

# Wood Lake Nature Center

612-861-9365

6710 Lake Shore Drive

Richfield, MN 55423

[www.woodlakenaturecenter.org](http://www.woodlakenaturecenter.org)

Wood Lake Nature Center is a 150-acre park operated by the City of Richfield. Walking trails wind through the forest, marsh, and prairie, and across a floating boardwalk over the marsh. The trails are either blacktop or crushed limestone and most are wheelchair accessible during summer months.

Professionally-trained naturalists lead programs year-round, available for children and adults of all abilities (ages 4 and up). Classes are usually 1½ hours in length and have a naturalist/participant ratio of 1:15. Please call several months in advance to schedule a trip. There is no charge for parking or for supervising adults.

**Fees:** \$4 per participant (\$40 minimum per group)  
(School Groups: \$3 per student with a \$40 minimum)

Additional fee for snowshoe and cross-country ski rental and class supplies as listed

Classes are listed in order of topic, with seasonal availability and recommended grade levels. Most programs can be adapted to fit all ages, but the grade levels listed below are the staff's recommendations.

**Animal Adaptations** year-round 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Discover how adaptations aid in animal survival with a scavenger hunt, adaptation activity, and a look at live animals.

**Animal Camouflage** year-round pre-2<sup>nd</sup>  
Investigate how animals hide with a 'hide and seek' hike to find real hidden animals. End the class with a look at the camouflage on a live snake.

**Animal Homes** year-round 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Learn how animals' size and adaptations define their shelters. Hike to survey different animal homes.

**Animal Tracks** year-round 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Study track identification basics and hike to search for and identify tracks of resident animals. Make plaster casts of animal prints to take home. Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.

**Apple Cidering** Sept-Oct pre-6<sup>th</sup>  
Using an old-fashioned cider press, make apple cider and learn about the natural and cultural history of apples. Enjoy a fall hike, time allowing. Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.

**Bees and Honey** April-Sept 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Collect insects and learn about the bees' hive and life cycle. Finish the program with a sample of Wood Lake honey. Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.

**Birds Around Us** year-round 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Look at birds' amazing adaptations for survival in various habitats. Study real bird parts, participate in a bird behavior scavenger hunt, and see what kind of birds can be found at Wood Lake Nature Center.

**Birds Around Us- Advanced** year-round 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>  
Look at birds' amazing adaptations for survival in various habitats. Study real bird parts, learn how to use binoculars and a field guide, and see what kind of birds can be found at Wood Lake Nature Center.

**Cold-Blooded Critters** April-Oct 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Learn the attributes of animals with no fur or feathers, observe live specimens in their habitats, and participate in a 'hands-on' visit with some live cold-blooded critters.

**Compass Skills** year-round 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>  
After learning how to use a compass, experience some of its real-life applications by playing an orienteering game and finding an animal using radio telemetry.

<b><u>Critter Walk</u></b>	year-round	pre-2 <sup>nd</sup>
From trees to bees and everything in between, explore Wood Lake to observe and learn about nature's critters and their habitats.		
<b><u>Cross-Country Skiing</u></b>	Jan-Feb	5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Learn the basics of cross-country skiing with an indoor demonstration followed by practice outdoors. Snow conditions permitting. Additional ski rental cost: \$1 per participant.		
<b><u>Dead or Alive</u></b>	year-round	1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup>
Observe characteristics of living, dead, and inanimate (never alive) things and learn the difference between the three. Sort objects into the three categories and go on a hike to identify how all three things fit into nature's cycle of life.		
<b><u>Dinosaurs</u></b>	April-Oct	1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup>
Extract fossilized (plastic) dinosaur bones at a simulated 'dig site' and learn about the science of paleontology. Look at real fossils, then reconstruct a skeleton using bones from the 'dig site'.		
<b><u>Endangered Species</u></b>	year-round	2 <sup>nd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>
Learn the difference between endangered, threatened, and extinct. Play an active game to learn what it's like to be a threatened specie, then meet a live turtle that's threatened in Minnesota.		
<b><u>Flight</u></b>	April-Oct	5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Discuss and see examples of the four types of flight and go outside to experiment with boomerangs and water rockets.		
<b><u>Food Web</u></b>	year-round	2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup>
Observe the interdependency of all living things with an interactive game and a hike.		
<b><u>Hot Air Balloons</u></b>	year-round	4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Discover the physics of hot air balloon flight, then construct and launch a model hot air balloon. Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.		
<b><u>Insect Study</u></b>	April-Sept	1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>
Using sweep nets and magnifying 'bug boxes', find and observe insects and other invertebrates in the prairie and forest.		
<b><u>Insect Study- Advanced</u></b>	April-Sept	4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Using sweep nets, magnifying 'bug boxes', and a scavenger hunt sheet, perform a mini field experiment to find, observe, and sort insects and other invertebrates using a classification key.		
<b><u>Invasives! (Natural Resource Management)</u></b>	May-Sept	5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Learn about invasive plants and animals, then take part in restoring Wood Lake's diversity by removing buckthorn and/or other invasive plants.		
<b><u>Keeping Warm</u></b>	Dec-Mar	3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>
Learn about the importance of insulation for animals that live in cold climates. Make predictions about the effectiveness of various insulative materials and carry out an experiment to test the predictions.		
<b><u>Light and Energy</u></b>	year-round	5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Observe properties of light and energy through hands-on experimentation and a fun game to test vocabulary knowledge.		
<b><u>Maple Syruping</u></b>	Feb-Mar	1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Learn about the natural and cultural history of maple syruping. Identify and tap maple trees, collect sap, and turn syrup into a maple sugar treat.		
<b><u>Marsh Explorers</u></b>	May-Sept	pre-6 <sup>th</sup>
Discover the incredible variety of animals, insects, and plants that live in the marsh. Dip into the marsh with a collection cup to explore the hidden depths of this diverse wetland.		
<b><u>Marsh Explorers- Advanced</u></b>	May-Sept	3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Discover the incredible variety of animals, insects, and plants that live in the marsh. Dip into the marsh with a net and collection cup to explore this diverse wetland, then examine caught specimens with a video projection microscope.		
<b><u>Migration and Hibernation</u></b>	Sept-Feb	2 <sup>nd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>
Identify the ways animals (including humans) adapt for winter. Hike to find signs of animal activity and play a migration game to learn about the importance of habitat for migrating animals.		

