



# Field Trips and Nature Programs for the Classroom and Beyond

**Bowling Green Parks and Recreation**

Wintergarden/St. John's Nature Preserve



Photo by Sherri Doust

All programs free of out-of-pocket fees!

- Supplement your curriculum with a focus on local natural history!
- Complement your classroom instruction with hands-on outdoor activities!
- Bring to life the Ohio science and social studies academic content standards!

Call the  
Rotary Nature Center at  
419-353-0301  
to schedule a program!



[www.bgohio.org](http://www.bgohio.org)



## Field Trips

### General Exploration Hikes

Join our staff naturalists for a tour of the nature preserve to study and learn about the plants and animals that call this area home.

Choose any of the following seasonal themes for your hike:

- Local birds, mammals, amphibians & reptiles, insects, trees, flowers
- Plant and animal classification, life histories, biodiversity, and basic ecological concepts

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Develop an appreciation for nature and local wildlife
- Utilize a variety of senses to develop observation skills
- Be encouraged to ask questions about the world around them

*Available:* Any season

*Grades:* This program can be adapted for all ages, Pre-K to adult

### Northwest Ohio Natural History

The naturalist staff will use the preserve as a backdrop to explore local natural history, science and social studies topics. Choose from a variety of themes such as:

- Native ecosystems: Black Swamp, oak savannas, prairies and the geologic processes that helped to create them, and our watershed
- Human impact: settlement, technology, agricultural heritage, Native American and pioneer lifestyles
- Food webs, the “food, shelter, water, space” relationship, predator/prey interactions, animal and human population issues, invasive species, endangered species, adaptations, the water cycle, prescribed fire, and succession

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Understand the significance of the nature preserve in relation to the history and landscape of northwest Ohio

*Available:* Any season

*Grades:* This program can be adapted for all ages, Pre-K to adult

**To schedule a program call 419-353-0301**



## Additional Information

- All programs 1 hour unless otherwise noted
- Make a day of it! Pick several programs and have the students pack a lunch!
- Spend half the day at the preserve and the other half at the Wood County Historical Center & Museum fulfilling history education requirements [www.woodcountyhistory.org](http://www.woodcountyhistory.org)

Field trip behavior expectations...

Prior to your field trip please address behavior expectations with your students.

Explain to your students that just as there are rules in the classroom, there are also rules for exploring outside. These rules are designed to promote safety for the students and respect for the plants and animals of the park. The naturalists will discuss the rules for the hike prior to departure.

Pre/post field trip activity ideas...

- Journal writing, poetry, create a field guide, magazine, or book (try an alphabet book)
- Research and draw a local plant or animal, create a photo essay
- Draw map of the school grounds, the student's backyard, neighborhood, a special place, or enlarge a map on a parking lot
- Invent an animal with adaptations to live in the schoolyard
- Make bird feeders

Items available for check out include..

- Books, tracking stamps or molds, seed and leaf identification kits, rock identification kits, insect nets and containers

## Natural Resources Staff

### Chris Gajewicz

Chris is a graduate of Hocking College with his Associate of Applied Science in Natural Resources Interpretation and Bowling Green State University with his undergraduate degree in Outdoor Recreation and his graduate degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies. His areas of interest include birding, aquatic life, especially those species that have to do with fly fishing, and teaching others about the natural world around them.

### Mike Przysiecki

Mike graduated from BGSU with an undergraduate degree in Environmental Science. He is also a graduate of Tom Brown's Tracking, Nature and Wilderness Survival School. He enjoys all aspects of outdoor recreation and teaching an appreciation for the outdoor world.

### Cinda Stutzman

Cinda graduated from BGSU with an undergraduate degree in Biology and Environmental Science and a graduate degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies. She enjoys studying the plant diversity found in local prairies and savannas, and sharing her enthusiasm for the wonders of nature with young children.

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## Power Point Presentations

These presentations can be conducted as part of a field trip, a pre-field trip activity or as a stand alone program at your location.

