

TROUT LAKE NATURE CENTER ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

The mission of Trout Lake Nature Center is to instill a knowledge and appreciation of the natural world and to teach stewardship of the environment. Our nature center has been bringing this message to the Lake County community for over ten years and, in particular, to the children of Lake County.

We have an extensive list of programs available to public, private and home-schooled children. In 1999, through an Eisenhower Grant, seven Lake County science teachers formalized the curriculum and coordinated it with the Sunshine State Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Expectations. Our Education Committee, under the guidance of Trina Raether, Vice President in charge of the Education Programs, is constantly working to enhance and improve the programs that we provide to our schools.

We have also developed specialized lessons that can be utilized for a variety of groups. These fun but educational programs can be adapted for use by scout troops, 4-H groups, Boys and Girls Clubs, and even special events like birthday parties.



Do you know how much food one Florida black bear needs to survive? Do you know how much water is contained in the human body? Would you like to make a tree cookie, or a pine cone bird feeder? And we have lots of environmental games to choose from. Each program has a variety of activities, some with crafts, some with games, but all of them fun and informative. Join us soon and discover the wonders of nature.



Trout Lake Nature Center offers a wide variety of curriculum options. We have our regular curriculum designed to meet the needs of Lake County's public school students. They have all been correlated to the Florida Sunshine State Standards and are grade specific. If you are an ESE teacher you may pick and choose from the curriculum choices to best meet the needs of your students. If you have specific questions about the curriculum, please contact us.

Trout Lake Nature Center Field Trip Curriculum K – 2 Grade Level Activity List

Please remember, activities or example organisms may be changed due to weather or seasons, but the concept will remain the same.

HABITATS (especially good for 3rd grade and younger but works for all ages)

Activity 1 – Wetland Metaphors – Students use everyday objects to remind them that wildlife meet their needs for food and shelter in these wetlands.

Activity 2 – The Thicket Game – Students become “predator” or “prey” and use their senses to find food or avoid being food in this version of hide and seek.

Activity 3 – Too Close for Comfort – Students read how a fictional animal reacts to humans in its habitat, and then discover how real animals would react to that stress.

Activity 4 – Wildlife is Everywhere – Students search for evidence of wildlife.

PLANTS/TREES (especially good for 3rd grade and younger but works for all ages)

Activity 1 – Tree Lifecycles – Students determine that trees are living things, with the same basic needs as other living things; compare a tree lifecycle with a human life cycle.

Activity 2 – Looking at Leaves – Students discover how trees can be identified using leaf shape, texture, and smell; and then use leaf rubbings to record their discoveries.

Activity 3 – Earth Manners – Students understand appropriate ways to treat living things and how to act in forests, parks, and other natural areas.

Activity 4 – Tree Factory – Students describe the major parts of a tree and explain how those parts help the tree to function.

ANIMALS/BIRDS (all ages)

Activity 1- Bird Needs – Students take a walk, observing the relationship between birds and plants

Activity 2 – Fill the Bill – Students use bird specimens to discover how their body parts, especially their bills are adapted for their food and habitat.

Activity 3 – Birds and Bugs – Students create a hypothesis that well camouflaged bugs will survive, and then test that inference in a role playing game.

Activity 4 – Backyard Habitat – Students make a pine cone bird feeder, then discover other ways birds can meet their needs for food, water, and space in backyards.

**Trout Lake Nature Center
Field Trip Curriculum
3-5 Grade Level Activity List**

Please remember, activities or example organisms may be changed due to weather or seasons, but the concept will remain the same.

ECOSYSTEMS (all ages)

Students assume the role of a native animal for the day; then decide which ecosystem(s) at TLNC will allow the animal to meet its needs and survive.

Activity 1 – Meadow Life – Students explore this sunny area and decide if its soil, water, and plants would meet the needs of their animal. Air and soil temperatures will be recorded.

Activity 2 – Forest and Marsh Life – Students walk the forest and marsh and collect data on the role of sunlight, soil, water, and plants for wildlife in these ecosystems.

