

field trips

Our Mission: To be a guiding example of restoration and environmental education which inspires exploration, cultivates stewardship, and encourages empathy towards nature.

For Budding Naturalists:



Tour of Animal Homes

Seasons offered: Year-round
Suggested grade level: K5+

■ This is our most standard program, a true introduction to Mequon Nature Preserve. The focus of this lesson is on the restoration of land and the creation of habitats. Students are taken on a 1.5-mile hike through MNP's wetlands, prairies, and forests, learning about the similarities and differences of these habitats.

DCI* Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3, 1-LS1-1, 1-LS1-2, 1-LS3-1, 2-ESS2-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS3-2, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS1-1, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS2-5, HS-LS4-4.

Nature Scavenger Hunt

Seasons offered: Year-round
Suggested grade level: K5-2

■ Students have the opportunity to hike the land and search for seasonally relevant animals, plants, and other natural features seen on MNP's grounds. More chaperones are recommended and welcomed for this trip to assist students with their lists while on the trail.

DCI Standards: K-ESS2-2, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1.



Where Do They Go in the Winter?

Seasons offered: Winter
Suggested grade level: 2-6

■ Even during our cold Wisconsin winters there is evidence of animal activity at MNP. Students will learn about the different responses our native species have when the thermometer starts to drop, such as migration, hibernation, and roughing out the cold. Animal tracks, scat, and signs of feeding will be given attention during this hike.

DCI Standards: 2-LS4-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-PS3-1, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-1.



Creepy Crawly Critters

Seasons offered: Summer-Fall
Suggested grade level: 2-4

■ Hidden among the leaf litter and logs are millions of tiny organisms. Students will hike to one of our woodlots and search the forest floor to find them! Critters will be collected, identified, and sketched by students.

DCI Standards: 2-LS4-1, 2-ESS2-1, 3-LS2-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS3-2.



For Avian Appreciators:



Birding 101

Seasons offered: Spring-Fall
Suggested grade level: 2-12

■ Since its inception, Mequon Nature Preserve has seen 209 different bird species on the premises. Armed with binoculars and a species checklist, students will hike the land in search of a diverse range of bird species. A quick indoor lesson will cover the season's "most likely" species, before setting out through three different habitat types!

DCI Standards: 2-LS2-2, 3-LS2-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-PS3-1, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS4-2, HS-LS4-4.

Adaptations of Owls

Seasons offered: Year-round
Suggested grade level: 1-8

■ Even among the variety of bird species worldwide, owls have some of the most unique adaptations. An indoor lesson will cover the incredible physical and behavioral specialties of owls, their different calls, and how they feed. This lesson culminates with a dissection of real owl pellets! An outdoor hike will take the group to a forest that hosts resident great horned owls.

DCI Standards: 1-LS1-1, 1-LS1-2, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-PS3-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS2-5, MS-LS4-6.



* DCI: **Disciplinary Core Idea**, the fundamental ideas that are necessary for understanding a given science discipline.



For the Tree Huggers:



The Prairies and Wetlands:



All About Trees

Seasons offered: Spring-Fall
Suggested grade level: K5-12

■ Roots, trunks, and leaves...oh my! This lesson covers shape and function of the basic parts of a tree. Students will also learn five native trees common to southeastern Wisconsin and the services they provide to their ecosystem. Elementary learners will create a leaf/bark rub booklet, older groups may help remove invasive buckthorn, plant trees, or spread seed/acorns. Seasonality affects activities available.

DCI Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, 1-LS1-1, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1, MS-LS1-6, MS-LS1-7, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS2-5, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS1-5, MS-LS4-1, MS-LS4-2, HS-LS1-5, HS-LS2-4, HS-LS2-5, HS-LS2-6.



Forest Floor Recycling

Seasons offered: Spring-Fall
Suggested grade level: 4-8

■ Worms, fungi, centipedes, beetles, and plants all work to keep nutrients moving through their ecosystem. Students will observe above and below the forest floor to determine this habitat's continuous nutrient cycling.

DCI Standards: 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-PS3-1, 5-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1, MS-LS1-6, MS-LS1-7, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4.

Maple Sugaring

Seasons offered: Late February-March
Suggested grade level: K5-12

■ Only offered during maple tapping season, MNP staff will give your class the full rundown on where real maple syrup comes from. Students will learn of traditional origin stories, what trees can be tapped, how sap is collected, and finally boiled down into a breakfast must have. Your trip will also include tapping a sugar maple on site, and depending on our syrup stocks, taste real MNP produced maple syrup.

DCI Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS3-1, 1-LS1-1, 1-LS3-1, 2-PS1-4, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1, MS-LS1-6, MS-LS1-7, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-5, MS-LS1-5, MS-LS4-1, MS-LS4-2, HS-LS1-5, HS-LS2-4, HS-LS2-5, HS-LS2-6.

Insects in the Prairie

Seasons offered: Summer-Fall
Suggested grade level: 3-9

■ Insects are the unsung heroes that keep the soil moving, nutrients recycling, and flowers pollinated. In this lesson students will learn about various orders of insects by catching, identifying, and releasing them in our prairies.

DCI Standards: 3-LS4-3, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-LS2-1, MS-LS1-6, MS-LS1-8, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS2-5, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS4-2, HS-LS2-5, HS-LS2-6, HS-LS2-8.

To Schedule a Field Trip:

Field trips are scheduled Monday-Friday.

Pond Animals Indicate Water Health

Seasons offered: Spring-Fall
Suggested grade level: 3-12

■ Hidden in the muck and submerged plants of MNP's wetlands are a variety of different invertebrates, amphibians, and fish. As students collect and identify pond life, the observed diversity can be a good indicator of our habitat quality.

DCI Standards: 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-LS1-1, MS-LS1-6, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS1-5, HS-LS1-5, HS-LS2-4, HS-LS2-5, HS-LS2-6, HS-LS4-1.

■ Please contact Marianne before registering online to check for date availability. moconnor@mequonnaturepreserve.org

Food Chains in the Wetlands

Seasons offered: Spring-Fall
Suggested grade level: 4-9

■ The struggle to gather food and avoid predators often goes unnoticed in a pond. Under the surface producers, herbivores, and carnivores are constantly competing to survive, grow, and reproduce. Let's capture, identify, and organize pond critters into a wetland food web!

DCI Standards: 4-LS1-2, 4-LS1-2, 5-PS3-1, 5-LS2-1, MS-LS1-6, MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS1-5, HS-LS1-5, HS-LS2-4, HS-LS2-5, HS-LS2-6, HS-LS2-8.

■ Recommended student count: Minimum 10, Maximum 60. If higher, we can still accommodate, but contact Marianne before filling out online form.

Understanding Amphibians

Seasons offered: Spring-Fall
Suggested grade level: 3-6

■ Get to know native frog and salamander species through our amphibian lesson! Learn about frog anatomy, adaptations, food sources, reproduction, and calls. While in the field we'll look and listen for the eight amphibian species that call MNP home!

DCI Standards: 3-LS2-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-PS3-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS2-2, MS-LS2-5, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS1-5, MS-LS3-1, MS-LS4-4.

■ If you are a city of Milwaukee school in need of assistance funding transportation to MNP, ask Marianne about our bus scholarship.

