Ecology: Move Like an Animal

Introduction
- Ask your student: What are some animals that live in Colorado? Examples include...
  - Mammals: Bighorn sheep, black bear, deer, mountain lion, elk, rabbit, etc.
  - Birds: Lark bunting, magpie, red tailed hawk, cormorant, snowy egret, Stellar’s Jay, etc.
  - Reptiles: Western Painted Turtle, snake, lizard
  - Fish: Greenback Cutthroat Trout, rainbow trout, minnow
  - Bugs: insects (butterfly, praying mantis,
- Clarify that many animals in the zoo do not exist in the wild in Colorado

Game time!
Easiest way to play is on a walk with your student.
1. Have them name a wild animal in Colorado. Ask them questions to get them thinking about how that animal moves. Examples:
   - Is it slow or fast?
   - Big or small?
   - Does it move on all fours?
   - Is it a predator or prey? (Does it hunt or get hunted?)
2. Pick a landmark (like a lightpole) on your path. Challenge them to move like that animal. If they feel silly or are hesitant, do it along with them! You won’t be mad about it.

Variation with multiple students:
- Set up two boundary lines in an open area. The goal is for students to move from one line to the other without being caught by you (the predator animal)
- Have students take turns choosing Colorado animals. When they pick one, ask them what animal would be its predator? (Examples: rabbits may have to watch out for snakes, birds of prey, fox, mountain lion, etc. Fish may have to watch out for a black bear or a bird.)
  - Eyes in the front= ready to hunt; Eyes on the side= ready to hide
- Frontload:
  - Light tagging
  - Fast walking/slow running