

MCDOWELL

QUEST

REEDY CREEK

STEVENS CREEK

MECKLENBURG COUNTY

# NATURE CENTER

## CURRICULUM GUIDE



Mecklenburg County  
Park and Recreation

# Table of Contents



## LOCATIONS & INFO

PROGRAM INFORMATION	2
NC ESSENTIAL STANDARDS	3
FIELD TRIP LOCATIONS	4
CONTACT US	5
TEACHER PLANNING	6

V P K 1 2 3 4 5

## PROGRAM OPTIONS

●		●	●		●	●	ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS	7
	●						BUG BASICS	7
●		●	●				CREEPY CRAWLY	8
						●	F.B.I. INVESTIGATION	8
●		●		●			FANTASTIC FLOWERS	9
	●						I SPEAK FOR THE TREES	9
	●						MAGNIFICENT MAMMALS	10
						●	ROCKIN' ROCKS	10
		●	●			●	SCALY & SLIMY	11
	●						SCALE TALES & SLIMY TIMES	11
	●						SENSORY SAFARI	12
		●	●			●	STREAM STUDY	12
			●		●	●	SURPRISING SOIL	13
●		●	●	●			TREMENDOUS TREES	13
		●	●				WONDROUS WEATHER	14
		●	●			●	WOODLAND WILDLIFE	14
			●	●		●	WORLD OF WATER	15
							CUSTOM PROGRAMS	16

# Program Information

2

## The Curriculum

Each of our Kindergarten through 5th grade Nature Center Experiences is carefully crafted to align with the North Carolina Essential Standards, making our programs a fun and unique supplement to traditional classroom instruction.

Additionally, our preschool programs are inspired by the Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers.

We take pride in our programs. Our team of educators routinely evaluate our curriculum to ensure we are providing the best education programs in Mecklenburg County and the surrounding areas.

In order to help us identify opportunities for growth or allow us to celebrate our strengths, you'll receive a survey at the end of your program. Please consider taking a moment to ensure we can continue to offer the best programming available by providing us with your feedback.



## Picnic Under a Pavilion

Come to learn, stay for a picnic! Just let us know you'd like to stay for lunch and we can reserve an outdoor pavilion, porch, or indoor space for your group to eat.

In case of inclement weather, we are only able to make indoor arrangements at Quest, Reedy Creek, and Stevens Creek Nature Centers. McDowell Nature Center is limited to accommodating large groups indoors based on occupancy restrictions.

## Group Preparedness

Prior to your Nature Center Experience, you will receive an email that outlines expectations for student and teacher/chaperone behavior, as well as activities you can do with your class before you visit.

Please know that while we are here to assist in the learning process, ultimately teachers and chaperones have a relationship with students that our educators do not. Student behavior is the responsibility of the teacher/chaperone at all times during your visit.

Additionally, please ensure all teachers, chaperones, and students are dressed appropriately for the weather and wearing closed-toe shoes. Programs include indoor and outdoor activities that occur rain or shine. Nature center staff will make modifications for extreme weather if needed.



## ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS



- K.L.1.1; K.L.1.2
- 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2; 1.L.2.2
- 2.L.2.2
- 4.L.1.1; 4.L.1.2; 4.L.1.4
- 5.L.2.1; 5.L.2.2; 5.L.2.3

## CREEPY CRAWLY



- K.L.1.2
- 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2; 1.L.2.2
- 2.L.1.1; 2.L.1.2

## F.B.I. INVESTIGATION



- 4.L.1.1; 4.L.1.2; 4.L.1.3
- 5.L.1.2; 5.L.1.3

## FANTASTIC FLOWERS



- K.L.1.2
- 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2; 1.L.2.1
- 3.L.2.1; 3.L.2.2; 3.L.2.3

## ROCKIN' ROCKS



- 4.P.2.1; 4.P.2.2; 4.P.2.3

## SCALY & SLIMY



- K.L.1.1; K.L.1.2
- 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2; 1.L.2.2
- 2.L.1.1; 2.L.1.2; 2.L.2.1
- 4.L.1.1; 4.L.1.2

## STREAM STUDY



- K.P.1.1; K.P.1.2; K.L.1.1; K.L.1.2
- 2.L.1.1; 2.L.1.2
- 4.L.1.1; 4.L.1.3
- 5.L.2.2; 5.L.2.3

## SURPRISING SOIL



- 1.E.2.1; 1.E.2.2; 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2
- 3.L.2.4
- 4.L.2.3

