



Environmental Education Program Guide

At Wolf Creek Environmental Center, children can discover the wonder of nature, and learning can become an adventure.



It has been proven that direct experiences in nature facilitate better long-term science learning. Nature-based learning experiences help engage the scientific mind and provide a framework on which individuals can build upon. A stronger scientific understanding and appreciation of the natural world can be fostered by providing these types of experiences throughout a child's school years. The drive to understand and explain why natural phenomena occur can endure throughout adulthood.



Medina County Park District's environmental education curriculum is designed to meet criteria outlined in the content themes for science under the Ohio Content Standards for Education. The park district's dedicated team of naturalists will help enhance your curricular classroom studies with practical applications in the natural environment.



Scheduling Information:

To schedule a school program, please call 330-722-9364 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday – Friday.



Plan ahead. A **minimum** of four weeks' advance notice is required for reservations, but popular months (October, April, and May) fill early.

Programs are offered Tuesday - through Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., at Wolf Creek Environmental Center.

Group size is generally limited to 60. Larger groups may be accommodated with advanced notice if staffing permits. Once on site, students will be divided into smaller groups for the best low student-to-naturalist ratio.



Programs are free for Medina County schools/groups. Out-of-county schools/groups are invited to inquire about program fees and availability.

When calling for reservations, please be prepared to provide:

- Program choice
- School/group name, grade, and number of students/adults
- School address and phone number
- Name, address, and phone number of contact person
- Preferred date/time and alternate date/time
- Special requirements or needs

Confirmation of your reservation and specific details about selected programs will be sent to the contact person.

SPECIAL REQUESTS: If the program offerings listed do not meet your exact educational objectives, please call to discuss modifications or specific needs that can be addressed with sufficient notice.



Other Important Information:



- Please call if you are unable to keep your scheduled reservation.
- Programs are held rain, snow, or shine as scheduled. If being outdoors is not possible due to unsafe conditions, the program will be adapted with indoor activities.
- Please ensure all children are dressed appropriately for hiking and outdoor activities including proper footwear.
- Picnic tables outside the facility are available for your use for lunch. If weather is inclement, an indoor space for lunch will be provided.
- Collecting of any kind is not permitted at Wolf Creek Environmental Center or on any other park district properties.
- Teachers are expected to address any discipline issues that arise.
- Students are not permitted to bring cell phones or cameras to the programs.
- Teachers should bring at least 1 adult per 15 students as chaperones.



A minimum of four weeks' advance notice is required to schedule a program, but don't wait too long – the schedule fills up quickly.

Call 330-722-9364 to reserve your class program today!



Connecting Children and Nature

Transportation Assistance Grant Program



Friends of Medina County Parks, Inc., a 501 (C)3 supporting organization of Medina County Park District, is offering a grant program to provide transportation cost assistance to school groups wishing to

travel to Wolf Creek Environmental Center for field studies. Grants are offered to applicants on a first-come, first-served basis.

During the regular school year, all Medina County school groups in grades 2 through 12 are eligible to apply. Grant monies are limited to actual busing costs up to \$150 per bus.

Once you have scheduled a program with the park office, you can request a grant application. Individual applications for each program date in which funds are being requested must be filled out completely and signed by the school principal. Grant applications must be received within four weeks of scheduling a field study date and must be approved prior to your attendance. Applications with incomplete or incorrect information will be immediately denied. Grant checks (not to exceed \$150 per bus) will be mailed after the scheduled program has taken place and an invoice has been issued by the school for payment.

For questions about field trip funding, to schedule a program, and to obtain a grant application, please call 330-722-9364.



PRE-K Kindergarten

Programs are one hour in length and offered in the morning or afternoon year-round.

Seasonal Discoveries

Through observation of living things in their unique natural environments, students will gain understanding of the interrelationships and adaptations that allow these living things to survive throughout the changing seasons. *Outdoor program*

What's Wild?

