

How to Use Our Materials

Background

The materials provided on this website are intended to engage you in learning more about the study of animal behavior (ethology). An ethogram is used to categorize animal behaviors and its purpose is to allow researchers, or anyone for that matter, to objectively evaluate behavior of interest. For our example training, we will be using the instantaneous scan sampling method.

We have created the following materials for your use:

- How to use an ethogram training video (lecture taken directly from an actual UF course)
- Inter-observer test guidelines video
- Blank ethogram for your use
- Animal behavior descriptions for use with the ethogram
- Video of a focal animal (horse) for your inter-observer test
 - 10 minute video of a young horse
 - Includes running timer and beeps every 30 seconds
- Filled out ethogram used to evaluate your results
- Explanation of scored behaviors

How to navigate the material

Of the list above, we recommend you go through and review the material. Our hosted videos are on our YouTube channel (Wild Discoveries). If you are unfamiliar with certain animal behaviors we have listed an index of common behaviors on our website (Training Materials). It is important to remember when doing an “inter-observer” reliability test that the goal is to certify you to our ethogram. Meaning, you “see” the behaviors at each beep within the video that we “see.”

1. Review the provided material and videos
2. Read and understand the animal behavior descriptions
3. Print off the provided ethogram
4. When ready, click on the inter-observer test video
5. A countdown will appear and once the clock begins, record (check off) on the provided ethogram every 30 seconds (@ beep) what you see as being the animal’s behavior at that instant
6. When done, open the filled out ethogram and compare your results to ours
7. To be “certified” to our ethogram your score needs to be > 90%, or 18 out of 20 behaviors correctly identified
8. We have provided a listed explanation of each behavior we observed at each time point
9. Repeat as necessary to score >90%