## TREMENDOUS TREES



- K.L.1.2
- 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2; 1.L.2.1
- 2.L.2.1; 2.L.2.2
- 3.L.2.1; 3.L.2.2; 3.L.2.3

## WONDROUS WEATHER



- K.E.1.1; K.E.1.2; K.E.1.3
- 2.E.1.1; 2.E.1.2; 2.E.1.3; 2.E.1.4
- 5.E.1.1; 5.E.1.2; 5.E.1.3

## WOODLAND WILDLIFE



- K.L.1.2
- 1.L.1.1; 1.L.1.2; 1.L.2.2
- 2.L.2.2
- 4.L.1.1; 4.L.1.2; 4.L.1.4
- 5.L.2.1; 5.L.2.2; 5.L.2.3

## WORLD OF WATER



- K.E.1.1; K.E.1.2
- 1.L.1.3; 1.E.2.1
- 2.E.1.1; 2.P.2.1
- 3.E.2.1; 3.L.2.2; 3.P.2.2; 3.P.2.3
- 4.L.1.1; 4.L.1.3
- 5.P.2.1; 5.P.3.1

The following align with National Guidelines for Excellence in Early Childhood Education for preschoolers:

- BUG BASICS
- I SPEAK FOR THE TREES
- MAGNIFICENT MAMMALS
- SCALY TALES & SLIMY TIMES
- SENSORY SAFARI

# Field Trip Locations



# Program Information

5

## Cancellation, Rescheduling, & No-Shows

Every effort will be made to reschedule a program if needed. However, we cannot guarantee further availability once your booking is confirmed.

## Program Fees

CMS Schools: \$40.00 (per group / per hour of program time)

Non-CMS Schools: \$50.00 (per group / per hour of program time)

In-School Visits: Additional \$15 travel fee for programming for each day of travel.

Customized Programming: Additional fee of \$25 for a customized program.

## Program Payment Options

Payment in full is due prior to your group's visit, unless other arrangements are made. An invoice will be sent to the email address provided within the week of program confirmation. If after one week you have not received an invoice in your email or filtered folders, please call the respective nature center and we can resend it.

Payments may be made by Visa, Mastercard, cash, or check. For further payment instructions, please refer to the confirmation invoice.

# Contact Us

*Book your program today!*

### **MCDOWELL NATURE CENTER**

**15222 York Rd. Charlotte, NC 28278**

**980-314-1558**

CATHERINE.ROBERTSON@MECKNC.GOV

### **QUEST @ LATTA NATURE PRESERVE**

**6345 Sample Rd. Huntersville, NC 28078**

**980-314-7878**

SHELBY.HARRISON@MECKNC.GOV

### **REEDY CREEK NATURE CENTER**

**2900 Rocky River Rd. Charlotte, NC 28215**

**980-314-1119**

TRACY.OWENS@MECKNC.GOV

### **STEVENS CREEK NATURE CENTER**

**15700 Thompson Rd. Mint Hill, NC 28227**

**980-314-1209**

CORINNE.RIZZO@MECKNC.GOV

### **EASTWAY REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER**

**423 Eastway Dr. Charlotte, NC 28215**

**980-314-1465**

ALDEN.PICARD@MECKNC.GOV

# Teacher Planning

6

## Scheduling Your Field Trip

Please have this information available when you call to schedule.

- Grade level \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of students and classes \_\_\_\_\_
- 2-3 date options \_\_\_\_\_
- Arrival and departure times \_\_\_\_\_
- Program Selections (programs are 1-2 hours in length) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Lunch plans and pavilion request \_\_\_\_\_

