

UC Santa Barbara

Educational Materials

Title

Dichotomous Key

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Kids in Nature

Dichotomous Key

Classification	If yes, go to	If no, go to
1 a) Is it a plant?	2	1b
b) Is it an animal?	4	2
2 a) Does it look like a grass?	3	2b
b) Does it have a yellow flower?	Gumplant	2c
c) Is it fleshy (succulent)?	Pickleweed	3
3 a) Does it have crystals on the leaves?	Saltgrass	3b
b) Does it have a triangular stem and grow in or near water?	California Bulrush	
4 a) Does it have fur?	5	4b
b) Does it have something other than fur?	6	5
5 a) Does it have a short white tail and hop?	Brush Rabbit	5b
b) Does it howl at night?	Coyote	5c
c) Is it small with dark brown fur, whiskers and a pink and brown tail?	Saltmarsh Harvest Mouse	5d
d) Does it have a black and white striped coat?	Striped Skunk	5e
e) Does it have gray fur and the ability to climb trees?	Gray Fox	
6 a) Does it have feathers?	7	6b
b) Does it have something other than feathers?	8	7
7 a) Does it have a black body with red wing flecks?	Red-winged Blackbird	7b
b) Does it have a bald red head and dark feathers?	Turkey Vulture	7c
c) Is it a large wading bird with bluish-gray feathers?	Great Blue Heron	7d

Kids in Nature

Dichotomous Key

Classification	If yes, go to	If no, go to
d) Does it have white tail feathers and hover when looking for prey?	White-tailed Kite	7e
e) Is it a large bird with rust colored feathers under its wings, tail and body?	Red-shouldered Hawk	7f
f) Is it a small bird with a dark back and light under feathers?	Belding's Savannah Sparrow	
8 a) Does it have scales?	9	8b
b) Does it have something other than scales?	10	9
9 a) Does it have 4 legs, and blue flecks on its back?	Western Fence Lizard	9b
b) Does it have 4 legs and look like an alligator?	Southern Alligator Lizard	9c
c) Does it have a long tail, no legs and no eyelids?	Gopher Snake	
10 a) Does it have 6 legs and 3 body parts?	11	10b
b) Does it jump and croak?	Pacific Tree Frog	
11 a) Does it have red wing coverings with black spots?	Ladybug	11b
b) Does it have a yellow and black body and look like a bee?	Hoverfly	11c
c) Does it have a bright green metallic body?	"Native Bee"	11d
d) Does it have a quick darting flight habit and orangy-brown wings?	Skipper Butterfly	