

MACKENZIE CENTER CLASS OFFERINGS

LODGE GROUPS

Environmental Education & Outdoor Skills

The MacKenzie Center's programs include environmental education and outdoor skills classes. Each program is tailored to the group's needs, grade level, and learning goals. Many of the lessons are flexible and timing can be adjusted. Topics include conservation, ecology, wildlife, forestry, aquatic and water issues, outdoor recreation and skills, team building, and more. If you would like to do something that is not listed here, talk to a MacKenzie Educator, and we will help create a class that fits your group's needs.

Nature Exploration:

Bird Watching
Nature Hikes
Scavenger Hunts
Wisconsin Weather

Sustainability:

Conservation Museum Tour
Invasive Species Service Learning

Wildlife:

How Birds Make a Living
Oh Deer!
Owl Pellets
Predator/Prey Activity
Secrets of the Skull
Sound Off
Tracking and Animal Signs
Wildlife Habitat Area Tour
Wolf/Deer Activity

Water:

Pond Life
Stream Study
Watershed Program

Forestry:

Forestry & Woodcutting
Learn to Make Maple Syrup
Logging Museum Tour
Looking at Leaves
Nature's Recyclers (Decomposers)
Tree Identification

Outdoor Skills Classes:

Archery
Compass Skills 101
Cross-Country Skiing
Fishing Clinic
Geocaching 101
Ice Fishing Clinic
Nature Photography
Shooting Safety & Skills Snowshoeing
Team Building Trail

Survival Skills:

Fire Building
Shelter Building

***bold indicates new class**

Class	Topic	Grade Level	Self-guided Option	Seasonal
Archery	Outdoor Skills	4-12		
Bird Watching	Nature Exploration	K-12	X	
Compass Skills 101	Outdoor Skills	4-12		
Conservation Museum	Sustainability	K-12	X	X
Cross-Country Skiing	Outdoor Skills	4-12		X
Fire Building	Survival Skills	4-12		
Fishing Clinic	Outdoor Skills	4-12		X
Forestry & Woodcutting	Forestry	4-8		
Geocaching 101	Outdoor Skills	4-12		
How Birds Make a Living	Wildlife	4-8		
Ice Fishing Clinic	Outdoor Skills	4-12		X
Invasive Sp. Service-Learning	Sustainability	6-12		X
Learn to Make Maple Syrup	Forestry	4-8		X
Logging Museum Tour	Forestry	K-12	X	X
Looking at Leaves	Forestry	K-3	X	
Nature Hikes	Nature Exploration	K-12	X	
Nature Photography	Outdoor Skills	5-12	X	
Nature's Recyclers	Forestry	K-8	X	
Oh Deer!	Wildlife	4-7	X	
Owl Pellets	Wildlife	5-8	X	
Pond Life	Water	1-7	X	X
Predator/ Prey Activity	Wildlife	4-8	X	
Scavenger Hunts	Nature Exploration	K-12	X	
Secrets of the Skull	Wildlife	5-12	X	
Shelter Building	Survival Skills	4-12		
Shooting Safety & Skills	Outdoor Skills	4-12		
Snowshoeing	Outdoor Skills	4-12		X
Sound Off	Wildlife	4-8	X	
Stream Study	Water	4-8		X
Team Building Trail	Outdoor Skills	K-12		
Tracking & Animal Signs	Wildlife	4-8	X	

Class	Topic	Grade Level	Self-guided Option	Seasonal
Tree Identification	Forestry	6-8		
Watershed Program	Water	4-12		X
Wildlife Exhibit Tour	Wildlife	K-12	X	X
Wisconsin Weather	Nature Exploration	4-7		
Wolf/Deer Activity	Wildlife	4-8	X	

The Wildlife Exhibit, Conservation Museum, and Logging Museum are open 10am- 4:00pm



MACKENZIE CENTER CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

LODGE GROUP

NATURE EXPLORATION

BIRD WATCHING

Grades: all ages

Length: 60 min

Many different species of birds call MacKenzie home or pass through during migration. Students will learn how to use binoculars and will use guides to identify local species.

NATURE HIKES

Grades: all ages

Length: 30-90 min

There are five self-guiding trails on the MacKenzie Center grounds. Please take some time to hike these with your students or use them with some of your own activities.



SCAVENGER HUNTS

Grades: all ages

Length: 30-90 min

Using a check-off sheet as a guide, students examine the surrounding area identifying things to see, hear, smell, feel and think about. Scavenger hunts are tailored to each group's interests and age level.

WISCONSIN WEATHER

Grades: 4th -7th

Length: 60 min

Step outside to examine and understand the basic elements of weather here in Wisconsin. Students will participate in a discussion about clouds and the water cycle, wind, air pressure, and humidity. By building their own anemometer, students will have a chance to become citizen scientists and calculate wind speed.