## Virtual Programs

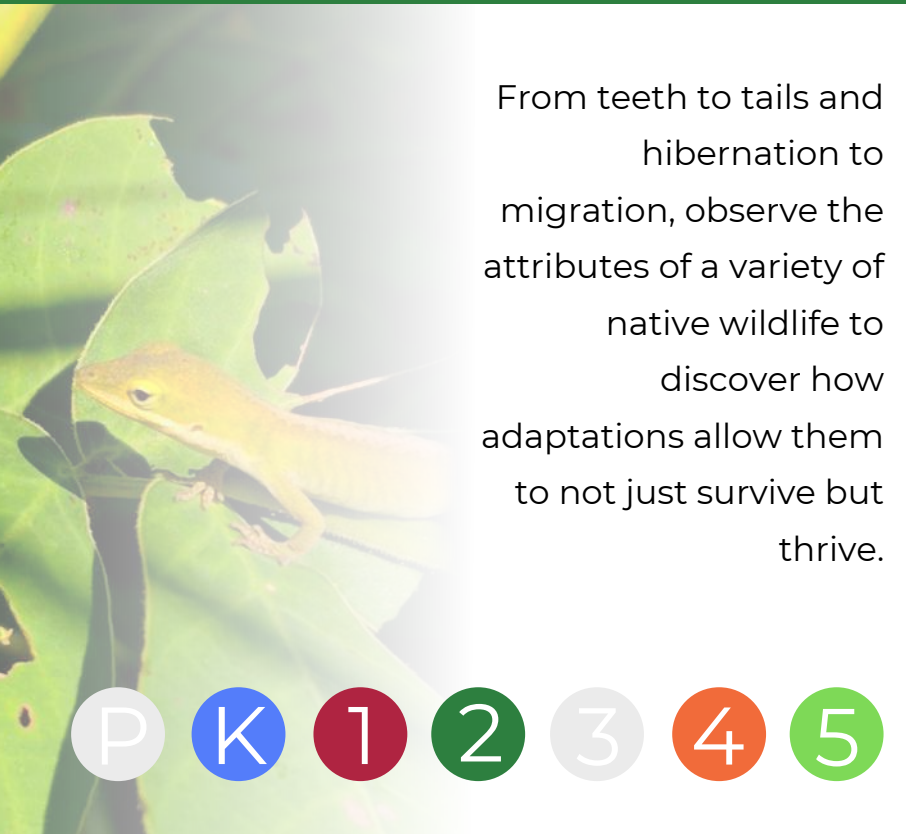


**Call the center nearest to you for more information on virtual program options.**





# Animal Adaptations



From teeth to tails and hibernation to migration, observe the attributes of a variety of native wildlife to discover how adaptations allow them to not just survive but thrive.

P

K

1

2

3

4

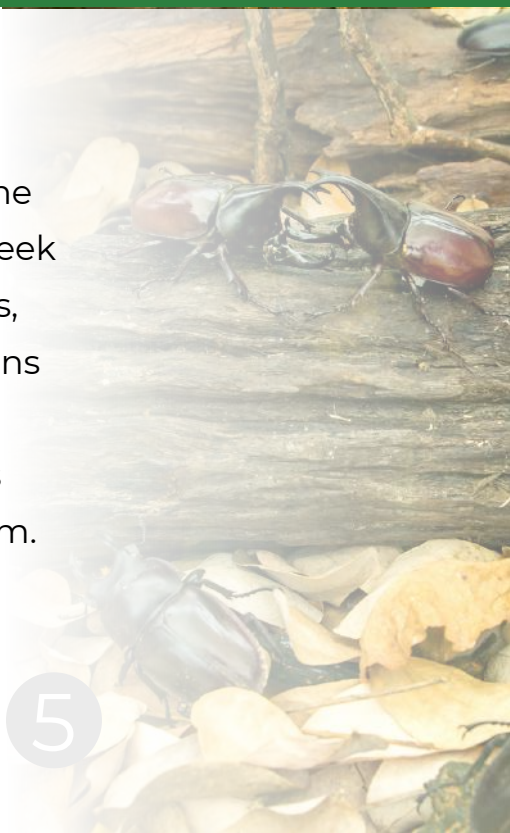
5



# Bug Basics



Get to know the creatures that call the forest floor home! Peek under rocks, roll logs, and collect specimens to uncover the important role bugs play in our ecosystem.



P

K

1

2

3

4

5





# Creepy Crawly



All creatures play a role in our ecosystem, even the creepiest and crawlliest ones! Discover the world of invertebrates from egg to adult and uncover the value of a worm as we search the forest floor for nature's less celebrated species.



- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



# F.B.I. Investigation



In this program, F.B.I. can only stand for one thing: Fungus, Bacteria, and Invertebrates. Students will investigate a “crime scene” to determine the culprits in the case of decomposition. All evidence collected will be analyzed in the most effective way possible – up close and hands on.



- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



# Fantastic Flowers



Peel away the petals to uncover the inside scoop on flowering plants during a flower dissection and investigate the way flowers bring more than just color into our world.



# I Speak for the Trees

Compare and contrast leaf shapes, investigate the textures of tree bark, and get a grip on how trees grow so that you can speak for the trees, too!





# Magnificent Mammals

10



Study pelt and skull specimens up close to reveal the secret lives of North Carolina's elusive mammal population. Take to the trail in search of tracks and traces of where these furry forest dwellers have been!



