

Natural Connections Video Summary

Note: *This summary estimates the number of minutes of each video clip, noted in sequential order. Its purpose is to help teachers locate clips that may be most relevant for their use in the classroom. It is an estimate only. The clip underlined is strongly recommended for teachers seeking a brief visual that helps connect consumption issues to biodiversity and waste issues.*

0-5 min.

Introduction—the loss of biodiversity is one of the major environmental concerns.

5-13 min.

The clip begins with a quote, “More than 250 researchers from 26 countries work at [a Costa Rican Research Center]...” The clip continues with music and visuals showing how insects can be “infinitely entertaining.” It includes information about the species scale, such as facts that two million species have been identified, but that species go extinct before the role they play is even known. The clip focuses on ants, which play one of the most important roles in the global ecosystem. “The nature of ants is to contribute to the maintenance of the earth’s ecosystem. Human nature often has the opposite effect,” one researcher states. Visuals show urban centers, shopping, pollution, cars on freeways, etc. “We associate quality of life with the power to be wasteful. The more wasteful, the more quality of life...With six billion people, if everyone is wasteful to their maximum potential, it’s going to be a short ride,” says a researcher. He continues, “I love to spend wildly and waste things, but it’s ...not ethically right.” The clip mentions that U.S. accounts for five percent of the world’s population, but uses more than 25 percent of the world’s resources.

14-22 min.

Clip: “A river runs red with the migration of miracles” is about salmon of the Northwest. It includes information about human-induced obstacles that impact the salmon, such as overlogging, dams, and climate change. A biologist says that loss of the salmon would be less a loss of biology than the poverty of the spirit. The clip then discusses how the choices we make in our everyday lives impact salmon, such as putting one gallon of oil in a storm drain, which could contaminate one million gallons of water. It concludes with a researcher stating, “We got here with a series of small thoughtless actions. We can improve with a series of small, thoughtful ac-

Natural Connections Video Summary, cont.

23–30 min. Clip: “A rich natural laboratory full of critical creatures.” This clip discusses the melting pot of living things. One researcher states that, “Once you can buy a species it no longer enjoys the moral protection that all species should enjoy. Economics is not the answer. We have to teach an environmental ethic that says that all of these species have a right to co-exist with us on this planet.”

31–37 min. Clip: “A bird’s eye view of the world’s most ancient forest.” This clip discusses efforts to manage forests to retain their productivity and biodiversity. It provides examples of techniques that can be used to accomplish this goal.

38–44 min. Clip: “Why the past might be a sign of the future.” This clip discusses the fact that extinction is normal, but pre-human extinction rates were about one species for every million species yearly, and current rates—with human impact—are 100–1,000 species for every million species yearly. It refers to the situation as biological bankruptcy. It then discusses the five major global extinctions over the past 500 million years, and that the current and sixth extinction is not fueled by natural disasters such as meteors (like the other extinctions). One researcher believes the major problems can be summed up with the acronym, HIPPO, which stands for habitat destruction; introduction of exotic species; pollution; population growth; and over-consumption far beyond basic needs.

45–48 min. The video emphasizes that humans depend on a relationship with the natural world. “If we choose to embrace earth as a community to which we belong rather than a commodity belonging to us, we might begin to cherish...this natural place we call home,” he concludes.