SUSTAINABILITY

CONSERVATION MUSEUM TOUR

Grades: all ages

Length: flexible (30 min)

Examine this conservation themed museum and discuss some of the issues and themes found within. Worksheets and guide packets are available.

INVASIVE SPECIES SERVICE-LEARNING

Grades: 6th and up

Length: flexible (30-90 min)

Students will learn to identify invasive plant species and participate in management techniques to control them.

WILDLIFE

HOW BIRDS MAKE A LIVING

Grades: 4th-8th

Length: 60 min



Birds have special adaptations that allow them to survive. This activity discusses the many types of specialized foot and beak structures that help birds exist in different habitats. Later, students try to “beak the clock” by securing food in different habitats using their own specialized “beaks”.

OH DEER!

Grades: 4th-7th

Length: 60 min

During this entertaining game, students will be able to recognize the essential needs for survival in any habitat. This lesson also teaches an ever changing balance between a species (deer) and the factors which affect its population.



OWL PELLETS

Grades: 5th-8th

Length: 60 min

Students will be able to construct a simple food chain by examining owl pellets and reconstructing prey skeleton. Using the eating habits of the owl and its food sources as reference students will hypothesize what the owl might have eaten. *Groups need to supply their own owl pellets for this activity.*

PREDATOR/PREY ACTIVITY

Grades: 4th-8th

Length: 60 min

Students will learn principles of predation and predator-prey relationships by becoming predators themselves as they explore an artificial population of animals (caramel and chocolate candies).

SECRETS OF THE SKULL

Grades: 5th-12th

Length: 60 min

Through observations such as tooth size & shape, eye socket placement, nose & ear size students will characterize the animal whose skull they hold. These details will place skulls into groups such as carnivore, herbivore, and omnivore as well as shed light on other details about an animal’s life and adaptations. *Not available for day groups in the winter.*

WILDLIFE Continued...

TRACKING & ANIMAL SIGNS

Grades: 4th -8th

Length: 60-90 min

Students will learn about different animals and the tracks and signs they leave for us to find. This activity can include making plaster track casts if requested.

WILDLIFE EXHIBIT TOUR

Grades: all ages Length: 60-90 min (Wildlife exhibit only)

By seeing native Wisconsin animals up-close, visitors can study the animal's adaptations, habitats, human interaction and more. There are 15 different species of wildlife to learn about here at the MacKenzie center

SOUND OFF

Grades: 2nd -6th

Length: 60 min

After assuming a role of an organism, blindfolded students try to find their partner using only the sounds from musical instruments while avoiding an equally blindfolded predator using his own instrument.

WOLF/DEER ACTIVITY

Grades: 4th -8th

Length: 60 min

After a basic introduction to the natural history of gray wolves and white-tailed deer, students have a chance to become members of a wolf pack or deer herd. They will then take part in a simulated "hunt", the deer laying down a scent trail (scented sponges) and the wolves following it.



WATER

POND LIFE

Grades: 1st -7th

Length: 60-90 min

To acquaint the students with the pond as a natural community, and introduce them to the wide varieties of life found there. Students will spend time exploring the pond and identifying the critters they find. *Available in Spring, Summer & early Fall.*

STREAM STUDY & WATER QUALITY

Grades: 4th -8th

Length: 2.5 hours

Students will act as fish managers and learn to use the tools necessary to collect data for measuring survival, habitat requirements, and water quality. Students will study a section of Rowan Creek to determine whether or not the German Brown Trout can survive in Rowan Creek. *Groups are responsible for transportation to and from the stream off site. Available in late Spring, Summer & early Fall.*

WATERSHED PROGRAM

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 60 min

Students will learn about the environmental, ecological, and human components of a watershed. Students will be able create this own watershed and learn about how water moves through the land by using the groundwater model. *Not available for day groups in the winter.*



FORESTRY

FORESTRY & WOODCUTTING

Grades: 4th-8th

Length: 60-90 min

Develop an understanding of forest ecology, basic forestry and woodcutting skills. Explore WI history of the lumberjack and use a traditional “two-man saw” to cut your own slice of the log or a wood “cookie.”