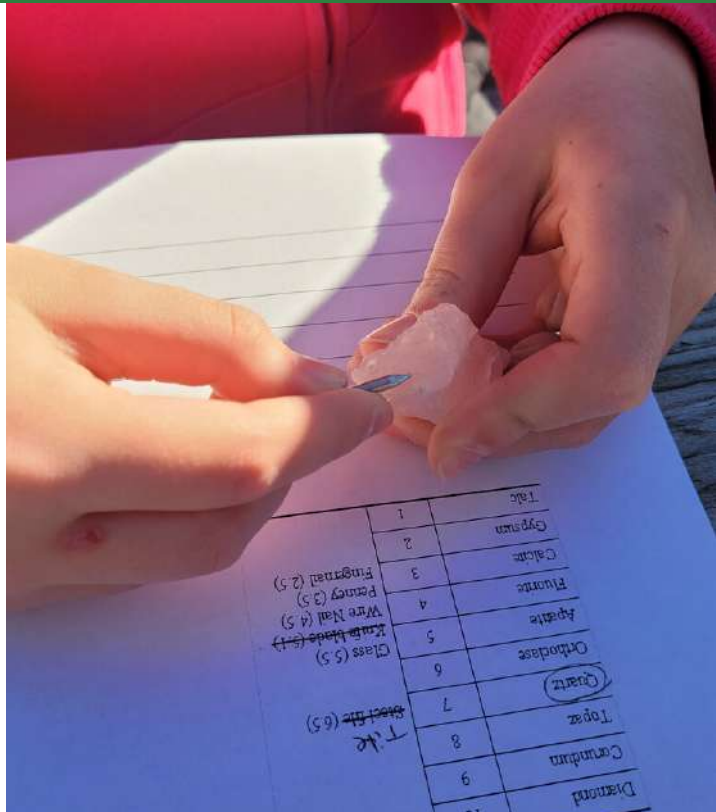
P K 1 2 3 4 5



# Rockin' Rocks



When it comes to geology, the answers aren't always crystal clear. Compare properties of rocks and discover the geologic processes that create metamorphic, igneous, and sedimentary rocks here in the Carolina Piedmont.



P K 1 2 3 4 5

10	Diamond
9	Corundum
8	Topaz
7	Quartz
6	Orthoclase
5	Class (5)
5	Iron Oxide (5-1)
4	Wine Nail (4 5)
3	Fluorite (3 5)
3	Pyrite (2 5)
2	Calcite
2	Crysoberyl
1	Talc



# Scaly & Slimy



At first glance, the difference between reptiles and amphibians can seem insignificant. However, characteristics and habitat needs can differ dramatically. Get a close look at adaptations that set these animals apart, and search high and low for a close encounter of a scaly (or slimy!) kind.



- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



# Scale Tales & Slimy Times



Discover the characteristics that set reptiles and amphibians apart, then take to the trail in search of a close encounter of the scaly and slimy kind!



- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



# Sensory Safari

12



Taste a tree, smell a bug, look for critters, listen for wildlife, and get your hands dirty, on an exploration through woods that will engage all five senses!



- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



# Stream Study



Slosh along a stream bank, net a crayfish, and observe the quality of our waterways by studying the indicator species of aquatic ecosystems.



- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



# Surprising Soil

13

Soil can tell the story of a place's past, while nourishing the lives of plants and animals in the present. Dig into soil types, till through its components, and unearth some of the creatures that reside there.



P K 1 2 3 4 5



# Tremendous Trees

V

Examine the systems that help trees grow and investigate the anatomy of a tree in this hands-on program that shines light on how tremendous trees can really be!

P K 1 2 3 4 5



# Wondrous Weather

14

It is easy to classify the weather as it is happening, but how do meteorologists predict what will happen with the weather tomorrow or next week? Use meteorological tools to measure weather conditions, decode weather data, and determine how weather plays a role in our daily lives.



P K 1 2 3 4 5



# Woodland Wildlife

Go beyond terrific turkeys, slithering snakes, and fantastic foxes for a glimpse into the world of the Piedmont's most elusive woodland animals. Compare diets and consider adaptations while studying skins and skulls. Head outside to explore how these creatures connect with their habitat.



P K 1 2 3 4 5



# World of Water

15



Our planet is covered in water, yet only 1% of that water is available for human consumption. Dive deep into the role water plays in our lives and the ways it nourishes the greater ecosystem.

- P
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5







# Don't See What You're Looking For?

16

Environmental Education goes beyond science standards, and so do we.

**Let us customize your experience!**

Call your nature center representative to collaborate.





Mecklenburg County  
**Park and Recreation**