

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES & CLASSES

Along the Portage P.M.

Minnesota's history is closely tied to the land, and way of life for Minnesotans has changed dramatically over the years. Through an interactive character program, students explore the history of the local landscape during the fur trade. As students learn about the lives of voyageurs, they will get a chance to test their strength and skills and will gain a greater appreciation for years gone by.

Birding Basics DAY

Take flight as we learn about the birds around us. Students will learn what makes birds unique among animals as well as the basics of bird identification. Then, using high quality binoculars and a field guide for identification, groups will visit feeders for a close-up peek at some well known song-bird species, explore the trails for a glimpse of forest dwellers, and have the chance to sit quietly as wild Chickadees approach.

Can't See The Tree Thru The Forest DAY

Trees surround us. We spend time in them and under them as youngster and use their shade to cool us as we age. Trees play an important role in our world; from providing oxygen and influencing ecosystems to producing food and wood products that we use daily throughout our lives. Students will go on an outing with our Naturalists in the forest to explore more closely a tree and examine the layers of the a tree to learn more on how trees function and grow. Students will also age 80+ year old trees and write a history of the tree using biological event and historical bench markers.

Fireside Stories P.M.

Gathering around the fire to hear stories of legends and the natural world leaves students with warm memories. Our staff will read these stories to your students in a setting that is calm and comforting. If you and your staff are interested in doing a more lively activity after the story telling or in place of it, please inform our staff and you will be welcome to lead your students in these types of activities during this time.

Dumpster Diving P.M.

We all have opportunities to recycle. It seems like a simple idea, but what do we know about recycling and the products we use? Students work together as the Dumpster Diving game show teaches them about some of the products they use in their lives and gives them a few easy ideas to help the environment.

Frog Pond

Leap into the world of amphibians, and find out why frogs are considered an indicator species for environmental health. Our live frogs and toads, as well as tadpoles in the spring, help students understand frog biology and habitat requirements. An active outdoor game enlivens the students' indoor learning.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) DAY

Navigating through the woods, making waypoints, and searching for something—that's GPS class. Students love GPS technology and following our course in search of their next destination. With these opportunities at their fingertips, they quickly master the basics of GPS, discover the uses and limitations of GPS, and eagerly find their way through the woods.

Go Bats! P.M.

Uncover the truth about this mysterious, graceful and essential creature. Students learn the real story behind popular misconceptions about bats: "Bats are blind!" "Bats get tangled in your hair!" "Bats suck blood!" What leads to these misunderstandings? How are bats beneficial? In a predator-prey simulation activity, students experience first-hand the adaptation of echolocation.

Great Games P.M.

An array of active games will burn off energy, encourage teamwork, and strengthen group cohesiveness. Activities may take place indoors or out, and include goal-oriented, non-competitive games. You may request your own games, or suggest students' favorites.

Jeopardy DAY

How much did your students learn at LLCC? They will impress you during LLCC Jeopardy! This class is set up as a game show, and teams of students will compete to show what they have learned. Jeopardy also serves as a great activity to review terms and concepts that showed up during other classes.

Journal Writing P.M.

Writing and illustrating help students reflect on their Long Lake Experience. School staff is responsible for the format and content of the journals. Specific questions, writing and drawing prompts, and blank pages are all excellent possibilities. This quiet-time activity is scheduled in conjunction with Canteen in the evening.

Lake Hike DAY

See the abundant, teachable moments nature offers on LLCC's 760 acres. This naturalist-guided hike might take you along the lake shore, through woods featuring a variety of tree species, and across a meadow. Sights along the way may include tracks, wildflowers, a beaver lodge, birds, edible plants, and much more. Students are encouraged to make observations and ask questions.

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES & CLASSES

Loons, Lore, and More DAY

The haunting call of Minnesota's state bird intrigues all who come to the north country. Students in this class learn about loon calls and the cultural importance of loons through history. A fun dress-up activity helps students understand loons' physical adaptations. Finally, students play an outdoor game that immerses them in the challenges of loon life and showcases how pollution bio-accumulates and makes its way up the food chain.

Minnesota Trees DAY

Do you have a favorite tree? If so, how do you recognize it? Students will learn some of the identifying characteristics of native Minnesota trees as well as how to use a dichotomous key which they will then utilize in a race to identify some common campus trees. Once finished, we will discuss some of the amazing products trees provide and some fun facts about each species identified.

Oh, Deer! P.M.

The essential components of habitat are food, water, shelter, and space. In this activity, students take on the roles of deer and habitat components, allowing them to understand wildlife population dynamics and limiting factors within ecosystems. To reinforce the concepts, students play a game that simulates deer ecology.

Orienteering DAY

Orienteering is one of Long Lake's best-loved traditions. Students learn the basic navigation by shooting and finding bearings with a compass. They practice their new skills on our outdoor orienteering field.

