



BRUCE MUSEUM

## DIGITAL WEEKENDS: BACKYARD ANIMALS

### Dioramas

One of the best parts of visiting the Bruce Museum has long included viewing the diorama in our permanent science galleries. Inside the diorama is a woodland scene depicting what Greenwich looked like over 500 years ago. While things may not look the same today, many of the animals depicted in the diorama are still around. When exploring our diorama, you might see scenes of animals in their natural habitat and a wigwam. When you look in your backyard, you might see some of these animals if you're lucky. Some of these animals include: rabbits, snakes, skunks, birds, and turkeys!

Dioramas are three dimensional models of an event, a landscape, or a specific place in time. Dioramas can be made in miniature or full scale. In a nature diorama, you will see different animals, seasons, times of day, and even weather.

Thanks to the artists and scientists who create dioramas, we can still explore and learn from past environments captured through dioramas that preserve things like plants and animals, even after landscapes or habitats have changed. Some of the tools these artists and scientists use include everything from paint and paper to taxidermied animals.

The Museum's permanent science galleries are currently closed and being prepared for a new exhibition, but one thing is for certain: dioramas will still be a big part of the new permanent science exhibition being created. In particular a focus for the new permanent science galleries will include animals in our backyard. This Digital Weekends activity will get you thinking about the animals you see in your backyard. Now it is your turn to create a diorama.



### Vocabulary:

**Diorama:** a model representing a scene with three-dimensional figures. It can be miniature or a large-scale museum exhibit.

**Animal:** a member of the kingdom Animalia, typically characterized by a multicellular body, specialized sense organs, voluntary movement, responses to factors in the environment, and the ability to acquire and digest food.



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**Habitat:** the natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.



**BEFORE YOU BEGIN:**

Visit this link to read more about the exhibition: [Changes in our Land](#)

Visit this link to read more about the new exhibition: [The New Bruce Science Galleries](#)

Materials:

- Shoe Box Lids (or whatever box lids you have available)
- Acrylic Paint
- Hot Glue Gun (you can use liquid glue as well)



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- Paper
- Additional supplies (rocks, toys, etc)

### **DIRECTIONS:**

#### Prep:

Ask an adult to help you find all the materials listed above. If you don't have an item listed, get creative and use something else from around your house. Some other items you can use include paper, colored pencils, and tape. If you are younger, try using play dough or air-dry clay. Don't be afraid to go outside with your adult and observe your backyard. Keep track of any animals you see that you would like to add to your diorama. Just remember to be safe when exploring and observing.

#### STEP 1:

Begin by looking at the photo of the diorama above. Have you visited this diorama before? Does your backyard or local park look similar? Spend some time thinking about those questions and the animals you observed from your backyard with your adult. Once that is done, it is time to start the video.

#### STEP 2:

Watch teaching artist Grayson Kennedy as she creates her own diorama. If you do not have a shoebox lid to create your diorama, look for cardboard to help build a box. Otherwise, try drawing a picture of a diorama instead.

#### STEP 3:

When you have your box, or paper, selected, decide if you want your diorama to be vertical or horizontal.

#### STEP 4:

Begin by designing your background. Start by painting your darkest colored objects and finish the background with lightest colored objects. The background could include a variety of things like trees, rocks, or flowers. Make sure to paint the whole background scene during this stage.

#### STEP 5:

Glue the top and bottom of the shoe box together.

#### STEP 6:

Paint the bottom of the shoe box just like in step 4. Start with the darkest colors and work your way up to lighter colors. Add scene details you might find in your backyard.

#### STEP 7:

Once the paint is done drying, you can start to glue down the physical items in your diorama. You can cut out and glue down paper objects (like grass, trees, rocks, etc.), and glue down 3D objects.

#### STEP 8:

Finally, add your backyard animals! You can cut your animals out of paper, or use 3D objects. Then, glue them down.



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**STEP 9:**

Once you are done with your diorama, share it with your friends and family. You and your adult can also share your diorama with our hashtag #Brucemuseum.

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