

# Field Trip Guide to the Pine River Nature Center

## Exciting opportunities await you at the Pine River Nature Center

We look forward to meeting your class at the Pine River Nature Center. Our goal is to introduce your students to the natural world through hands-on science investigations.

### Location

The Pine River Nature Center is located at 2585 Castor Rd in Goodells, Michigan.

### About Us

The Pine River Nature Center provides programs to enhance local schools' science, mathematics, ecology, and environmental education studies with outdoor-based field studies correlated with state standards. It also provides outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities for all. The nature center is owned and operated by the St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA).

### What's available

All content meets Next Generation Science Standards. Specific content have been correlated with each program and are listed in the program descriptions. Contact the nature center if you would like an individualized program. We will be happy to work with you to tailor a program to fit your curriculum needs. Contact the nature center's operations coordinator, Sarah Nelson, by phone at (810) 364-5477 or by e-mail at [Nelson.Sarah@sccresa.org](mailto:Nelson.Sarah@sccresa.org), for more information.

### Program Times and Length

Full-day field trip times are generally from 9am–1:30pm. Half-day field trips run from 9am-11:30am. Field trip times can be adjusted to accommodate your school's transportation schedule. Let us know the timing that works best for you and we will modify the schedule as needed.

### Cost

Field trips are offered at no charge to public schools located in St. Clair County. The cost for private schools and schools outside of St. Clair County is \$5/student or \$100/classroom. Transportation costs are the responsibility of the school.

## Scheduling your field trip

1. Contact the nature center to reserve a date and time by phone at (810) 364-5477 or e-mail Sarah Nelson at Nelson.Sarah@sccresa.org.
2. Fill out the online School Program Reservation Form, which is available from Sarah Nelson.
3. Save or print a copy of the confirmation email for your records.

## Managing your field trip

### Facilities

Two classrooms and a wet lab are used for field trips. The nature center also offers interpretive displays on local wildlife. Students can view live turtles and fish. Our center offers a variety of natural items to look at including turtle shells, animal skulls and furs and more. Displays can be viewed during lunch with chaperones.

### Restrooms

Restrooms are located in the nature center building on the first and second floors.

### Lunch

Classes are encouraged to bring a lunch to eat after, or during their field trip. Students are able to eat lunch in the basement classroom or outside. There are picnic tables located on the back deck as well as in the front of the center.

### How to dress and what to bring

Please have students and chaperones dress for the weather. Programs will be outdoors even in the rain. Alternative activities will be arranged for inclement weather conditions, such as a thunderstorm. If rain is in the forecast, remember an umbrella, raincoat, and rain boots. Wear old shoes or boots when visiting. Trails can be muddy or snowy depending on the season. Open toe shoes are not recommended for the trails. Long pants are recommended depending on temperature and season. Insect repellent is recommended at certain times of the year, but at the discretion of the school. Aquatic field trips require students to bring an extra pair of waterproof shoes or rubber boots.

### Supervision

Students must have adult supervision at all times. Due to limited space in the center and limited parking, please plan to have only 6 chaperones attend with each class. Because of limited staffing at the nature center, chaperones are expected to participate in the field trip through

helping students in activities and enforcing nature center rules. Please review the rules with chaperones before your trip and advise them to play an active role in enforcing them.

## Field trip rules

Please review the rules for the nature center with your students and chaperones before your visit. Stay on the trails unless otherwise directed, this helps to protect plant and animal life at the nature center. It also avoids chance encounters with poison ivy and ticks.

1. Students are expected to walk on and stay on the trails.
2. Students must stay behind the leader during hikes.
3. Listening skills are important. Students must pay attention to lessons and directions for activities during the field trip.
4. Take nothing from nature. Unless otherwise directed, all flowers, leaves, rocks, and animals are protected and must remain where they are found. Some items may be collected during field trips, however everything that is collected will be returned to nature.

## Current Programs

### Preschool

#### Autumn Adventure

Preschoolers will enjoy this interactive program celebrating the fall season. Activities include: the story, Squirrel's Fall Search; a leaf hunt in the woods; exploring leaf shapes and a fun take-home craft.

Season: Fall

Length: 2 hours with outdoor hike

#### Eyes on Owls

Screech, Saw-whet and Great Horned are all names of Michigan owls. From tall to small, preschoolers will explore and learn different facts about owls. Activities include: learning that owls sound different, how owls eat, a fun take-home craft and a hike in the woods.

Season: Fall, Winter and Spring

Length: 2 hours with outdoor hike

#### Big Black Bear

Preschoolers will enjoy this hands-on program all about bears and what they eat. Activities include: reading a story, Bear Snores On; learning what bears eat; scavenging like a bear; a fun take-home craft and a hike in the woods.

Season: Spring

Length: 2 hours with outdoor hike

## Interesting Insects

Preschoolers will find insects very interesting after this interactive program. Activities include; learning insect characteristics, exploritive centers, and a hike in the woods to find insects.

Season: Spring

Length: 2 hours with outdoor hike

## Woodland Wonders

Preschoolers will explore the world of Jan Brett through the book, The Mitten. Activities include: using fine motor skills to lace a paper mitten, sequencing of animal, and a wintery woodland hike to look for animal tracks.

Season: Winter

Length: 2 hours with outdoor hike

## KINDERGARTEN

### Basic Needs of Animals

Kindergarteners will be excited and engaged in this program. Students will differentiate wants versus needs of an animal, learn what animals need in their habitat and engineer a nest as if they are a bird.

Season: Fall and Spring

NGSS: K-LS1-1., K-2-ETS1-2.

## 1ST GRADE

### Animal Features

First graders will experience a fun-filled, hands-on program as they learn about the structures and functions of animals feet. Students will also explore body coverings of animals and how those body covering help them survive.

Season: Fall and Spring

NGSS: 1-LS1-1.

## 2ND GRADE

### Plants and Seed Investigation

Second graders will enjoy participating in a pollination activity. They will also learn different methods for seed dispersal. Data collection will be used to examine plant diversity in contrasting habitats.

Season: Fall and Spring  
NGSS: 2-LS2-2., 2-LS4-1.

## 3RD GRADE

### Stream Study

Is the Pine River a healthy ecosystem? Find out with this exciting hands-on field trip. Students will learn about benthic macro-invertebrate identification and classification as well as life cycles and invasive species. Waterproof boots are recommended, an extra pair of shoes is required.

Season: Fall and Spring  
NGSS: 3-LS1-1., 3-LS4-3.

## 4TH GRADE

### Plant and Animal Adaptations

Using bird and mammal taxidermy as models, students will identify external physical structures and they help those animals survive. Students will also engineer a creature with an adaptation of their choosing. Plant adaptations will be discussed and students will explore plant parts and functions. An outdoor activity will demonstrate the reason why a maple tree produces so many seeds.

Season: Fall and Spring  
NGSS: 4-LS1-1.

## 5th GRADE

### Ecosystem Exploration

Students will listen to a short presentation before heading into the woods to explore. With this exciting hands-on field trip, students will search for different ecosystems in the nature center's 90 acres of diverse habitats. As a team, students will decipher 10 clues about the different ecosystems at the nature center and the teams to complete all 10 will earn a prize.

Season: Fall and Spring