Activity 3 – Lake Life – Students dip for small animals at the lake and discuss their role in the food chain.

Activity 4 – Animals in the Museum – Students record information about animals' specialized adaptations, their place in the food chain, and their ecosystem.

WETLAND & UPLAND PLANTS (4th grade and up)

Activity 1 – The Forest Condominium – Students discover how an animal's adaptations reveal its niche in the forest or wetland ecosystem.

Activity 2 – Tree Study – Students learn how tree's cellular process, create food for animals and renewable resources for humans.

Activity 3 – Insect Nurseries – Students observe how insects use plants (Galls, tree bark, & host plants to ensure the survival of their young.

Activity 4 – Land & Aquatic Plants – Students walk the forest to the lake discovering the adaptations of plants which allow them to survive in their ecosystem and meet the needs of wildlife

ANIMALS/ADAPTATIONS (4th grade and up)

Activity 1 – Animal Adaptations – In the museum, using the specimens, students observe and record specific animal adaptations, and hypothesize how these adaptations allow the animals to meet their survival needs in their habitat.

Activity 2 – Animal Tracks and Signs – Students record signs of animal's presence in the ecosystem. Students make an inference about how animals were meeting their needs at TLNC last night.

Activity 3 – Dare to Be Different – Students observe aquatic organisms from tiny one cell organisms seen through a microscope to, macro-invertebrates, to alligators and water birds and hypothesis how these organisms use their adaptations to find food & avoid being food.

Activity 4 – Camouflage – Students observe and discuss various types of animal adaptations which help them survive, such as, camouflage, speed, and "freezing" in place.

Here is a sample of some of our specialized curriculum packets.

BUGGED OUT Spiders and Insects

Activity 1 – Spider Sensations – Volunteer docents share fun bio-facts about spiders and then students play the game Spider Sensations, pretending they are spiders.

Activity 2 – Spider and Insect Hunt – Students explore the Trout Lake Ecosystem and hunt for spiders, spider webs, and the insects they might eat. This includes dipping at the lake to look for fishing spiders.

Activity 3 - Spider Walk Relay Game – This fun active game increases the student’s awareness of animal (particularly spider) adaptations which help them capture their food.

Activity 4 – Museum and spider craft – Students explore the museum and then make a grapevine and yarn “spider web.”



‘THIS WAY TO THE LAKE’



“LET’S SEE WHAT LIVES DOWN THERE”

THE BEAR FACTS

Florida Black Bear Curriculum

Activity 1 - How many bears can live in this forest? Students role play the lives of bears, to learn how bears find their food, the types of food they eat, and important lessons about competition for resources.

Activity 2 - Walk like a bear – During a walk down the trail to the lake children pretend they are Florida Black Bears and look for the things they need for food and shelter.

Activity 3 – Illustrated bears – Students are given “draw a bear” instructions and then asked to draw a Florida Black bear in its ecosystem with the things it needs to survive.

Activity 4 – What makes a bear a bear? Students explore the museum and then participate in a guided discovery activity looking at bear and other animal skulls, a bear skin, and a poster skeleton bear to understand how the bear is designed to survive.

WATER WORLD

Activity 1 – Exploring Trout Lake – Students walk the boardwalk over the marsh to the lake. At the lake they use the dip nets to observe aquatic animals close up.

Activity 2 – The Long Haul – Students participate in a water relay to help them understand some of the reasons modern people use much more water in their daily lives than people used in the past.

Activity 3 – Aqua Bodies – Students explore some familiar objects (grapes/raisins, live frog/dehydrated frog) to increase their awareness of the role of water in life. Students participate in activities which illustrate how much water is in their own bodies.

Activity 4 – Museum and Water Address Game – Students explore the museum and then divide into teams to guess plant’s and animal’s “Water Address.”



START OF A RELAY RACE

BIRDS AND FROGS – DO THEY BOTH EAT BUGS?



MAKING BIRD FEEDERS



If your group would like to participate in any of these special activities, call Trout Lake Nature Center at 352-357-7536 to reserve a date and time.