



CURRICULUM-BASED NATURE PROGRAMS
AT YOUR SCHOOL, VIRTUALLY, OR A REWARDING FIELD TRIP!

INTERACTIVE

STEAM-BASED

HANDS-ON

Outdoor Explorations: Field Trip Programs

Enthusiastic and knowledgeable environmental educators add a new dimension to your visit, entertaining and educating children while meeting the curriculum needs of the classroom teacher. All programs correlate to the New York State Science Curriculum.

Habitats of the Saratoga Sandplains Elementary School

Learn about three different habitats and how plants and animals are adapted to them through visiting the meadow, the forest, and the pond. In the meadow they will learn about our most famous resident, the endangered Karner blue butterfly! At the pond, students use dip nets to discover aquatic creatures like tadpoles, snails, salamanders, and insects. In the forest, trees are explored through a fun activity!

Trips scheduled in the last week of May or the first two weeks of June, are likely to see the Karner blue butterfly.

Maximum Group Size: 80 students

Journaling Ecosystems

Upper Elementary and Middle School

Students will think critically on interrelations of living and nonliving things in an ecosystem and how energy is transferred. Journaling their observations and using new vocabulary, participants will take a hike through the meadow and forest habitats, to learn the secrets of the food web of the Saratoga Sand Plains ecosystem. This program also meets ELA standards, combining science and poetry! *This program provides journaling materials at an extra cost of \$2/person.*

Maximum Group Size: 60 students

Karner Blue Butterfly Walk All Grades

As spring arrives, we see many changes to the meadow habitat. Students will find out how these changes bring us regrowth and the presence of the endangered species the Karner blue butterfly. Learn why there is sand here and why the Saratoga Sand Plains is one of the few places to find this butterfly.

Maximum Group Size: 60 students

Run Time: 1 1/2 hours

Water Wellness

Middle and High School

How are aquatic ecosystems affected by human activities? Students will begin by using dip nets to collect the many different aquatic species found at Delegan Pond.

High school participants will use mathematical skills to calculate aquatic biodiversity and determine habitat health. The second portion of this program will have students engaged in a hands-on water quality experiment.

Maximum Group Size: 60 students

Analyzing Habitats Upper Elementary and Middle School

What makes a forest different from a meadow? This hands-on, outdoor lab lets students use soil probes, anemometers, light meters, thermometers, and moisture meters to measure, collect, and analyze data. Students will learn how these habitats provide different resources to animals, and how animals are adapted to these different conditions.

Maximum Group Size: 80 students

Winter Snowshoe Walk

All Grades

Shake up your usual field trip and come for a visit this winter! Learn winter tree identification, animal tracking, and wildlife adaptations for winter survival. *This program runs on snowshoes, with an additional cost of \$3/person.*

Program size is limited based on sizes of snowshoes available.

Maximum Group Size: TBD



Traveling Programs: Nature in the Classroom

Bring the Preserve & Park into your classroom, after-school program, scout meeting, or other organized group without the transportation expense of a field trip. Each hands-on lesson correlates to the New York State Science Curriculum.

Builder Beavers Elementary School

Beavers are the largest rodent in North America and played a role in the settling of New York State. They have many adaptations for survival and can be ecosystem changers that create habitats for other living things. This fun program has a food-based activity and requires space for movement.



Endangered Karner Blue Butterfly & Monarch Butterfly Elementary School

What does it mean to be threatened, endangered, or extinct? Learn about the life cycle of the local Karner blue butterfly the Monarch butterfly and what we can all do to help protect these important species for the future. This program highlights the fascinating life story of these species and includes a craft.



Lupine Lab & Parts of a Plant Elementary School

Learn about roots, stems, leaves, and flowers and the specific adaptations of the wild blue lupine plant, the essential food for the endangered Karner blue butterfly larva. Lupine will be grown in the classroom for planting as part of local habitat restoration. Students will learn the empowering lesson of helping an endangered species.

This program can be combined with a spring field trip where your students plant the lupine plants in the meadow.



Turtle Discovery Elementary School

Turtles are one of the oldest groups of reptiles on the planet with great adaptations for survival, so why are their populations decreasing? One of your classmates will become a turtle to learn about their methods of survival. We will discuss the threats that turtles face and what we can do to help them. Includes a turtle craft and a chance to look at real turtle shells and skulls, and to meet a live turtle!



Owl Adaptations

Upper Elementary and Middle School

Birds can survive in many different habitats due to their amazing ability to adapt. Students will learn about the adaptations of owls and learn how to identify our local New York owls. This program includes an owl pellet dissection lab so there is an additional cost for the owl pellets.

Winter Snowshoe Walk

All Grades

Shake up nature's classroom and have us come to your school to take a snowshoe walk on your school grounds!

Learn how to use snowshoes while learning about animal adaptations in the winter and how to identify trees based just on the bark! *Program size is limited based on sizes of snowshoes available.*

Maximum Group Size:TBD

Freshwater Food Webs Elementary School

Bring freshwater ecosystems to life in your classroom! Students will learn how the energy of the sun helps support food chains and webs with interactive games. Students will explore the life cycle of aquatic animals and even observe a live frog! This program included a craft, which reinforces the food web and food chain. In some months of the year we will be able to bring live pond animals into the classroom.