### **Oak Savanna and Prairie Restoration at the Wintergarden/St. John's Nature Preserve**

Enjoy a virtual tour of the preserve and learn about the restoration activities being conducted on site.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Understand the significance of the nature preserve in relation to the history and landscape of northwest Ohio
- Learn about the various methods being used to restore these habitats
- Understand basic concepts of plant and fire ecology
- Learn about the life history of local plants and animals

*Available:* September through May

*Grades:* Jr. High, High School, College Students and adult civic organizations



### **Birds**

Our experienced staff members will introduce local and migratory birds to your group through the use of photos, hands-on learning materials and power point presentations.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Explore identification methods for birds common to our area
- Learn about the life history of local birds
- Identify characteristics that make birds unique animals
- Examine movement patterns of migratory birds

*Available:* September through May

*Grades:* Jr. High, High School, College Students and adult civic organizations

**To schedule a program call 419-353-0301**

## Field Trips

### **Wetland Study**

Get up close with the plants, animals and soil of our seasonal wetland. Hands-on activities include collecting and identifying macro-invertebrates and tadpoles. Older students can test water quality.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Understand the ecological value and functions of wetlands
- Be able to identify several wetland plant and animal species
- Be able to describe different types of wetlands

*Available:* May and June

*Grades:* This program can be adapted for all ages, Pre-K to adult

### **Survival Skills and Living History**

Come learn a few basic survival skills that you can use the next time you go camping or hiking. This program is designed to give students a greater appreciation of our natural world by enhancing "awareness" and kinship with nature. This is usually a 2-3 hour program, depending on the group.



*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Learn how to look and listen to their surroundings
- Learn about the "Sacred Order:"  
Shelter-Water-Fire-Food
- Practice shelter and fire building in a controlled environment

*Available:* spring and fall

*Grades:* 4<sup>th</sup> to adult

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## Field Trips

### Orienteering and GPS

Being lost in a strange place can be a scary experience. A few basic skills can go a long way if you ever find yourself alone in the wilderness, or just out for a day hike.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Learn how to read a compass and topographic map
- Receive basic instruction on GPS navigation
- Learn how to orient themselves without modern tools

*Available:* spring and fall

*Grades:* 4<sup>th</sup> to adult

### Service Learning Projects

Assist our naturalists with land stewardship activities such as seed collecting, cleaning or planting, the planting of transplants, or removing weeds that compete with desirable plant species.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Experience the value of contributing to a community effort to restore habitat
- Learn about the life history of local plants and animals

*Available:* spring and fall

*Grades:* 3<sup>rd</sup> to adult

### Experiments

Utilize the nature preserve to collect data for analysis. These programs generally take 1.5-2 hours or require a pre-field trip visit to your classroom. Possibilities include:

- Plant diversity in a variety of habitats, plant population and tree height estimates
- Germination studies (relating concepts of plant population dynamics, invasive species, endangered species, adaptations)

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Learn about the life history of local plants and animals
- Develop observation and math skills
- Be encouraged to ask questions about the world around them

*Available:* spring and fall

*Grades:* 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>

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To schedule a program call 419-353-0301



## Outreach Programs

### Show and Tell

These nature programs travel to your pre-school or daycare for 20-minute sessions for 8-12 students per session. A winter story will be followed by an interactive learning session about local wildlife. Choose from...

- Winter adaptations with hands-on items including skulls, furs and wings
- Animal tracks and scat with a hands-on project. Choose from a track stamping book or plaster-of-paris replicas

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Develop an appreciation for local wildlife
- Utilize a variety of senses to develop observation skills
- Be encouraged to ask questions about the world around them

*Available:* December-February

*Grades:* Pre-K

### Neighborhood Nature Hikes

Nature is everywhere! One of our naturalists will come to you and help you to explore the neighborhood around your school for signs of urban wildlife. Insects and tree leaves are good topics for these as well as most of the General Exploration Hike topics.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Develop an appreciation for nature and local wildlife
- Utilize a variety of senses to develop observation skills
- Be encouraged to ask questions about the world around them

*Available:* Spring and Fall

*Grades:* This program can be adapted for all ages, Pre-K to adult

### Human Population Simulation

This hands-on activity will visually simulate for your students how population and resource use throughout the world impact people's quality of life.

*Learning Objectives:* Participants will...

- Understand terms related to population demographics
- Understand the relationship between human population, distribution of resources, wealth and energy use.
- Be able to define "quality of life"

*Available:* December-February

*Grades:* Jr. High, High School and College Students

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