Orienteering Race DAY

5...4...3...2...1...Go! With compasses in hand, a flight of students dash to the starting board. "Yellow course, 253 degrees!" The orienteers take off into the woods in pursuit of their next clue in one of LLCC's most exciting activities. When they all return, we'll compile the results and hold an awards ceremony, to see if anyone set a new World Record. Prerequisite: general orienteering class. **Advanced Race available as well.** Check with staff.

Quick Frozen Critters DAY

A snowshoe hare feeding along the edge of the forest suddenly freezes when danger lurks near. The lynx is on the prowl. Students in this activity learn about population dynamics, relationships between prey species and their predators, and how animals are specially adapted for the best chance to eat but not be eaten. A freeze-tag game helps students understand survival in the wild. Class concludes with a role playing discussion of wildlife management techniques.

Resource Distribution P.M.

All humans utilize natural resources. Concerns continue to grow that humanity's "wants" are depleting the earth's ability to provide for our basic "needs" in the future. Our Resource Distribution Game Show helps students simulate a global community, encouraging them to think—and act—wisely when they use natural resources.

The Scoop on Poop

Ew, poop? Yes, poop. We have a mystery to solve, and a pile of poop is one of our best clues. Examining "scat" can uncover indicators not only of an animal's species, but also its basic eating habits, health, population numbers, and much more. This topic may sound gross, but students leave talking about all they learned, and they don't soon forget.

Snakes Alive! P.M.

Slithering and hissing, snakes carry a negative image that few other critters do. Yet few animals are so fascinating. Students learn about Minnesota's native snakes and how they are adapted for life in their ecosystems. We'll bring out our resident reptiles, including garter, bull, fox, and hognose, snakes, to provide real life examples and thrill the kids. . . and the adults!

Weasel Watch DAY

This crowd is savage, blood-thirsty, and has a nose for trouble. Among the most interesting and mysterious of our native neighbors, weasels have an array of adaptations that students enjoy learning about. Students plunge into an outdoor game simulating the challenges weasels face as they feed their extraordinary metabolisms and avoid predators themselves.

Web Works P.M.

Meet Charlotte, our larger-than-life, in-house spider. As Charlotte introduces the fascinating world of arachnids to students, they gain an appreciation for the role that invertebrates play in relation to other living things. Students get actively involved through an outdoor, predator-prey game.

Wilderness Snack DAY

Just one match? That's the challenge: build an environmentally sound fire, cook your dessert, and "leave no trace". . . but be careful, because you only get one match! Along with environmental ethic and outdoor skills, Wilderness Snack is an exercise in the life skills of teamwork and cooperation as students work together to succeed.

Who Gives a Hoot? P.M.

An owl has an assortment of special tools that make it an efficient hunter. We'll talk about the wide variation of owl species, and a student volunteer will help demonstrate the unique adaptations these raptors share. In the "Hoot" role-play game, always a favorite, students play a slow, silent version of tag to demonstrate how owls can capture prey without even seeing it.

SPRING AND FALL ACTIVITIES & CLASSES

Archery DAY

The student slowly draws the bow, takes aim, and lets the arrow fly. Students quickly learn the challenge and the lure of archery, one of the oldest forms of hunting in the world. Our archery field is designed with safety as top priority, and has stands for eight archers at a time. At their turn, students practice the coordination and concentration necessary to hit the target.

Beaver: Gnawin' Again DAY

What Minnesota mammal eats birch branches like corn on the cob and can clamp its nose and ears closed when swimming? Beavers are equally at home on land and water, and engineer elaborate dams and lodges. In this class, students explore the world of the beaver and visit an active beaver lodge.

Bog Trek DAY

At the center of an ancient, glacial lake bed, LLCC is an ideal location to investigate the unique bog environment. Populated by remarkable plants such as the carnivorous pitcher plant, edible Labrador tea, various orchids, and tamarack trees, the bog has a illuminating history. Be prepared for a sloppy, gloppy trek into the peat itself on our Bog Trek.

Canoeing DAY

The waters of 130-acre Long Lake provide the perfect setting for beginning canoeists. Students receive PFDs (life jackets), paddles, and instruction on land before venturing onto the water. Once on the water, students practice the art of canoeing. This is done while maneuvering through a skills course finishing with a water scavenger hunt.

Challenge Cooperation Course DAY

Across Lava River, onto the Teeter-Totter, through the Blind Maze and over the Wall. . . . To achieve these and other challenges, students have to think creatively, communicate independently, and cooperate effectively. After discussing their successes and ways they might improve, students will want to do each station again. . . but they'll be more eager to try the next station on the CCC trail.

Dissolved Oxygen

With our test tubes, water samples, and testing equipment, the Dissolved Oxygen activity is an excellent introduction to water chemistry. The testing procedure helps students understand the basics of scientific method. The test results contribute to a discussion of aquatic biology, food chains, photosynthesis, and water quality.