Nature provides wild animals with everything they need to survive without human intervention. Students will learn about the differences between wild animals and pets and discover why wild animals do not make good pets. *Indoor/outdoor program; may include live animals*

SENSE-ational Hike

Let's look, listen, feel, and hear what is happening all around us as we enjoy the great outdoors! Students will learn how animals use their senses to live in their environments. *Outdoor program*

Grades 1-6

Programs are approximately three hours in total length. The morning portion of the program focuses on meeting core standard criteria through a variety of lessons and activities. After lunch, groups are taken on an outdoor hike for practical applications and exploration of ecosystems. Unless noted, programs are offered year-round.

Grade 1

Focus on Food Chains

Where do living things get their energy? Why do animals live in certain types of habitats? Students will explore these habitats and discover how animals and plants depend on one another to survive.

Birds of a Feather

Students will discover the physical needs of several common birds of Ohio through this interactive program about avian survival and the unique traits that allow the birds to best live and thrive within their different habitats.

Grade 2

Fossil Adaptations

Who wouldn't like to hold a 350-million-year-old fossil in his/her hands? Students will investigate the process of fossilization, fossil animals, and some of the adaptations that helped them survive (and caused them to become extinct). The group will then take a hike to explore some of the characteristics of modern animals that enable them to thrive in their environments.

Eco-interactions

Plants and animals impact the environment in a variety of ways. Students will explore some of these eco-interactions through hands-on activities and search for evidence of them on a hike.

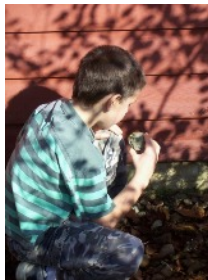
Grade 3

Life Cycles

All living organisms have unique *life cycles*. Students will learn about the life cycles of different animal groups. We will focus on a seasonally relevant animal during the hike.

Earth's Foundations

Rocks are the building blocks of the Earth, and soil is the foundation for all life. Students will investigate the different processes that occur to form various rocks and the unique characteristic of rocks that allow them to be sorted and classified. Students will also learn about soil composition and the measurable, observable characteristics of soil.



Grade 4

Shape of the Earth

Many forces contribute to Earth's changing landscapes. Students will learn about how weathering, erosion, and deposition shapes rocks and the Earth. The group will go on a hike to find evidence of these forces in action.

Nature Adapts

Organisms are dependent upon their environments. Changes in an organism's environment are sometimes beneficial to its survival and sometimes harmful. Through hands-on activities, students will look at how animals have adapted to changes prehistorically and in modern day.

Grade 5

Aquatic Ecosystems

WCEC's aquatic ecosystems are teeming with life! Students will investigate several aquatic ecosystems by conducting studies in search of macroscopic insects, tadpoles, fish, and other aquatic life, and examining microscopic life using microscopes. *Only Available April - October*

Terrestrial Ecosystems

Students will explore various terrestrial environments and conduct seasonally relevant, hands-on field investigations of life in these ecosystems, including observing and discussing lifecycles, predator prey relationships, and the many other interrelationships of organisms.

Grade 6

Rocks and Minerals

Students will discover the basics of geology through this hands-on, interactive program. We will study rock and mineral identification and explore various examples of erosion and weathering as we hike the trails.

Other programs

The following programs can be offered to grades 1-6 and will meet some core content criteria. Offered year round, these programs are shorter in duration and are good choices if your group has limited time or is looking for some quality investigative time outdoors.

Feathers, Fur, Scales, and Skin

Indoor program; one hour in length

With help from a few live animal ambassadors and hands-on objects, students will learn the many fascinating and unique characteristics of different animals, how they use these characteristics for survival, and how they compare to humans.



General Nature Hike

Outdoor program; one and a half hours in length

Medina County Park District sites offer limitless educational opportunities. While on the hike, a naturalist will help students look for plants and animals and share interesting facts about Ohio's wildlife.