



Benton County Conservation



FIELD TRIP GUIDE

Contact Information

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WHO WE ARE

Benton County Conservation (BCC) provides environmental education for students in Benton and surrounding counties. BCC sees over 6,000+ students every year through in-school visits and field trips. BCC offers a wide range of educational and recreational opportunities throughout the year.

BCC by the numbers

5	BOARD MEMBERS
8	SKILLED STAFF
26	PROPERTIES
40	MILES OF TRAILS
1,600+	ACRES OF LAND PROTECTED



SCHEDULING

BCC Naturalists' schedules fill very quickly. Naturalists will meet with teachers at the beginning of the school year to set up field trip dates and in-school visits. For field trips, BCC offers half or full day experiences. Most field trips will include several rotations. After viewing programming options, contact Aaron at aaskelson@bentoncountyparks.com to schedule a program.

GROUP SIZES

Field trips are limited to one grade level at a time unless they are single classes. The Nature Center can accommodate 70 students at one time. Groups larger than 70 can be accommodated at Rodgers and Hannen Lake Park. Special field trips to other BCC areas may be considered with adequate time to plan.



FIELD TRIP TIMES

BCC can offer staff-led activities from 9:30am-2:00pm. Field trips can be half days or shorter depending on age range and activities planned. Grades 2nd and under have rotations that last approximately 30 minutes, Grades 3rd and up will need a minimum of 45 minutes per rotation.



BEFORE YOU ARRIVE



We encourage carry in/carry out at all of our parks and facilities, meaning we prefer individuals take their own refuse with them when they leave. Please consider this when planning to attend one of our field trips.



We encourage all participants to bring reusable water bottles, sunscreen, and bug spray.



If the students are fishing, BCC will provide the bait with a reimbursement request from the participating school(s).



All students should wear closed-toed shoes. Please wear clothes that can get dirty and wet. Absolutely **NO FLIP FLOPS.**



Prepare students and chaperones for the field trip experience. This includes distributing schedules, assigning responsibilities, and making sure everyone is aware of proper attire.



Make sure students and chaperones are aware of expectations for the field trip.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PLANS

BCC staff are prepared to be outside in all weather conditions. We ask that students are also prepared, but understand that this isn't always possible. Therefore, teachers and administrators will be asked to make the decision to cancel or not. BCC will cancel the trip in the event of severe/dangerous weather. BCC does not reschedule field trips in the month of April or May. If the field trip is canceled, arrangements for BCC staff to come to the school for a shortened nature lesson can be requested.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

All students should wear closed-toed shoes. Please wear clothes that can get dirty and wet. Absolutely NO FLIP FLOPS. Apply sunscreen and bug spray before arriving. No sunscreen or bug spray should be applied in the Enclosed Shelter or any BCC buildings. Hats are recommended.

**Call Aaron (319-560-7017) or
Faith (319-560-9809) if you are
running 15 minutes late or early.**



TRIP LOGISTICS

ARRIVAL

BCC staff will meet the bus at the pre-designated area as students unload. Please have kids carry their lunch, or have all lunches together, and BCC staff will instruct where lunches need to be placed. We ask that students are in their designated groups and stay together. Each field trip will begin with introductions, expectations and the schedule for the day.

DURING THE VISIT

We ask that teachers and chaperones help ensure student safety. This includes providing supervision and discipline of the students. There should always be an adult present with students at all times. We request that teachers and chaperones refrain from using cell phones except for emergencies or photos. Engagement from an adult enhances the students' experiences!

LUNCH

We encourage carry in/carry out at all of our parks and facilities, meaning we prefer individuals take their own refuse with them when they leave. Please consider this when planning to attend one of our field trips. We ask that students sit in groups during lunch to help aid in quick cleanup.

There will be a 10 minute group clean up right after lunch to ensure all trash and food is picked up. Please keep students in the lunch area and naturalists will announce when groups can go to their next rotation. If a recycling bin is available, we ask that only EMPTY plastic bottles are placed in the bin.

If at Rodgers Park, lunch will be OUTSIDE the enclosed shelter unless otherwise instructed.

If at the Nature Center, lunch will be outside in the grassy area and picnic tables. No lunch on the deck or mulched areas, including the playground. Trash cans will be located by the Nature Center basement door, but we encourage carry in/carry out.



FIELD TRIP OFFERINGS

Join us at one of our properties for an educational and fun outdoor field trip! If you are interested in a program topic that is not on the list, please let us know. BCC Naturalists may be able to tailor an educational program to fit your needs.

Spring field trips fill up very quickly so please plan in advance. We also offer fall and winter field trips!

Pre-K

Hike - Look for animal signs with a naturalist.

Live Animal - Meet an Animal Ambassador! Learn all about one of our educational animals and get a chance to touch one, too.

Nature Crafts - We offer a wide variety of nature-related crafts

Games - Play nature-themed games.

Free Play - Play on our Naturescape and playground.

Bugs! - Flip logs and look for insects with a Naturalist.

Nature Bingo - Explore the great outdoors with a nature bingo card.

Kindergarten

Furs - What is a mammal? Find out what makes a mammal special. Look up close and touch some furs that come from different animals and talk about why they are unique.

Hike - Look for animal signs with a naturalist.

Live Animal - Meet an Animal Ambassador! Learn all about one of our educational animals and get a chance to touch one, too.

Nature Crafts - We offer a wide variety of nature-related crafts

Games - Play nature-themed games.

Free Play - Enjoy our playground and Naturescape.

Bugs! - Flip logs and look for insects with a Naturalist.

Nature Bingo - Explore the great outdoors with a nature bingo card.

1st Grade

Furs - What is a mammal? Find out what makes a mammal special. Look up close and touch some furs that come from different animals and talk about why they are unique.

