

Croydon Creek Nature Center

School Programs



Our mission is to promote knowledge, understanding, appreciation and conservation of our natural resources. We enhance this mission through our school programs which incorporate challenging and thought-provoking activities that invigorate students' natural curiosity toward the natural world.

Our school programs align with current Next Generation Science Standards. Don't see a subject you're looking for? Ask us about a custom program to fit the needs of your group.

We welcome groups of all ages and abilities. Contact us for further details on how we can provide meaningful nature experiences for your students!



Field Trips

Field trips at Croydon Creek are 45-60 minutes with both indoor and outdoor elements that provide hands-on, immersive learning experience.

The cost for programs is \$3 per student for schools within Rockville city limits and \$5 per student for those outside city limits. Inquire about discounted pricing for Title I schools.

Animals Up Close

Get up close and personal with some of Croydon Creek's animal ambassadors, and learn about each animal's characteristics and unique adaptations. Explore outside the nature center to discover signs of animals that live in your own backyard!

Grades: Adapted to all ages

Length: 45-60 minutes depending on your group's needs

Habitat Explorers

All living things have the same basic needs: food, water, shelter and space. Through our animal ambassadors, biofacts and outdoor exploration, learn how the animals in the forest, meadow and creek meet their basic needs for survival.

Grades: PreK-K

Length: 45-60 minutes depending on your group's needs

NGSS: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3

Seasons

Young scientists use their observations of local weather to learn about the changing seasons. With animal ambassadors, biofacts and outdoor observations, naturalists help students discover how the change of seasons affects native plants and animals.

Grades: PreK-K

Length: 45-60 minutes depending on your group's needs

NGSS: K-ESS2-1

Budding Botanists

Where do plants come from? Why are they important? Learn all about the form and function of our photosynthesizing friends. Students participate in a flower dissection, record observations in their field journal and journey outside to search for plants in their natural environment.

Grades: 1-2

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 1-LS3-1, 2-LS2-2, 2-LS4-2

Did You Hear That?

Chirp, hiss, whistle and squeak — our world is full of animal sounds! Students discover how sound is created, perceived and used to communicate through hands-on activities and animal ambassador encounters. Using their knowledge, young scientists create their own ear to observe how ear shapes affect sound perception over distance. Time outside is spent listening for, discussing and mapping animal sounds.

Grades: 1-4

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 1-PS4-1, 1-PS4-4, 1-LS1-1, 4-PS3-1, 4-PS3-2, 4-PS4-1

Life Cycle Discoveries

From a tiny insect to a huge oak tree, all living things go through a life cycle. Students meet animal ambassadors while comparing life-cycle stages of native species. Learn how parental care varies between species and design your own cozy nest. Take a hike on the nature center's bluebird trail to learn about bird nesting, and discover how plants and animals have similar life cycles.

Grades: 1-3

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 1-LS1-2, 1-LS3-1, K-2-ETS1-2, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2

Biodiversity Blitz

Croydon Creek critters help young zoologists learn about the diversity of the animal kingdom. Our animal ambassadors allow students to discover the differences between animal groupings and their importance in the ecosystem. Take a walk through various habitats around the nature center while conducting a biodiversity survey and observing wildlife that calls Croydon Creek home.

Grades: 2-3

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 2-LS4-1, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS3-2

Weather the Impact

Weather and climate are two different phenomena with major impacts on our lives. Utilizing weather apps and climate maps, students use their observation skills to gain an understanding of weather patterns and their impact on climate trends. Exploring the differences between what we expect (climate) and what actually happens (weather) students discover ways that both shape our world.

Grade: 3

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 3-ESS2-1, 3-ESS2-2

Survival of the Fittest **NEW**

Animals have developed all sorts of amazing physical and behavioral adaptations for survival. Students meet animal ambassadors as they learn how animals are adapted to survive in a temperate ecosystem. Participate in an owl pellet lab where each student dissects an owl pellet while learning about owl adaptations. Explore the habitats around the nature center and understand how our local wildlife adapts to a changing environment.

Grades: 3-4

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 3-LS2-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 4-LS1-1

Watershed Connections: Creek to Chesapeake

The Chesapeake Bay watershed sustains an amazing array of wildlife. Explore our local watersheds and learn how our creeks, streams and rivers are connected to the bay. Students conduct an experiment to learn the effects of erosion in a watershed and discover the impact of human activity on water quality and aquatic organisms.

Grades: 4-5

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 4-ESS2-1, 3-5-ETS1-2, 4-ESS2-2, 4-ESS3-2, 5-ESS2-1, 5-PS2-1, 3-5-ETS1-2

Go With the (Energy) Flow

Students learn how energy flows through an ecosystem by examining food webs and predator-prey relationships. Participate in an owl pellet lab where each student dissects an owl pellet to determine what it ate. Head outside to see ecosystems in action, learn how species of the forest are interconnected and consider how human actions can disrupt the flow of energy through an ecosystem.

Grades: 5

Length: 90 minutes

NGSS: 5-PS3-1, 5-LS2-1

Outreach Programs

Outreach programs bring nature to your learning space! These lively 30-45-minute presentations are presented in an engaging learning format and feature active learning through live animal demonstrations and hands-on activities.

The fee for these programs is \$150 per visit, plus \$3 per student for groups within Rockville city limits or \$5 per student for groups outside the city limits. Inquire about discounts for Title I schools.

The maximum group size is 30 students per presentation. Multiple presentations may be scheduled for the same day.

Check our website for programs that can be adapted for outreach.