Skull Science Elementary School

Did you know you can tell the difference between a predator and its prey by looking at their skulls? This lab provides a unique experience to explore native mammals. Learn how skulls have adapted for survival, then work together to uncover skull adaptations and identify their species. But the fun doesn't end there! Students will match animal furs to the skulls and learn how fur is an important adaptation for mammals in upstate New York.



Annual Earth Day Essay Contest 2024

We invite your students to participate in our annual essay contest for the 54th Earth Day on April 22.

The theme for 2024 is Planet vs. Plastics. This is a call to advocate for widespread awareness on the health risk of plastics, rapidly phase out all single use plastics, and demand an end to fast fashion. With this awareness, we can build a plastic-free planet for generations to come!

There are four categories: high school, middle school, and lower and upper elementary school. High School entries must be no longer than 650 words; Middle School entries must be no longer than 500 words; Elementary School entries must be at least 10 sentences. Accompanying illustrations are also encouraged. The contest winner from each of the categories will receive a \$50 cash prize!

Deadline: Friday, April 19, 2024. Winners will be announced in May and prizes awarded at our Annual Wildlife Festival on Sunday, June 2nd. Submissions may be mailed to Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park at 80 Scout Road, Wilton, NY 12831 or emailed to info@wiltonpreserve.org by the deadline. Please include the student's name, the name of the school, the student's grade, and the teacher's name. Make sure that there is an email and a phone number with each student's entry. Thank you and happy writing!

Traveling Program and Field Trip Combination:

Traveling Program: Lupine Lab & Parts of the Plant
Field Trip: Habitats of the Saratoga Sandplains

Schedule these programs together to give your students the empowering experience of growing a food source for an endangered species! Watch wild blue lupine grow in your classroom and bring it to the Preserve & Park to plant it in the habitat of the Karner blue butterfly.



Helpful Information

Field Trips

Field trips are \$5.00 per person, including chaperones. There is no charge for teaching staff. **Minimum group size is 10**, maximum group size is dependent on the program. Program time is 2 hours unless otherwise noted.

The facilities are owned by the Town of Wilton and include a covered pavilion for lunch and restrooms. Field trips take place rain or shine. There is no drinking water and it is a pack-it-in pack-it-out park.

Since field trips take place on Town of Wilton property, participants are required to fill out a Camp Saratoga Use form for the Town of Wilton at least three weeks prior to the scheduled field trip.

Schools can apply for the Connect Kids to Parks Grant to cover the costs of bussing and admission.
See page 4 for details.

Traveling Programs

The program fee is \$175 for one presentation and then \$125/each additional presentation at the same site on the same day. Ideal program length is 75 minutes but can be modified if needed.

We do not schedule traveling programs in May and June.
Maximum group size is 30.

Virtual Programs

Some of our programs and field trips can be done virtually as a one hour program. The program fee is \$125/presentation, and can be offered on any virtual meeting platform.
Looking for a particular program to meet your needs?
We will work with you to bring a program into your classroom!

Special Arrangements

We will work to meet your special program needs. If you are working on a project or a tailored program, please give us a call!

Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts

We work with troops to help organize volunteer opportunities for community service. We also work with scouts who are working towards Silver and Gold Awards and Eagle Scout projects.

Conservation and Community Service Opportunities

There are many opportunities to participate in projects that are part of our citizen science program or that support our efforts in conservation and outdoor recreation. Please let us know if you are interested in learning more about what is available.

The Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park is a private, non-profit organization supported by donations, memberships, program fees, and grants from private and public agencies. If you are interested in becoming a member to help support our programs, please visit our website at www.wiltonpreserve.org.

Our Programs are Eligible for BOCES Reimbursement

Since our programs meet the New York State Standards, both our in-school and field trip programs can be submitted to BOCES and they can help you with funds to pay for your programs! You will need to contact your BOCES to determine the process for the necessary paperwork.

Connect Kids to Parks Field Trip Grant Program Information

The Connect Kids to Parks Field Trip Grant Program (Connect Kids) is a field trip refund grant program connecting New York school children with nature and New York State history. Each grant provides reimbursement of up to \$80 per student (and \$160 for Special Education students) for field trips to state and federal parks, forests, historic sites, fish hatcheries and outdoor recreation areas. To find out more information about this great program or to apply for the grant use this web address:

<https://parks.ny.gov/environment/connect-kids/grant-program.aspx>



Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park is a non-profit organization partnering with the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County, NYS DEC, and The Nature Conservancy to conserve ecological systems and natural settings while providing opportunities for environmental education and outdoor recreation. Almost 2,400 acres protect significant habitats and over 25 miles of trails provide a wonderfully fun, healthy, and educational resource for the community.

Educational and recreational opportunities are at the heart of the organization. We provide a full range of year-round programs for the public and for local schools, scout groups, and others at the Preserve & Park and off-site. Special events include our Wildlife Festival, Campfire Chats, Moonlight Walks, and Fun Runs.

Wilton Wildlife is part of the Saratoga Sand Plains, an area of ancient sand dunes, small but important wetlands and diverse ecological communities, home to the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly, the threatened frosted elfin, and the hognose snake, a species of special concern. The Karner blue butterfly was the catalyst to conserve this rare landscape in 1996, and within a few years, other extremely rare species, the eastern spadefoot toad and Blanding's turtle, were discovered on its protected lands. The Saratoga Sand Plains are the ancestral homelands of the Mohawk, Mohican, and Abanki people.