Hike - Look for animal signs with a Naturalist.

Pond Study - Use dip nets to discover the magical insect world underwater! Learn about water quality and food chains by identifying macroinvertebrates.

Live Animal - Meet an Animal Ambassador! Learn all about one of our educational animals and get a chance to touch one, too.

Nature Crafts - We offer a wide variety of nature-related crafts.

Games - Play nature-themed games.

1st Grade Cont.

Free Play - Enjoy our playground and Naturescape.

Bugs! - Flip logs and look for insects with a naturalist.

Nature Bingo - Explore the great outdoors with a nature bingo card.

2nd Grade

Squirrels - learn about Iowa squirrels, look for squirrels and signs of squirrels on a hike, play a game and sign a song.

Hike - Look for animal signs with a Naturalist.

Pond Study - Use dip nets to discover the magical insect world underwater! Learn about water quality and food chains by identifying macroinvertebrates.

Insect Catching - Explore the great outdoors with an insect net! We will catch insects, identify them and learn about the insects that call Iowa their home.

Reptiles & Amphibian - Come learn the difference between reptiles and amphibians with an activity and live animals.

Games - Play nature-themed games.

3rd Grade

Nature Journaling - Learn how to make scientific observations in a journal. We will sit out in nature to draw some plants, insects and make observations.

Hike - Look for wildlife, animal signs, learn about plants and maybe eat a wild edible on a naturalist led hike.

Pond Study - Use dip nets to discover the magical insect world underwater! Learn about water quality and food chains by identifying macroinvertebrates.

Fishing - Try your luck at fishing on the lake! BCC will provide equipment and bait.

Reptiles & Amphibian - Come learn the difference between reptiles and amphibians with an activity and live animals.

Lakota Games - Play games that Lakota play such as Knee Coup and Bison Robe.

4th Grade

Atlatl - Discover one of the oldest hunting tools of mankind. Students will have the opportunity to try out their aim by using atlatls to throw darts at targets.

Archery - Use National Archery in School Program equipment and techniques to try archery.

Hike - Look for wildlife, animal signs, learn about plants and maybe eat a wild edible on a Naturalist led hike.

Canoeing - Learn about paddling basics, canoe and water safety and explore the lake! This is a weather and lake dependent activity.

Nature Journaling - Learn how to make scientific observations in a journal. We will sit out in nature to draw some plants, insects and make observations.

Pond Study - Use dip nets to discover the magical insect world underwater! Learn about water quality and food chains by identifying macroinvertebrates.

4th Grade Cont.

Fishing - Try your luck at fishing on the lake! BCC will provide equipment and bait.

Reptiles & Amphibian - Come learn the difference between reptiles and amphibians with an activity and live animals.

Insect Catching - Explore the great outdoors with an insect net! We will catch insects, identify them and learn about the insects that call Iowa their home.

5th Grade

Reptiles & Amphibian - Come learn the difference between reptiles and amphibians with an activity and live animals.

Nature Journaling - Learn how to make scientific observations in a journal. We will sit out in nature to draw some plants, insects and make observations.

Lakota Games - Play games that Lakota play such as Knee Coup and Bison Robe.

Fishing - Try your luck at fishing on the lake! BCC will provide equipment and bait.

Canoeing - Learn about paddling basics, canoe and water safety and explore the lake!

Canoeing is based on lake and weather conditions. If water to air temperatures are not within safety guidelines, or it is too windy, another activity will take place.

Games - Play nature-themed games.

Hike - Look for animal signs and find out which plants are edible. naturalist led.

Service Project - Give back to Benton County Conservation by helping us clean up our parks! Projects include pulling weeds, picking up litter, cleaning up a trail! Projects are season and park dependent.

Snowshoeing - If you can walk, you can snowshoe! Join a naturalist on a hike in snowshoes! We must have at least 4 inches of snow.

Fire Starting - Learn how to make friction fires in a survival setting! This program includes fire safety and team building.

6th Grade & Up

Orienteering - Participants will learn how to use and read a compass and work together to solve a riddle. This program takes an hour.

Atlatl - Discover one of the oldest hunting tools of mankind. Students will have the opportunity to try out their aim by using atlatls to throw darts at targets.

Archery - Use National Archery in School Program equipment and techniques to try archery.

Hike - Look for wildlife, animal signs, learn about plants and maybe eat a wild edible on a naturalist led hike.

Canoeing - Learn about paddling basics, canoe and water safety and explore the lake! This is a weather and lake dependent activity.

Pond Study - Use dip nets to discover the magical insect world underwater! Learn about water quality and food chains by identifying macroinvertebrates.

Fishing - Try your luck at fishing on the lake! BCC will provide equipment and bait.

6th Grade Cont.

Reptiles & Amphibian - Come learn the difference between reptiles and amphibians with an activity and live animals.

Lakota Games - Play games that Lakota play such as Knee Coup and Bison Robe Games - Play nature-themed games.

Nature Journaling - Learn how to make scientific observations in a journal. We will sit out in nature to draw some plants, insects and make observations.

Fire Starting - Learn how to make friction fires in a survival setting! This program includes fire safety and team building.

Snowshoeing - if you can walk, you can snowshoe! Join a Naturalist on a hike in snowshoes! We must have at least 4 inches of snow.

Service Project - Give back to Benton County Conservation by helping us clean up our parks! Projects include pulling weeds, picking up litter, cleaning up a trail! Projects are season and park dependent.

INTERESTED IN OTHER TOPICS?

If you have ideas for new lesson topics or activities, let us know! Please email us at aaskelson@bentoncountyparks.com or call us at 319-472-4942 to speak with a naturalist. When possible and with adequate time to plan, we are happy to create a lesson that is relevant to your curriculum!

