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Outdoor Activities Planning Guide



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Revised 2017

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Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Outdoor Careers	1	Meet a Park Naturalist (visit a local state park or nature center and have the children interview the naturalist)
		2	Meet a Conservation Officer
		3	Meet a Biologist
		4	Meet a Fish Hatchery Supervisor (visit local fish hatchery and have the children interview the supervisor)

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Nature Art	1	Wildlife Sketching
		2	Leaf Prints
		3	Fish Printing
		4	Nature Collages

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	In the Sky	1	Birding
		2	Make a Kite
		3	Cloud Shapes/Cloud Racing
		4	Rockets (make straw rockets and stomp rockets and compete to see whose can fly the farthest)



Introduction

Greetings! On behalf of Project Get Outdoors, we want to thank you for your efforts to connect children to nature exploration and outdoor learning!

This guide book has been designed to accompany the Project GO activity backpack and Leader Certification training. These resources are provided to empower youth-serving organizations to incorporate nature activities into out-of-school programs.

Included in your activity backpack, you will find the following items:

- Activity calendar
- Bandanas (3)
- Balloons
- Binoculars
- Bubbles
- Bug box
- Bug net
- Chalk
- Clipboard
- Cloud frame
- Duct tape
- Field guide
- First Aid kit
- Foam ball
- GO cards
- Journal with pen
- Magnifying glass
- Paint swatches
- Parent’s Guide to Nature Play
- Pop-up bug habitat
- Rope (50 foot)
- Ruler
- Whistle

Just keep it simple, be creative and have fun! More activity ideas can be found on the Project GO website at www.mnprojectgo.org.

Good luck to you in your outdoor adventures!

Sara Holger

Founder of Project Get Outdoors, Inc.

Outdoor Activity Ideas

Name of Activity	Backpack Supplies Needed	Description
Adopt A Tree	Paper, pen, ruler	Pick a tree to observe, measure, sketch and write about throughout the year.
Alphabet Hike	Paper, Pen	Take a walk around town and try to find things that start with each letter of the alpha-
Ball Games	Foam Ball	See short activity list on pages 10–12.
Balloon Games	Balloons	See short activity list on pages 10–12.
Bat & Moth Game	1 Blindfold	See page 11.
Bird Nest Walk	Binoculars	Try to find different kinds of bird nests.
Bird Watching	Binoculars, field guide	Hide pictures of birds along a walking trail or route and lead the group out to find the
Blindfold Games	Blindfolds	See short activity list on pages 10–12.
Blindfold Walk	Blindfolds, rope	Blindfold participants and have them hold on to the rope while leading them on a sensory nature walk. Or have them partner up with someone who is not blind folded
Cloud Watching	Paper, pen	Participants lay on their backs and watch the sky for 10 minutes. One person is the secretary and makes note of all of the different shapes seen in the clouds.
Creature Clues	Paper, Pen	Hike to find different animal signs.
Crime Scene Investigators	Paper, Pen	Have participants search for “crime scenes” in the forest or nature area and note clues about what happened (feathers, tracks, fur,
Don’t Break The Ice Game	Whistle	Have participants mimic activities you can do on the ice (hockey, skating, ice fishing) when the whistle is sounded, it means the ice is breaking and participants must stop, drop and spread out on the floor. The last one down is out. Repeat this until there is only

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	MN Rocks	1	Fossil Collecting
		2	Rock Hunt (show the kids some of the most common types of rocks in MN and then give them each a rock bingo card listing the names of the kinds of rocks. Take a hike and see who is the first to fill a row)
		3	Stone Art (make art using small stones and pebbles
		4	Cave Tour or local geology site tour

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Camping	1	Tents and Shelters
		2	Campfires and Cooking
		3	Orienteering
		4	Leave No Trace Activities

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Hunting	1	Archery
		2	Animal Tracking
		3	Camouflage Games
		4	Animal Calling at local state park or natural area

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Insects	1	Sidewalk Safari (have the children work in teams to count all of the insects they find crawling in the cracks of the sidewalk)
		2	Dragonflies (Make a dragonfly from clothespins and two popsicle sticks. Decorate with paint or markers).
		3	Weird Bugs (have children work in teams to collect strange insects and use field guides to try to identify them)
		4	Butterflies/Monarch Tagging



Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Forests	1	Adopt-A-Tree (Have each child find a tree in the forest that they will adopt. Have them describe the tree in their journals and visit the tree throughout the year)
		2	Make a Willow Basket
		3	Tree Planting
		4	Forest Hike (scavenger hunt at local state park or natural area to find certain kinds of trees listed)

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	MN Waters	1	Shoreline Cleanup
		2	Water Study (Electro-shocking demonstration)
		3	Build a Raft (small groups work with various materials to construct tiny rafts that they will try to float on the water)
		4	Canoeing

Draw Yourself	Chalk	Have participants find a partner, each partner draws a chalk outline of the other on the sidewalk. Then participants draw their chalk body doing something outdoors – related.
Explore A Park	Paper, Pen	Explore a new city park each month and compare the different activities you can do at each park.
Fairy Homes	Paper, Pen	Participants use objects on the forest floor to design tiny homes for fairies, gnomes or other make-believe creatures. Have the kids sketch their fairy homes on paper or in their nature journals.
Fantastic Voyage	Paper, Pencils	Have children work in pairs or alone to collect 3 natural objects and then write creative stories about make-believe creatures who live in the forest or nature area you are exploring.
Frame It Up	Frame, Activity Card, Journal	Place the frame on the ground and observe for two minutes. Draw what you see.
Geology Hunt	Pocket Naturalist Guide	Hike to find as many rocks and minerals as you can from the pocket naturalist.
Getting to Know You	Rope	Lay the rope down into a circle shape. Have participants stand on the circle. Have a caller stand in the middle and call out outdoor-themed descriptions “If you have been camping,/rode your bike this week/ have a fishing pole”. Participants can take one step forward for each description that matches them. The first to reach the caller is the winner.
Hide & Seek	Whistle	One player hides and uses the whistle to give clues to their location.
Icicle Hunt	Ruler	Hike around town to see how many icicles you can find, or who can find the biggest icicle.
Insect Collecting	Bug box, field guide	See how many different kinds of insects you can
Journaling	Journal, pen	Find a special place to sit quietly for several minutes then write or draw about the things you observe.
Leaf Printing	Paper, crayons	Walk to find different leaves, then lay paper over the leaves and gently rub with crayons to make leaf

Little Pricklies	Paper, Pencils	Hike to find different plants that are prickly. Make a list of the different plants or sketch them.
Mating Call Game	Blindfolds	Participants are placed into groups and assigned a certain call (clapping, snapping, whistling, chirping) then blindfolded and told to find their mate with the matching call only by using sound.
Mushroom Hunt	Field guide	Hike to see how many kinds of mushrooms you can find.
Nature Drawing	Paper, Pen	Pick a theme (plant, animal, landscape) and have participants spend some time sketching those things in nature.
Puddle Hunt	Paper, pen	Hike to find how many puddles are in an area.
Pirate Maps	Paper, Pen	See short activity list on page 12.
Rainbow Walk	Paper, pen	Hike to find natural objects that represent each color of the rainbow. List how many objects of each color you can find.
Reptile & Amphibian Hunt	Field guide	Hike to see how many kinds of reptiles or amphibians you can find.
Rope Games	Rope	See short activity list on pages 10–12.
Scavenger Hunt	Paper, Pen	Make a list of things you want to find in nature. Go for a walk and see how many you can find.
Scat Hike	Field guide	Hike to find different kinds of animal scat, take pictures with digital camera.
Sidewalk Safari	Magnifying glass, paper, pen	Have participants work in teams to investigate the cracks of the sidewalk and track how many insects they find between a given distance.
Sidewalk Murals	Chalk	Have participants use chalk to sketch nature murals on the sidewalk.
Silent Shapes	Rope	Have participants hold on to the rope. Call out shapes and ask the participants to form the rope into that shape without talking.
Stick Ball	Foam ball	Have participants find long sticks. Divide into two teams, and use their sticks to try to hit the ball into the other team's goal.

