

STEM Practitioner Unit – Zoologist

Unit context

A zoologist studies the origins, life progression and behaviours of animals. A zoologist's knowledge is key in preserving natural habitats, protecting endangered species, and managing wildlife's adjustment to our ever-changing climate.

There are a variety of avenues a zoologist can choose to take and many specialties they can branch into. A zoologist may devote their entire career to the study of one specific species or their work can be more generalised. They can choose to study animals either in their natural environment or in captivity in zoos, aquariums, or wildlife sanctuaries.

A zoologist requires several personal and professional qualities, many of which align with our **STEM Practices**; for example, Using Appropriate Language and Vocabulary, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Questioning, and Problem Finding. A zoologist also uses a variety of technical tools e.g., cameras, sound recordings, and mapping software (using tools to produce artefacts) to complete their work.

This STEM Practitioner unit makes an important contribution to the development of children's STEM knowledge and attitudes. When children are engaging with animals, they hopefully develop an appreciation of animals as they explore the relationships between themselves and other living things. They become active agents in observing the impact of human activity on animals and their habitats. This involvement with animals in their local environment helps children develop a sense of belonging within an authentic local context, that is their 'place'.