



# Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center

## Educational Programs

We offer year-round opportunities for children, adults and families to connect with nature. Our facility introduces the habitats, flora, and fauna of southern New England through natural history exhibits and interactive displays with live birds of prey, reptiles and amphibians. Woodlands, wetlands and meadows surrounding us, and throughout the region, serve as living outdoor classrooms for exploration and discovery.

Educational services include:

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- Standards-based school programs and field trips
  - In-house programs for schools, scouts, civic groups, corporations and other groups
  - Nature-based preschool
  - Summer Nature Camp for ages 3-14
  - Group overnights and special events
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Whether you come to us or we go to you, DPNC educators help expand understanding and appreciation of the natural world and foster scientific capability using innovative teaching tools and techniques. In the classroom or in the field, students learn with live animals, mounted specimens, monitoring equipment, and natural objects. All of our programs include specific academic activities that meet CT and RI state science standards and national environmental education standards.

### **Costs:**

Nature Center (2 hour program)

Includes Museum admission and program of your choice . . . . . \$10/child

Program minimum . . . . . \$100

Off-site field trip (2 hour program) . . . . . \$9.50/child

Program minimum . . . . . \$95

In-school and Outreach Programs (1 hour program)

Designed for groups of 30 or less . . . . . \$125/program

Program series (i.e. afterschool) of 4 programs or more . . . . . \$100/program

Auditorium program for groups of 50 people or more . . . . . \$150/program

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# Programs

## *Biology*

**Animals! Animals!** Meet a variety of live animals and discover similarities and differences between them. Are they covered in feathers or fur? How do they move? Where do they live? What do they eat? Answer these questions and more as you explore the wild animal kingdom. K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2

### **Adaptations:**

Plants and animals have structural and behavioral adaptations that help them survive. Learn about the special body parts and behaviors through hands-on activities, games, live animals and natural objects. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 6.2

### **Alive or Not?**

Categorize different objects as living or non-living. Learn about the characteristics that distinguish living things from non-living things as you interact with live animals and plants. K.1, K.2, K.4, 1.2, 2.2, 3.3, 4.2

**Animal Senses:** Investigate the keen senses of a wide array of different animals. Meet live snakes, turtles, frogs and owls and investigate how they use their senses to survive in the wild. K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2

**Beaks, Feet and Feathers:** Explore the amazing adaptations of birds! Enjoy a nature hike with binoculars to observe wild birds in their natural habitats. Play games and participate in the hands-on “Bird Beak Buffet” activity. Optional activity, nest building, provides a unique perspective on how difficult it can be to create a bird nest! K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 6.2

**Creepers and Leapers:** Live frogs, toads, turtles and snakes provide a hands-on introduction to the interesting adaptations of our native amphibians and reptiles. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2

**Inspect an Insect:** Use microscopes and hand lenses to investigate features that all insects have in common. Learn about different families of insects as we explore a meadow and collect live specimens for identification and study. K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2

**Living Life Cycles:** Did you know that a dragonfly starts its life crawling around the mucky floor of the pond? Many plants and animals go through various stages throughout their life. Explore and compare life cycles of frogs, turtles, butterflies, dragonflies and more. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 6.2

**Owl Prowl:** Get up close and personal with a live owl! Learn about owls’ unique adaptations for nocturnal life, and dissect an owl pellet to find prey bones that can be taken home with you! K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2

**Plants:** Flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees are all very important parts of a healthy ecosystem. Learn the basic plant parts with a 3D plant model, discover what they provide to animals, and learn how their amazing lifecycles work. Optional activity – flower dissection. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 6.2

**Pollinators:** Learn about the special relationship between plants and their pollinators – insects, butterflies, birds and many other animals! K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2

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## *Earth Science*

**Landforms:** What are the forces that shape our planet? Learn about volcanic activity, earthquakes, weathering and erosion through a variety of hands-on activities. Explore local geology and landforms for a deeper understanding of the forces that shape our planet. 3.3, 3.4, 4.3, 7.3

