A new year offers new opportunities! Depending on what your school is looking for, programs can be held in-school, online, at DPNC or another natural area of your choice! All programs include natural artifacts, live animals, activities and engaging educators.

The Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center has decades of experience educating students of all grade levels about the diverse ecosystems of Southern New England. Whether in class, online, at DPNC we help students of all ages learn about the natural world, while meeting Next Generation Science standards.

Program Choices

All of the following programs can be conducted online, in person or on a field trip. All programs are custom designed to meet your classroom needs and grade level.

**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.

**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.

**Alive or Not?** Categorize different objects as living or nonliving. Learn about the characteristics that distinguish living things from nonliving things as you interact with live animals and plants.

**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.

**Habitats:** Forests to oceans, wetlands to meadows, habitats are homes. Learn the 5 things that all habitats must have and more about the plants, animals and geology that make up the diverse habitats of Connecticut.

**Frogs and Salamanders:** Amphibians have incredible life cycles and adaptations. Students will have an opportunity to meet live frogs as they learn more about them and their important roles in the ecosystem.

**Beavers:** Master engineers, beavers have incredible physical and behavioral adaptations. Students learn how these adaptations allow beavers to alter and engineer habitats for their survival. During this class students will create and test their own beaver dam.

**Trees:** Trees are the backbone of Connecticut’s forested landscape. Learn about the amazing adaptations these plants have, their incredible diversity, and essential roles they play in the ecosystem.
**Seeds:** Learn the parts of a seed by dissecting one and discover the incredible ways that plants use their seeds to spread their families. Students will engineer their own seed dispersal mechanisms.

**Flowers:** Flowers come in an incredible array of shapes, sizes and colors. Students will have a chance to dissect a flower and learn the roles pollination plays in plant reproduction.

**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!

**Creepers and Leapers:** Live frogs, toads, turtles and snakes provide a hands-on introduction to the interesting adaptations of our native amphibians and reptiles.

**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.

**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.

**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!

**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, the program will include flower and seed dissection.

**Pollinators:** Learn about the special relationship between plants and their pollinators – insects, butterflies, birds and many other animals!

**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.

**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!

**Water Wonders:** 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 Enviroscape, and becoming a drop of water in the water cycle game!

**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!

**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.

**Ecosystems:** Ecosystems include live plants and animals as well as non living 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.
**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.

**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.

**Watersheds:** Protecting the entire watershed is critical to maintaining healthy water sources for people and wildlife. Students will learn to identify their local watersheds, use the Enviroscape model to see how pollutants can travel through the watershed and learn ways to help protect it. On field trips students will explore the different areas of the Pequotsepos watershed.

**Growing Food:** Visit the Giving Garden and surrounding habitats to explore techniques for growing fruit and vegetables with activities involving plant life cycles, soil and pest control.

**Cultural History of the Land:** Land shapes our culture and history. Learn how the Coogan Farm landscape influenced the people who lived and worked there by examining foundations, stonewalls, watersheds and more.

**Natural Illustrating:** Learning the basic techniques of scientific illustration students gain an appreciation for the beauty and adaptations of our local plant and animal species.

**Nature Engineering:** Learn how nature has influenced design and, using simple materials, build and test designs inspired by the environment.

**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, amphibians, reptiles, tracking, orienteering, bats, endangered species, wildflowers, mammals, trees, and many other natural science topics.

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**Program Details**

**To book a program or for more information**

Please contact:

Kim Hargrave, Education Director
860-572-6800 khargrave@dpnc.org

**Costs:**

**Online Programs**

- Online program via Zoom, Google Meets or platform of your choice
- 45 minute program: $100

**Field Trips**

- Nature Center, Coogan Farm or Off-site

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**All on site field trips include museum admission**

- 2 hour program ......................... $10/child
- 4 hour program ......................... $15/child
- Minimum cost ......................... $100

**In-school Programs**

- Designed for groups of 30 or less ........ $125/program
- Program series (i.e. after school) of
- 4 programs or more ................. $100/program

Travel Fees may apply

Please reach out if your school would struggle paying fees. DPNC may have a grant that can help.