

## 635-1900 (60-215) Choice Chamber



**Introduction:** Whether driven by primal instincts or abstract thought, all animals will display preferences. These may be for habitats, mates, food, and in interactions with other creatures. For example, finches prefer to nest in trees, shun carrion, and will flee when humans approach.

Observing animal behavior can be difficult in a classroom, not least because there are no wild animals present! However, with our economical choice chamber it is possible to study the behavior of small arthropods.

**Operation:** The choice chamber consists of two pans separated by a passageway. Two escape proof lids are included; these can be removed individually.

We recommend using terrestrial isopods for the choice chamber, such as woodlice or ‘pillbugs’. These are abundant, easy to obtain, and have simple needs that quickly manifest themselves. These creatures eat rotting wood, and prefer to live in it. They are afraid of light and of being exposed. They will quickly scatter if a shadow moves over them, because this may signal an approaching bird.

Try filling one side of the choice chamber with sand and the other with dead leaves. The isopods will quickly move into the leafed area. Or, try leaving both chambers empty, but covering one and brightly illuminating the other. The isopods will flee from the light and hide in the dark. Keeping one chamber dry and the other moist will also have an effect; isopods need to be kept wet.

Other arrangements may work as well. Have your students come up with other ideas and see how the woodlice react. This can make a good group project. When you have finished with the animals, they can be released back into the wild or simply discarded.

### **Warranty and Parts:**

We replace all defective or missing parts free of charge. Additional replacement parts may be ordered toll-free. We accept MasterCard, Visa, checks and School P.O.s. All products warranted to be free from defect for 90 days. Does not apply to accident, misuse or normal wear and tear. Intended for children 13 years of age and up. This item is not a toy. It may contain small parts that can be choking hazards. Adult supervision is required.