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Birds	1	Binoculars and common birds
		2	Build a bird feeder
		3	Owling and pellets (dissect an owl pellet)
		4	Migratory Bird Watch (visit a local hotspot for migrating birds during the fall or spring)

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Basic Survival	1	Fire Basics (safety and how to build a campfire)
		2	Shelter Building (AKA, make a fort)
		3	Food from the Forest (edible plants and animals)
		4	Visit nearby "wild area" and create survival situations and have the children figure out what they would do to survive

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Animals	1	Neighborhood Safari (give each child a notepad and pencils and explore the neighborhood for animal signs)
		2	Nature Games (have the children rotate through different outdoor stations where various games and activities teach wildlife concepts; Oh Deer, Wolf & Deer, etc.)
		3	Plaster Casting (Animal Tracking)
		4	Camouflage Hike at State Park or local nature area (arrive ahead of time and hide animal furs or animal pictures along the trail and have the children try to find them as you hike)

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Winter Fun	1	Sledding
		2	Broomball
		3	Snow Shelters
		4	Snow Shoeing (at local state park or natural area)

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Fishes	1	Water study and shoreline cleanup
		2	Fish Printing
		3	Make a pop can fishing pole
		4	Fishing

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Gardening	1	Soil and composting
		2	Native seed collecting
		3	Indoor gardening (start seeds)
		4	Build a garden

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Geo-caching	1	Orienteering Activities with map and compass
		2	Treasure Map (allow the children to work in small groups to hide a treasure and make a detailed map. Groups then swap maps and find each others treasure).
		3	Geo-cache basics (set up a geo-cache course on the school grounds or gathering site to introduce the children to the technology)
		4	Find a real Geo-Cache (visit a local state park to find a real geo-cache)

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Hiking	1	Make a walking stick
		2	Hike to nearby park and do scavenger hunt
		3	Cleanup local hiking trail
		4	Hike a neat overlook or scenic location at nearby state park or public area

Stick Races	Paper, pen	Have participants find a partner. Each person finds a stick. Together they drop their sticks off the up-stream side of a bridge and the stick that comes out from the downstream side first, wins. Track winners
Survivor Man	Paper, pen	Have participants work in teams to find litter. Then have teams list different ways to use the litter in survival situations.
Touchy Feely	Blindfold, natural objects	Blindfold participants and have them feel different nature objects and try to guess what they are.
Track Hunt	Field guide	Hike to find different animal tracks.
Tree Climbing	Paper, pen	Hike to find the best climbing trees in the area. Make a map showing where your favorite climbing trees
Tree Hunt	Field guide	Hike to find different kinds of trees.
Water Runoff Game	Rope	Spread out the rope in a curvy pattern to represent a river. Place a few children in different locations along the river to represent trees, rocks, grass. The rest of the group lines up at the top and at the signal, run down the river's course, twirling 5 times at each tree, rock or grass. Repeat without any trees, rocks or grass. Talk about the different rates of speed the
Wildflower Hunt	Field guide	Hike to find different kinds of wildflowers.



Indoor Nature Activity Ideas

If you have not already done so, consider making your facility more nature-friendly:

- Incorporate kid-friendly greenery/house plants (Christmas cactus, Boston fern, spider plant...)
- Create container gardens
- Incorporate natural décor (photos, wall décor, carpets, etc.)
- Set up a bird feeder window
- Make a nature library
- Host a nature themed “learning center”
- Try natural soundscapes during quiet time

Be creative! There are hundreds of nature-themed activities that you can do indoors on rainy days or during the cold winter months. Try some of these:

- Nature arts and crafts
- Knot tying
- Animal calling
- Campfire sing-along
- Make a walking stick
- Campfire stories/Ghost stories
- Create a Game (give kids props from backpack and have them create a game to play)
- Camping recipes



		4	Farm Tour
April	On the Ground	1	Geo Cache
		2	Rock Collecting
		3	Fossils
		4	Cave Tour
May	Let's Grow Outside	1	*Tree Planting
		2	Outdoor Gardening
		3	Wild Flower Hike
		4	Wild Edibles

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	Fishing Fun	1	Try a different method of fishing the
	Gardening	2	Work on a gardening project the sec-
	Geo-caching	3	Do a different geo-cache at a nearby park or nature area the third week of each month
	Service Project	4	Develop and implement a new service project the fourth week of each month

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
1	4-H Fun	1	4-H leads a nature or outdoor activity
	Fish & Wildlife Fun	2	The Fish and Wildlife Service leads the
	Project GO Service Pro- ject	3	A Project GO service project is imple- mented the third week of each month
	Scouting Fun	4	Local Boy Scout and Girl Scout leaders come lead the activities the fourth week of each month

