limited and limiting resources

Overview. During this activity, we’ll focus on learning about competition for limited and limiting resources among various organisms

Today’s asynchronous science activity: *Before starting today’s activity, you should check out the “How to make observations” video on the Elon Explorer’s website.*

Cut up your fruit into small pieces and put it onto the plate. This plate will be called your “bait.” Next, find a safe outdoor space where you can put your bait on the ground. It should be a place you can easily observe from at least 10 or 20 feet away. Try to avoid car traffic and human foot traffic, and try to place it in a grassy area or one with leaf litter.

Take a photo of your bait and the surrounding area to document what it looks like before any animals come. Then, make a table like the one below in your field journal to make documenting everything easy and organized (two rows are filled in as an example):

Time of day	Type of animal	How many of that animal?	Environmental conditions	Any other observations
11:15 am	Beetle	2	Shady, 90°F, no non-natural noise	Beetles can fly!
11:25 am	Bird	1	Shady, 90°F, no non-natural noise	None

Over the next 2.5 hours, you will observe and document what kinds of animals are attracted to the plate of fruit by taking data every 30 minutes. During each observation period, note that environmental conditions are things like: temperature, noise levels, shade levels, etc. Take photos of all the animals you see. You should observe the bait from at least 10 feet away. Try to not move around or make a lot of noise - you don’t want to scare away any animals! If there are no animals (insects count as animals!), then enter zero.

Record your results in the data table. Take a picture of the bait every time you return to check on it. If the bait is gone, feel free to replenish it with more fruit.

After making observations, upload any photos to iNaturalist to identify what you saw. Also upload photos and data to the Elon Explorers website under the day for this activity. Be prepared to share your results with the camp this afternoon.