

Grades K - 2

Half and Full-day Field Trip Options



Overview

It's never too early to learn to see the world like a scientist! Our early elementary school programs aim to connect young students with their environment while tying into relevant science standards. We get students outdoors, observing the world around them, and asking questions about what they see. We also provide ample opportunities for games, reading, and fun.

Half-day (2 hour) and full-day (4 hour) programs are available

Want to learn more? Curious about other programs?

Visit cedarcreek.umn.edu/ed
Contact Caitlin Potter:
caitlin@umn.edu, 612-301-2602



Half-day program options:

Half-day options can also be combined with the Biomes of Minnesota hike to mak a full-day trip.

Biomes of Minnesota

Season: year-round

The Cedar Bog Lake trail is a unique experience that lets students walk through natural representations of all three biomes present in Minnesota before emerging at the shores of Cedar Bog Lake. Deciduous forest, tallgrass prairie and boreal coniferous forest, as well as swamps and a lake – they all contribute to make this a “Walk Across Minnesota!” Depending on the teacher’s goals, students can do this hike as a “color walk”, finding natural items that match paint chips as they traverse the trail, or as a purely observational walk with hand lenses and basic field guides. There are lots of opportunities along the way to stop and ask questions about the different types of nature the students are exploring, as well as some great snack spots! Total distance is ~1 mile.

Sort like a Scientist

Season: year-round

Students observe and/or collect a variety of items from around Cedar Creek and use their observational skills to measure, describe and sort them and to come up with a basic classification scheme (dichotomous key). They then test out their key with a handful of surprise items or a visit to a new area.

Animal Adaptations

Season: year-round

What animals live in Minnesota, and what makes them unique? Through a game, a story and lots of items to touch and explore, students will learn about adaptations our local animals use to make it through to spring. Most of the program will be indoors, but we will be going outside to look for signs of life - dress for the weather!

The Power of Observation

Season: April - November

The most important tool in a scientist's toolkit is their ability to look closely at the world around you. Hone your students' observation skills with a color-based scavenger hunt in nature! We will read a story, then go on a nature hike armed with paint chips and work together to see how many different shades and colors we can find. Once we are expert observers, we'll turn our attention to the plants and animals found around Cedar Creek's main campus building.

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Cedar Creek

Full-day program options:

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One Small Square

Season: April - November

How do we make observations when everything around you is SO INTERESTING? After going on a nature hike and learning how to make observations as a group, we'll gather around a big square: a huge PVC quadrat with room for everyone to peer in. The group naturalist will model how to use scientific equipment like magnifying glasses, rulers, soil corers and thermometers to investigate what's in the big square. Then, pairs or trios of students will get their own "small square": a kid-sized quadrat that sections off the perfect amount of land for little hands and eyes to explore. Armed with their own bag of tools, students will count, measure, draw, collect and get their hands dirty in their squares. We'll come back together as a group to share the most exciting and surprising things from our squares. The day will wrap up with a game of Food Web Tag!

Water Water Everywhere

Season: year-round

Learn about the importance of water to people through a game, an observational hike and a hands-on demo. Students will experience the water cycle through stories and a game of water cycle tag. They will then visit either a wetland or a swamp, and spend some time observing and drawing what they see. They will also get to get their hands wet using our stream table, where a naturalist will demonstrate the way water shapes landscapes through processes like erosion and deposition. Students will be tasked with building houses along the watershed and making real-world engineering decisions related to flood control, development and landscaping.

Leaves and Forests

Season: April - October

Students explore and investigate two of Minnesota's three biomes - the coniferous and deciduous forests. Go on a hike that passes through several forest types, learn how to identify trees, and discuss the importance of trees and forests for humans. Collect a leaf of your own, and then learn how the shape a leaf tells you something about its function as well as the type of tree it came from. Wrap up the day with a leaf art project or a game of forest tag.

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Cedar Creek

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Focus on Food Webs

Season: April – October

Did you know that the first scientist to study how energy moved through food webs worked here at Cedar Creek? Expose your students to Lindeman's legacy through Food Web Tag, a hike out to his research site (~1 mile total), and an investigation of adaptations in either animal skulls or pinned insects.

Animal Adaptations

Season: year-round

What animals live in Minnesota, and what makes them unique? Students will learn how to reconstruct the story of our local wildlife by looking for clues on a nature hike, and will investigate some of the adaptations found in Minnesotan animals. We'll play games, design our own adapted animals, look at skulls and pelts, go tracking and more!

Fees

Full-day field trips are \$330 for a "classroom" of approximately 30 students and at least one teacher/adult chaperone. Half-day programs are \$210 per "classroom". These fees cover the cost of a trained naturalist to guide and teach your group throughout the day, and provide access for your group to areas of the property not open to the public.

If this cost is prohibitive for your school, please get in touch with Caitlin (caitlin@umn.edu) - we are happy to work with you to subsidize the cost of your visit!



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