

Trout Lake Nature Center Field Experience Descriptions

Trout Lake Nature Center (TLNC) offers hands-on field experiences for your students that are correlated to grade-level standards. The TLNC experience can be used as an introduction or follow-up to important concepts you will teach during the school year.

Cost: \$7 per student, no charge for teachers or chaperones. Arrive by 10 AM, depart at 1:30 PM.

Student/Teacher Ratio: It is important to TLNC that each child have a quality learning experience when visiting TLNC. Therefore, we limit the number of students coming on each field trip. All visiting groups are broken into four smaller learning groups. Group size is limited to no more than 50 students or three classes.

TLNC observes the 1 to 10 ratio (teacher/chaperone to student enforced by the Lake County School District for field trips. Our educational programs cannot accommodate siblings.

Covid Adjustments: During Covid, student groups must be kept to no more than 10 students with adult and programs will be modified to reduce touching and sharing of materials.

Busing Funding: Limited grant funds may be available to offset your busing costs. They will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. A TLNC busing application must be submitted.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to TLNC at 352-357-7536 or tlnc.info@gmail.com

Grade-Level Focus Areas

PreK Focus—Real and Living: Students will develop an understanding of what makes animals “real live animals” and how animals find the things they need in the forest. They will learn how animals use their senses to help them find food and to survive.

Kindergarten Focus—Organization and Development of Living Things: Students will observe plants and animals and describe how they are alike and how they are different in the way they look and, in the things, they do. Students will also recognize that some books and other media portray animals and plants with characteristics and behaviors they do not have in real life.

First Grade Focus—Plants: Students will develop a basic understanding of the life cycle of plants and trees, and what role the sun and water play in the life of a plant. A tree is a living thing making its own food (using the sun’s energy) and providing food, shelter and other materials to animals and people.

Second Grade Focus—Needs/Habitats: Students will develop a basic understanding that all living things have basic needs that must be met for survival. Living things are found all over, under, and above Earth, but each is only able to live in habitats that meet its basic needs.

Third Grade Focus—Classifying Invertebrates and Vertebrates: Students will learn to classify animals into major groups, including vertebrates and invertebrates; vertebrates into mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish; invertebrates into some arthropod groups; and those animals having live births and those which lay eggs. Students will also look at physical characteristics and behaviors such as body coverings, warm and cold bloodedness, physical size, and population numbers.

Fourth Grade Focus—Interdependence/Heredity: Students will learn about how plants and animals are interdependent and how they and humans can impact the environment. Using Florida panthers, students learn about heredity and reproduction.

Fifth Grade Focus—Weather: Students will learn about the different weather instruments used. Students will understand how the instruments work and are used to measure or predict weather. They will be able to use them to record data from the instruments. Students will observe and compare how temperature and the amount of moisture vary in different microhabitats. Students will determine the relationship between temperature and the amount of moisture in different microhabitats. Students will describe characteristics of different climate zones as they relate to latitude, elevation and proximity to bodies of water. Students will learn about four types of clouds (cumulus, cirrus, stratus and cumulonimbus) as they relate to weather.

Special Program Focus Areas

Birds

Students become birds to migrate from the north to the south learning about the many hazards encountered. As “birds”, they learn about how each bird’s bill is specially adapted for its food or prey. Finally, they build their own birds.

Bugged Out: Spiders and Insects (Note: Spiders are more easily found from September through November.)

Through discovering spider senses, students learn how these senses are used to detect food or a friend through a spider web game. They take a bug safari on the trails of the TLNC and learn what types of ecosystem each spider inhabits. Spiders come in all shapes and sizes, students learn about the many spider adaptations that help them survive. Each student also learns how spiders produce silk and spin a web of their own.

Hoppin’ Around: Frogs and Toads

Frogs are indicators of environmental health and students learn about factors that are contributing to their decline. They learn how sound is used by frogs to find each other and take a hike to find frogs.

The Bear Facts: Florida Black Bear

Bears are common in Central Florida and students should learn about this magnificent native carnivore and predator. Through an educational game, students learn what a bear eats and needs to survive in Florida. Students travel the TLNC trails finding items that a bear would use to survive. Students conduct a discussion on what all living things need to survive and a bear’s specific needs. Through examining bear artifacts such as skull, claws, scat and more, students learn about bear adaptations or characteristics that make them such good survivors in Florida habitats.

What Lies Beneath” Our Florida Aquifer

Students investigate the Florida aquifer using a groundwater model. This model helps students understand how groundwater moves, springs flow and pollution travels underground. They learn about the soils of Lake County and perform percolation tests. In addition, they test the waters of Trout Lake to determine what can live there. Students will construct a microhabitat after learning the components needed for it to function.

Wondrous Watersheds: Earth Systems—the Water Connection

Using an augmented-reality watershed model, students learn about watershed functions, point and non-point pollution and best management practices or BMPs to protect our surface water. Students assemble a watershed floor puzzle and assume the role of home and business owners in our watersheds. Live frogs and toads, and a game of survival, help students understand why amphibians

are good indicators of water quality. In addition, they test the waters of Trout Lake using test strips and macro invertebrates to determine what can live there.

Water World

Using dip nets students collect and record the macro invertebrates found in Trout Lake. By travelling back in history, students complete an activity that teaches about the value of water and difficulties encountered by early settlers in obtaining water. Students estimate the water found on earth, what percentage can be found in many common foods, and how much water is found in our bodies along with how it keeps us healthy.