

Pop-up Seal Pup

OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that ringed seals dig lairs under the snow as a place to give birth to their young.

BACKGROUND

To help protect their young from cold weather and predators, ringed seals build lairs under snow drifts. Female ringed seals give birth in March or April, usually to one pup. The pup stays in the lair for about six weeks, drinking mother's milk and growing stronger. The pup lives on its own after about two months; able to swim and catch small fish.

MATERIALS

one set per student:

- 6" x 8" white construction paper
- one white cotton ball
- one cotton swab
- 8-1/2" x 11" photocopier paper

for group:

- colored chalk
- glue
- staplers
- black paint



ACTION

1. Distribute a sheet of white construction paper to each student. Have students fold paper in half so that the two short ends meet. Staple it together on the sides. Leave the end opposite the fold open.
2. Have students rip small semi-circle pieces off the top one half inch of their papers (open end) to give the effect of snow drifts. Students may rip one layer at a time. Save paper scraps.
3. Have students tear a small door in the top paper layer, close to the fold, so that the door swings open and shut. This will expose the lair.
4. To make more snow drift images, tear a "wave" pattern along an edge of the photocopy paper. Lay the torn paper pattern on top of the white construction paper. Rub the flat side of the chalk over the paper-edge pattern so that the reverse image shows on the construction paper. Move the torn photocopy paper as needed to create overlapping snow drifts.
5. Place three or four staples around the lair opening (be careful not to staple door shut). Use scraps of paper to stuff the insides of the construction paper envelope. Staple top shut.
6. Distribute swabs, cotton balls, and paint. Glue cotton ball in lair opening. Dip swab into paint and touch to cotton ball to make eyes and nose.