**Rocks and Minerals:** After learning about the basic groups of rocks – sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic – investigate their mineral composition by close observation, touch and testing. Then get moving with the Rock Cycle Ruckus game! K.1, K.4, 3.3, 3.4, 7.3

**Water Quality:** Take a close look at how water shapes and changes the earth, and how humans impact the water cycle. Hands-on activities include chemical water testing (pH & Nitrates), adding pollutants to the 3D Enviroscope, and becoming a drop of water in the water cycle game! K.2, 3.4, 4.3, 6.4, 7.3

**Soils:** Soils are essential to life on Earth! Investigate the properties of different soil types by looking at their particles and how much water they can hold. Learn about the important role soil has for plants, animals, and us! K.1, K.2, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3, 4.3, 6.2

**Through the Seasons:** Animals and plants adapt to seasonal changes. Depending on the season of your program, we will learn how animals prepare for hibernation, how plants sprout, or how animals migrate. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2

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## *Ecosystem Programs*

**Ecosystems:** Ecosystems include live plants and animals as well as nonliving components such as soil, air and water. Take a close look at some of Connecticut’s ecosystems, their food webs and how those ecosystems change over time. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 3.2, 3.4, 4.2, 6.2, 6.4

**Long Island Sound Study:** In-class – Learn about the creatures that inhabit Long Island Sound and why estuaries are some of the most ecologically productive places on Earth. Field Study – Spend time on the shores of Long Island Sound at Bluff Point, Barn Island or a shore location near you. Test the water and use seine and dip nets to capture a wide array of fish and invertebrates. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 6.2, 6.4

**Pond Life:** Collect and observe different specimens from our on-site pond or yours. Use nets to go ‘Pond-Dipping’ and discover who lives in the pond. Learn about unique pond animals such as fish, frogs and aquatic insects. K.1, K.2, K.3, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 6.2, 6.4

**Symmetry in Nature:** There are patterns in nature! Meet some live animals and then take a nature hike that focuses on the symmetry that is found in many living things. K.1, K.2, 1.2, 1.3, 4.2, 6.2

### **Create your own program**

Are you looking for something not listed above? We are flexible with our programming and can design a program to suit your specific needs. Programs can include gardening, tracking, orienteering, bats, endangered species, wildflowers, Native American life, Early American life, mammals, trees, and many other natural science topics.

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## **Science Core Framework Standards**

### **Kindergarten**

K.1 – Objects have properties that can be observed and used to describe similarities and differences.

K.2 – Many different kinds of living things inhabit the Earth.

K.3 – Weather conditions vary daily and seasonally.

K.4 – Some objects are natural, while others have been designed and made by people to improve quality of life.

### **1st grade**

1.1 – The sun appears to move across the sky in the same way every day, but its path changes gradually over the seasons.

1.2 – Living things have different structures and behaviors that allow them to meet their basic needs.

1.3 – Organisms change in form and behavior as part of their life cycles.

### **2nd grade**

2.2 – Plants change their forms as part of their life cycles.

2.3 – Earth materials have varied physical properties which make them useful in different ways.

### **3rd grade**

3.2 – Organisms can survive and reproduce only in environments that meet their basic needs.

3.3 – Earth materials have different physical and chemical properties.

3.4 – Earth materials provide resources for all living things, but these resources are limited and should be conserved.

### **4th grade**

4.2 – All organisms depend on the living and non-living features of the environment for survival.

4.3 – Water has a major role in shaping the Earth's surface.

### **5th grade**

5.2 – Perceiving and responding to information about the environment is critical to the survival of organisms.

### **6th grade**

6.2 – An ecosystem is composed of all the populations that are living in a certain space and the physical factors with which they interact.

### **7th grade**

7.3 – Landforms are the result of the interaction of constructive and destructive forces over time.