<b><u>Muskrat Safari</u></b>	Jan-Feb	1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup>
Learn about adaptations of aquatic and land mammals. Go out to the marsh to search for muskrat lodges and get a glimpse of life under the ice.		
<b><u>Native American Life</u></b>	year-round	3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>
Experience what life may have been like for Native Americans. Cook stickbread over a fire, use bone tools, play battledoor, and learn about the plants and animals used for survival. Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.		
<b><u>Nature Close-up</u></b>	year-round	3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>
Using magnifying glasses and microscopes, study wings, fur, plants, and other nature closer than ever before. On a hike, collect something special to observe under a microscope, then try to identify some common household objects close-up.		
<b><u>Nature's Needs</u></b>	year-round	pre-2 <sup>nd</sup>
Identify the things both animals and plants need to survive, listen to a story, then explore Wood Lake's forest and prairie. End the class with a visit from a live salamander.		
<b><u>Predator/Prey</u></b>	year-round	2 <sup>nd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Compare the adaptations of predators and prey by looking at skulls of herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores. Play a game to simulate predator/prey relationships and watch a video of predators in action.		
<b><u>Senses Around</u></b>	April-Oct	pre-2 <sup>nd</sup>
Explore the trails using the senses of sight, touch, hearing, and smelling through a fun hike with activities.		
<b><u>Snowshoeing</u></b>	Jan-Feb	1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Experience the joy of walking on top of snow, conditions permitting. Additional snowshoe rental cost: \$1 per participant.		
<b><u>Soil, Rocks, and Minerals</u></b>	April-Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup>
Learn the difference between igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks and compare their characteristics. Discover how they turn into a key component of soil and explore soil's other ingredients.		
<b><u>Survival Shelters</u></b>	year-round	5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Learn about the basics of survival, then test survival skills by making a shelter out of natural materials.		
<b><u>Taxidermy for Beginners</u></b>	year-round	3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Learn about taxidermy and anatomy by removing and tanning a mouse pelt from a frozen domestic mouse used for animal feeding. Additional supply cost: \$2 per mouse.		
<b><u>Trees, Leaves, and Seeds</u></b>	April-Nov	1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup>
Discover how plants grow and learn about their leaves and seeds. Collect seeds to find out how plants are able to spread out without being able to move.		
<b><u>Water Quality</u></b>	May-Sept	6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Test the quality of water at Wood Lake with testing kits and an up-close look at living water quality indicators.		
<b><u>Weather &amp; Water Cycle</u></b>	year-round	3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Using infrared thermometers and anemometers, learn why we have weather and how to measure it, and see firsthand how the water cycle works.		
<b><u>Wild Edible Plants</u></b>	May-Sept	4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
Discuss how to identify, collect, and prepare wild edible plants. Sample some of Wood Lake's wild edibles and prepare a simple wild edible recipe. Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.		
<b><u>Worm Cookies</u></b>	May-Sept	3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
For adventurous groups! Learn about the life history and significance of earthworms, then dig up worms to clean, cook, and mix with dough to make real worm cookies. (No kidding; they're delicious!) Class supply fee: \$5 for 1-15 students, \$10 for 16-30 students.		

**Adults and groups with special needs:** All of Wood Lake's programs and classes are adaptable to meet the needs of the participants, including adults, seniors, people with disabilities, at-risk youth, or other special populations. Please call Wood Lake to discuss which program would be appropriate for your group and any special needs your group may have.