



## NYSDEC Environmental Education

### Hot Hamsters

**Overview:** Students will rely on their knowledge of mammals to engage in an activity like “hot potato”

**Subjects:** Science

**Grades:** 1-4

**Length:** Quick

**Materials:**

- Timer
- Space to sit in a circle

**Procedure:**

1. Have students sit in a circle and set a timer to 30-45 seconds. You may want to alter this time depending on the size of your class.
2. Begin to pass the timer around the circle. When a student is holding the timer, he or she must name a mammal and pass it to the next student.
3. If students name an animal other than a mammal, have them keep trying until they can name a mammal. When the timer goes off, the person holding the timer is out. That person gets to choose who starts passing the timer in the next round. The instructor should write down the non-mammals that are stated. The class can revisit them at the end of the game and explain why they are not mammals.
4. If a student names an animal that the teacher isn't sure about, it should be counted as correct, written on the board and checked for accuracy when the game is over.
5. Repeat until there is one student left. That person is the “Mammal Champion.”

**Extension:**

1. Repeat this activity for all five classes of vertebrates: Fish, Amphibians, Reptiles, Birds, and Mammals.