



TODAY'S TOPIC:
Nature Weird and Wild
 You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age but could be adjusted as needed.

THINKING JOB: Ask a "thinking job question" to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

Is there anything in nature that is kind of weird, wild, or scary?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
n/a	You Tube videos of chameleons	Know it is okay to take a moment and think about things that seem weird or scary, and know that all things – even those that are weird, wild, or scary – are created by God.

ASK: Who has ever heard of a lizard called a chameleon? **Show videos to match these facts.**

Here are some interesting facts about chameleons:

- Special color pigment cells under the skin allow some chameleons to change their skin color, creating combined patterns of pink, blue, red, orange, green, black, brown, yellow and purple. Chameleons change color for camouflage but also when angry, or when trying to scare others.
- Chameleons have amazing eyes. The chameleons' eyes can rotate and focus on different things so they can see two different objects at the same time. This gives them a full 360-degree field of vision.
- Chameleons eat by projecting their tongues super-fast, often over twice the length of their body to catch prey, forming a suction cup as it hits its target.

ASK: Does anyone else know some weird animal facts?

Here are some other weird and wonderful nature facts:

- No two tigers have the same stripes.

- Bats are the only mammal that can fly, and its leg bones are so thin it cannot walk.
- Ants never sleep and don't have lungs
- Butterflies taste with their feet.
- A squid's eye can get as big as a basketball.
- Hippo's sweat is pink.
- Alligators can live up to 100 years.
- If a snail loses an eye, it will grow a new one.
- Elephants can smell water from 3 miles away.

SAY: Sometimes nature seems more scary than weird. Examples: Tornado, flood, hurricane, fire, animals that can attack. But are things that are weird or scary actually bad? No.

SAY: Three ways to think about things that are weird and scary – Have the kids repeat “empathy” and “speculate”.

Empathy: the ability to try and understand and share how something feels and acts.

Speculate: To wonder or guess without knowing all the facts or information. Examples: While wildfires in forests seem to cause lots of damage, they also create new growth with trees and plants that were blocked from the sun by larger trees. And some trees need the extra hot heat from fire for their pinecones to open and release seeds.

Bats can seem scary with their sharp teeth and all the flying and the hanging upside down, but they need sharp teeth to eat fruit, and don't have bones in their legs to allow them to stand. Plus, they eat so many insects that farmers depend on bats to help their crops.

Jump to Center: Spiritual spin – Everything and everyone are created by God; God lives in everything and everyone. So, if you see something or someone you don't understand or who seem weird or scary, speculate about the good reasons for what's happening and empathize for why someone is acting a certain way.

AFFIRMATION – God is a part of EVERYTHING!. repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/> .