Lake Bottom Organisms DAY

The lake's edge teems with life, from fairy shrimp to dragonfly nymphs, from cadis fly larva to water boatmen. Students venture to the lake or ephemeral pond and use nets and strainers to collect hundreds of astonishing critters. Students will also have a chance to estimate water quality in the lake using a Biotic Index. They learn about aquatic habitats and use microscopes and hand lenses to discover the complex world of lake bottom organisms.

Night Trek P.M.

Just because the sun goes down doesn't mean we can't continue learning outdoors. Guided by our naturalists, students find that nighttime in the north woods isn't scary, but instead a wonderful time to observe nature. You'll learn about the lives of animals at night and listen for the call of owls and other nocturnal creatures to respond to our calls. Students will also have the opportunity to learn about how nighttime vision works for humans and other animals. This class is limited to groups of 100 or less students.

Woodcock Sky Dance P.M.

With his comical strut and persistent "peent. . . peent. . . peent" call, the American woodcock is quite the character. A spectacular, spiraling sky dance is the highlight of his courtship ritual. After a lesson in woodcock biology, students have the opportunity to silently observe this unique bird's springtime show, staged on Long Lake's meadow at dusk. This class is limited to groups of 100 or less students.

(April & May only)

The Hidden Life of Insects DAY

What are the most common animals on the face of the earth? Creepy, crawly, fascinating insects! Take a closer look, and we'll find insects are just as awe-inspiring as a wolf or an eagle. Students "build their own" camouflaged insect to hide in our indoor "habitat," and may also participate in an active, outdoor game modeling insect life.

WINTER ACTIVITIES & CLASSES

Alpha Wolf P.M.

One of Long Lake's oldest, most requested traditions, "Alpha Wolf" places students—and adults—at the heart of a "wolf pack." Gray wolves provoke both reverence and fear in people around the world. This activity helps students examine the natural history of gray wolves and their roles in ecosystems. Then, we enter the dim, snow-covered woods and try to reunite our scattered pack by howling. . . and searching for Alpha.

Cross Country Skiing DAY

The stillness of the winter woods, the sparkle of fresh snow, and the swish of skis on the trail. . . every student should have the opportunity to experience cross country skiing. In this activity, students learn the basics of skiing equipment and method: kick and glide, hill climbing, and, of course, falling down. Our ski trail, with loops of different lengths, is the perfect setting for learners. (Requires good snow-cover: check with LLCC staff.)

Deer Browse DAY

When the ground is blanketed in snow, lakes are covered by ice, and forests have gone dormant for the winter, whitetailed deer must still find food. In this activity, students role-play as deer, foraging browse to fill their "rumen." Meanwhile, they must stay vigilant predators. Whether they "survive" or not, students come to understand the challenges wildlife face in winter.

Hypothermia/Survival P.M.

Hypothermia can strike anyone, so it is vital to be prepared. This activity guides students through the prevention of hypothermia, how to recognize its symptoms, and how to treat it. We provide guidelines for survival in a variety of conditions and finish with a trivia quiz game.

Snowshoeing DAY

Vast expanses of untrampled woods are open to those who travel on snowshoes. When students have begun to master the challenge of walking with "big feet," we venture into the breathtaking beauty of LLCC's forest, rolling glacial hills, and bogs. Snowshoe tramps lead off the beaten track, into the realm of winter wildlife. (Requires at least 12 inches of good snow: check with LLCC staff.)

Snow Snakes DAY

This traditional American Indians pastime engrosses students. First we learn how and why the Ojibwe and diverse other native people made carved and decorated wooden sticks known as snowsnakes. Then, on a packed snow track, students hone their skills at gliding their snakes accurately and swiftly, striving for distance.

Star-Gazing P.M.

The nighttime sky over Long Lake is an exceptional venue for star-gazing due to our distance from light pollution. We introduce students to major constellations, plus tales they can use as memory tricks when looking up at the sky on their own. The class can take place indoors or out, depending on weather.

Thicket

What's the best strategy to avoid being seen? In this wildlife version of hide-and-seek, students realize how easy—and how challenging—staying out of sight can be. Students learn about both physical adaptations (camouflage) and behavioral adaptations ("Shh, sit still!") . Then students take on roles of "hider" and "seeker" and apply what they've learned.

VIDEOS

Feature Films

The Bear
A Bug's Life
Cool Runnings
Never Cry Wolf

Educational Films

Bats and How They Live
Cold, Wet, & Alive
Cry of the Marsh
The Dinosaurs
The Eyes Have It
Insects
Legacy of a Loon
Legend of the Wolf
Lyme Disease: Facts for Kids

Lyme Disease: The Outdoor Menace
Pageantry of Grouse
Rise and Fall of the Great Lakes
The Secret World of Bats
Wild Cats
Wolf Pack
Woodcock (Wild America)
Woodcock (Mousehome Refuge)
Yellowstone Fires