

## Vegan Education in Schools

### Vegan Clubs

### Years 7 to 12

## Wildlife photography challenge

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### Overview

A wildlife photography challenge encourages students to explore their natural surroundings and capture images of local wildlife or nature. By observing and documenting animals in their habitats, students develop an appreciation for biodiversity and the importance of conservation. This activity blends creativity with education, as participants share stories about the animals they observed and their significance in the ecosystem.

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### How to organise a wildlife photography challenge

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#### 1. Define the purpose and theme of the challenge.

- Establish clear goals for the activity:
    - a) Encourage students to connect with nature and observe local wildlife.
    - b) Highlight the importance of protecting native species and their habitats.
    - c) Promote creativity and storytelling through photography and written reflections.
  - Choose a theme to guide students, such as:
    - a) "Urban Wildlife: Discovering Animals in the City."
    - b) "Biodiversity in Our Backyard."
    - c) "Moments in Nature: Capturing Wildlife Behaviours."
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#### 2. Provide guidelines for participation.

- Share clear instructions to ensure inclusivity and focus:
  - a) Photos can feature any local wildlife, including birds, insects, reptiles, or mammals, as well as plant-life and natural landscapes.
  - b) Students should avoid disturbing animals or their habitats while taking photos.

- c) Encourage the use of any available device, such as smartphones, cameras, or tablets.
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### **3. Encourage students to research and observe wildlife.**

- Provide resources to help students identify local species and their behaviours:
    - a) Share guides or apps for recognising birds, insects, or plants in the area.
    - b) Suggest visiting parks, nature reserves, or even observing wildlife in their own backyards.
    - c) Highlight best practices for ethical wildlife observation, such as maintaining a respectful distance.
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### **4. Teach basic photography tips for capturing wildlife.**

- Offer a brief workshop or share a guide on photography techniques:
    - a) Use natural light to enhance the colours and details in photos.
    - b) Focus on the animal's eyes or key features to create impactful images.
    - c) Be patient and wait for the right moment to capture unique behaviours.
    - d) Experiment with angles and framing to create visually engaging compositions.
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### **5. Incorporate storytelling into the challenge.**

- Ask students to write a short story or description to accompany their photos:
    - a) Include details about the animal, such as their species, habitat and behaviour.
    - b) Reflect on their experience, such as how they felt observing the animal or what they learned about the animal's role in the ecosystem.
    - c) Share any challenges they faced during the photography process and how they overcame them.
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### **6. Create a platform for showcasing the photos.**

- Display the photos and stories in a way that engages the school community:
  - a) Organise an exhibition in a common area, such as a hallway or library.
  - b) Publish a digital gallery on the school's website or social media platforms.

- c) Compile the photos and stories into a booklet or slideshow to share with parents and local organisations.
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## **7. Recognise and celebrate participants' efforts.**

- Acknowledge the creativity and effort of all participants:
    - a) Offer awards for categories such as "Best Wildlife Action Shot," "Most Inspiring Story," or "Creative Composition."
    - b) Provide certificates or small prizes, such as eco-friendly notebooks or reusable water bottles.
  - Host a celebration event where students can share their experiences and reflect on the challenge.
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## **8. Reflect on the impact of the challenge with the group.**

- Facilitate a discussion or survey to gather feedback:
    - a) "What did you enjoy most about observing and photographing wildlife?"
    - b) "What surprised you about the animals or environments you encountered?"
    - c) "How can we continue to protect and support local wildlife?"
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## **9. Use the challenge as a springboard for further conservation efforts.**

- Build on the enthusiasm generated by the activity:
    - a) Start a wildlife club to organise regular nature walks or conservation projects.
    - b) Collaborate with local environmental groups to host educational events or restoration projects.
    - c) Encourage students to participate in citizen science initiatives, such as bird counts or insect surveys.
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## Outcomes

- **Awareness and education:** Students gain a deeper understanding of local wildlife and ecosystems.
- **Empathy and connection:** Observing animals in their natural habitats fosters a sense of appreciation and responsibility for nature.
- **Creative expression:** Photography and storytelling provide an outlet for students to showcase their perspectives and talents.
- **Community engagement:** Sharing the photos and stories raises awareness about biodiversity within the school and local community.
- **Inspiration to act:** The activity motivates students to take part in conservation efforts and advocate for the protection of wildlife.