The 4-H WildlifeJudging Contest is an event designed to teach youth the fundamentals of wildlife management. Although it is a competitive event, its primary function is education. Natural resources management should belearned through involvement in this event, by holding traditional project meetings and related activities; including field trips and/or guest speakers. Additional benefits to youth, as a result of participation, include the development of leadership capabilities that focus around team-work, communication, organization and commitment. Meeting and speaking to other adults and wildlife professionals throughout the state provides an opportunity for 4-H youth to grow as well.

There are two divisions for this contest, Beginner and Senior. There are no pre-determined ages for these divisions. Youth should participate in the division that best suits their involvement in the 4-H Wildlife Project. The top 10 seniors from each county will participate in the state contest at the Delaware State Fair.

Resources:
This contest will follow the Purdue Extension Wildlife Science Series Project Books. These books are available at www.shop4-H.com. The digital download for all 4 resources is currently $22.00. Contact your local county 4-H office with questions related to this resource.

Please note: There are sections in the project books, where youth will need to do some research in preparation for this contest. Although there will be word banks and multiple choice/matching, there will also be some opportunity for open-ended responses. Most of the questions that require open-ended responses will have many possible correct answers.

Career Resources:
http://stem-works.com/subjects/30-the-animal-kingdom/cool_jobs
http://wildlife.org/next-generation/career-development/careers/
https://www.wcs.org/about-us/careers

Wildlife Habitat Education Program Resource
WHEP Manual with Delaware Information

How to Formulate a Set of Reasons for a Judging Class
Creating Reasons for a Judging Class
Special Needs: If you are in need of special accommodations to participate in this program, please notify 4-H office, **two weeks in advance** of the event.

This program is brought to you by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, a service of the UD College of Agriculture and Natural Resources — a land-grant institution. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. If you have special needs that need to be accommodated, please contact the office two weeks prior to the event.

The Beginner Contest

**Resources:**  
*Wildlife Science Facilitator’s Guide*  
*Wildlife Science Level 1*  
*WHEP Manual for Delaware Regions*

- **Delaware animals and their foods:**  
  Be able to identify animals by pictures and name foods they consume*  
  - American Bullfrog  
  - Bluegill  
  - Eastern Garter Snake  
  - Black (Rat) Snake  
  - Raccoon  
  - Red-Tailed Hawk  
  - Great Horned Owl  
  - Short-Eared Owl  
  - Box Turtle  
  - Snapper Turtle  
  - Brown Bat  
  - White Tail Deer  
  - Bald Eagle  
  - Groundhog  
  - Great Egret  
  - American Horseshoe Crab  
  - Piping Plover  
  - Coyote  
  - Mole  
  - Opossum  
  - Beaver  
  - Delmarva Fox Squirrel*  

  *This is not an exhaustive list of all wildlife found in Delaware

- **Animal Needs:** Be familiar with animals and their needs

- **Vertebrate Classes:**  
  Be able to identify the 5 classes of vertebrates and be able to identify a vertebrate class given a picture or an animal name

- **Animal Traits:**  
  Be able to discuss traits of animals  
  - **2021:** Mammals  
  - **2022:** Birds  
  - **2023:** Fish  
  - **2024:** Herptiles (reptiles and amphibians)

- **Using a Dichotomous Key:**  
  Given a dichotomous key, be able to show how the key is followed and name the animals (information in back of guide)
The Senior Contest

Resources:   *Wildlife Science Facilitator’s Guide*
*Wildlife Science Level 2*
*Wildlife Science Level 3*
*WHEP Manual for Delaware Regions*

- **Beginner requirements above**

- **Animal Habitats** (Level 2)
  - 2021: Mammals
  - 2022: Birds
  - 2023: Fish
  - 2024: Herptiles (reptiles and amphibians)

- **Special Topics** (Level 2)
  - Animal Endangerment: 2021
  - Wildlife Careers: 2022
  - Impact of Climate Change: 2023
  - Pioneers in Wildlife Conservation: 2024
  - Signs of Wildlife: 2025

- **Habitat Management** (Level 3)
  Understand wildlife management concepts and practices. Given descriptions of habitats, be able to identify animals found there.

- **Habitat Judging**: (Level 1-3 Putting it all together)
  Participants will be provided pictures of 4 habitats. Participants will be asked to judge the 4 habitats based on requirements for a given species. Participants will provide written reasons for their decision.

  *Use this format for written reasons: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion*

  Intro      I placed this class __________ (name class) 3,1,2,4
  Body  I placed 3 over 1 because….
        I placed 1 over 2 because…
        I placed 2 over 4 because…
  Conclusion For these reasons, I placed this class of ______ 3,1,2,4.

**STATE CONTEST:**
The state event will include a “role play scenario”. These are found in the Level 3 project book. One topic will be selected from the choices below; participants should be familiar with both.

2021: You are a Teacher   2025: You are the Mayor
2022: You are a Food and Fiber Producer   2026: You live in a Wildlife Habitat
2023: You are a Teacher   2027: You are a Legislator
2024: You are a Homeowner
## Learn How to Use a Dichotomous Key - Common Animals

Use the dichotomous key to reach the names of each of the 12 animals AND the pathway you used to get there. This is about learning to use a key — not about knowing the names of those common animal s (it is assumed you know their names). So use the blanks under the animal pictures to write the animal names AND the numbers in the key you followed to reach their names.

1. Does the animal have a backbone?  
   - Yes - Go to 3  
   - No - it is an insect - Go to 2

2. Does the animal change (go through metamorphosis) from a caterpillar to an adult form?  
   - Yes - it is a butterfly.  
   - No - it is a grasshopper.

3. Does the animal lay eggs?  
   - Yes - Go to 4  
   - No - Go to 9

4. Does the animal have feathers?  
   - Yes - it is a bird.  
   - No - Go to 5

5. Does the animal lay eggs in the water?  
   - Yes - Go to 6  
   - No - Go to 7

6. Does the animal live on land but come back to the water to lay its eggs.  
   - Yes - Go to 8  
   - No - it is a fish.

7. Does the animal have a protective shell?  
   - Yes - it is a turtle.  
   - No - it is a snake.

8. Does the animal have lots of warty bumps and no tail?  
   - Yes - it is a toad.  
   - No - it is a newt (red eft).

9. Is the animal a carnivore (eats mostly meat)?  
   - Yes - it is a fox.  
   - No - Go to 10

10. Is the animal an omnivore (eats meat and plants)?  
    - Yes - it is a racoon.  
    - No - it is a herbivore - Go to 11

11. Is the animal a rodent?  
    - Yes - it is a squirrel.  
    - No - it is a moose.

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www.exploringnature.org
Please visit the Delaware 4-H Science Page for wildlife project meeting ideas:

Delaware 4-H Science Page Website: [https://sites.udel.edu/kentcountyclover/delaware-4-h-science/](https://sites.udel.edu/kentcountyclover/delaware-4-h-science/)

You will also find additional resources on the Delaware 4-H Science Page, in the Delaware 4-H Wildlife Judging Contest section, also found on the site above.

As you hold your regular wildlife project meetings, be sure to cover a new part of the judging event, and review past lessons, so that youth can prepare for the judging event throughout the year.

If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Cook at kristin@udel.edu