LEARN TO MAKE MAPLE SYRUP

Grades: 4th-8th

Length: 2 hours

(morning or afternoon program)

Learn about how Native Americans traveled to the sugar bush and how they made maple sugar. Learn to identify a maple tree and about maple tree ecology. Your students will receive a hands-on experience tapping a tree all while learning the history of how the Pioneers made maple syrup. Walk away with a taste of maple syrup made from the MacKenzie Center’s sugar bush. *Available for visits in March only*



NATURE’S RECYCLERS (DECOMPOSERS)

Grades: K-8th

Length: 60 min

Students will learn the basics of decomposition and biodegradation during this hands-on activity. This lesson includes exploration and discussion of nature’s decomposers as well as a demonstration on composting here at MacKenzie. The biodegradable relay portion of this lesson offers the chance for students to learn about which waste items can be recycled, placed in a compost bin, or end up in a landfill while participating in friendly competition. Information gathered during this lesson will allow the students to start their own compost at home or school!

TREE IDENTIFICATION

Grades: 6th-8th

Length: 60-90 min

Students will be able to recognize and describe characteristics that differentiate trees. In addition they will be able to recognize common trees of WI by examining those characteristics and use a key to learn how to identify them.

LOGGING MUSEUM TOUR

Grades: all ages

Length: flexible (30 min)

Examine this forestry themed museum and discuss some of the issues and themes found within. Worksheets and guide packets are available.

LOOKING AT LEAVES

Grades: K-3rd

Length: 60 min

Students will be able compare and contrast, classify and categorize different leaves & needles of a variety of tree and plant species. Students will understand how leaf shapes, sizes, and other characteristics vary from plant to plant.



OUTDOOR SKILLS CLASSES

ARCHERY

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 90 minutes



Spend time learning the basics of archery safety and shooting form, then put that knowledge into practice with our National Archery in the Schools Program equipment. Each class is taught by a NASP certified instructor. *Not available for day groups in the winter.*

COMPASS SKILLS 101

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 60-90 minutes

Develop a basic compass knowledge and instill a sense of awareness of the environment. Enable students to meet challenges and make decisions, while navigating thru our orienteering course(s).

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Grades: 4th and up

Length: flexible

Venture into the snowy landscape using the MEEC cross country skis available for your group. This equipment can be used by Lodge groups as an unguided activity, or with an educator. Pair this activity with a guided ecology hike to learn more about the plants and animals on the MacKenzie Center property while also learning a new outdoor skill.

FISHING CLINIC

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 4 hours

Students will learn basic fishing skills like baiting and casting. Students will also can practice the new skills while fishing. *Students over 16 years of age a will need a valid WI fishing license. Fishing poles and bait included. Groups are responsible for transportation to and from the lake, off sit*

GEOCACHING 101

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 60-90 min

Participate and learn the basics of this growing outdoor entertainment game. Use a GPS to find several treasures! Great all group activity, treasures and GPS units provided.

ICE-FISHING CLINIC

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 4 hours

Students will begin by learning the basic skills and equipment involved with fishing during the winter. Students will then can test their newly learned skills fishing. *Students over 16 years of age a will need a valid WI fishing license. Fishing poles and bait included. Groups are responsible for transportation to and from the lake, off site.*

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Grades: 5th -12th

Length: 60 min

Learn the basics of photography, before exploring the natural world around you through the lens of a camera.

TEAM BUILDING

Grades: all ages

Length: 60 min

Students will work through a selection of team building activities appropriate to their age level and group focus.

TEAM BUILDING TRAIL

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 60 min

Through direct interaction students will cooperatively decide on a solution to a carefully designed problem and then carry out a plan of action, while working through a trail of activities.

OUTDOOR SKILLS Continued...

SHOOTING SAFETY & SKILLS

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 2 hours

Learn a traditional skill among Wisconsin residents. Trained instructors will lead the students to learn the basics of shooting safety and how to aim and shoot an air-gun using our self- contained shooting tent.

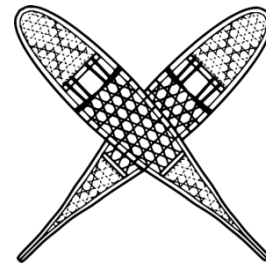


SNOWSHOEING

Grades: 4th and up

Length: flexible

Venture into the snowy landscape using the snowshoes available for your group. This equipment can be used by Lodge groups as an unguided activity, or with an educator. Pair this activity with a guided ecology hike to learn more about the plants and animals on the MacKenzie Center property while also learning a new outdoor skill.



SURVIVAL SKILLS

FIRE BUILDING

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 60-90 min

Learn about the science behind building a fire and different fire starting techniques.



SHELTER BUILDING

Grades: 4th -12th

Length: 60-90 minutes

Students will learn how to build a primitive survival shelter, such as a debris hut.

For more information on any of our classes or to reserve your group today please contact our group facilitator at (608) 635-8105 or email

DNRMacKenzieCenter@wisconsin.gov

***The MacKenzie Center Shuttle can be available for stream study and fishing classes upon request. Please contact our group facilitator for more information.**