Month	Theme	Week	Activity
October	Forests in Fall	1	Leaf Pressing
		2	Migratory Bird Watching
		3	MEA
		4	*Litter Cleanup
November	In The Skies	1	Kites
		2	Astronomy
		3	Cloud Racing
		4	Rockets
December	Snow Fun	1	Snowflakes
		2	Winter Survival
		3	Snow Forts
		4	Break
January	Winter Wildlife	1	Eagle Watching
		2	Owl Pellets
		3	Ice Fishing
		4	Animal Tracking Hike
February	Birds	1	Owling
		2	Pine Cone Bird Feeders
		3	*Build a Bird House
		4	Winter Birds Snowshoe
March	Springtime	1	Scavenger Hunt
		2	Maple Syrup
		3	Break

Early Childhood Activity Examples

A child is NEVER too young to experience nature. For young children, try some of the following activities:

Infants & Toddlers

- Bare foot time outdoors
- Sensory jars (with herbs, lemon slices, fragrant natural objects)
- Sensory box (with pinecones, sticks, bark, feathers, fur, etc.)
- Nature walks in the neighborhood
- Picnics in the grass
- Nature flash cards
- Nature story time outside
- Container herb garden



Pre-Schoolers

- Mud pies
- Stick sorting (longest to shortest or fattest to skinniest)
- Rock sorting (smallest to biggest)
- Sink or float tub
- ABC hike, Counting hike, Color hike, Shape hike
- Loose parts play area (sticks, boards, branches, logs that can be moved to build forts and structures)
- Nature arts and crafts
- Nature journals
- Pine cone bird feeders (or other simple bird feeder project)
- Nature bracelets with duct tape
- Gardening
- Sit spot (10 minutes in one spot outdoors)
- Nature photography scavenger hunt with phone
- Sprinkler time
- Nature collection box



Team Building & Group Challenge Activities



Supplies Needed	Name of Activity	Directions
Balloons	Balloon Burst	The first pair to burst a balloon by pressing it –back to back- is the winning team.
	Balloon Race	The first pair on each team stands behind the starting line, face to face, each with both hands on the other’s shoulders, holding a balloon between their foreheads. Keeping the balloon in this position, they run to the turn and back to pass the balloon to the next pair. The balloon cannot be touched except with the forehead. If it is dropped along the way, the players must pick it up and return to the starting line to try again. The team to finish first is the winner.
	Kangaroo Relay	Each team member must place the ball or balloon between his knees, hop out to the finish line, hob back to his starting line, and pass the object to the next player in line. If the object falls, the player must start over.
	Over & Under	Players are lined up. At the signal the first person in each line must pass the balloon overhead to the next person. That player must pass the balloon between his legs to the next player. The alternating over and under pass continues down the line. The last person in line runs to the front with the balloon and starts passing. If the balloon breaks, another one can be started at the front of the line. The game is over when one team has gone through one cycle of its members.

Sample Program Schedules

Utilize your nearby green spaces such as parks, trails, ball fields, cemeteries, preserves, and school forests for your outdoor activities.

The following pages present a variety of sample program schedules to help give you ideas on different ways you can develop your own schedules.

Using the supplies in the Activity Backpacks and keeping in mind the skills and interests of your staff and/or volunteers as well as the nearby nature areas that you have access to, you can easily develop a schedule of activities to fill up an entire year.

The **Orange** schedule demonstrates monthly themes.

The **Yellow** schedule reflects a repeated pattern in which each week within the month is assigned a certain theme that repeats with each month.

The **Grey** schedule shows how partnering agencies can adopt a certain week each month.

The **Blue** schedules are additional monthly themes to give you more ideas.





	Sit On It Relay	Place a chair in front of each team. On the signal, the first person in each team must run to the chair, blow up his balloon, and then try to burst the balloon by sitting on it. When the balloon bursts, he can return to his team and tag the next person.
Ball	Kickball	You know how to play this one!!!
	Ping Pong Race	Designate start and finish lines. Have players line up on the start line and place their ping pong ball on the ground. On hands and knees, the players need to blow on their balls to get them to the finish line.
Blindfolds	Bat & Moth	Have players form a circle. Choose one player to be the moth and one to be the bat blind fold the bat and have him/her clap to signify echo-location. The moth must repeat the clap to signify the echo that comes back to the bat. The goal is for the bat to catch the moth while blind folded. Let other players in the circle take turns.
	Sock Race	Five or six people are blind folded and seated in a small circle within reach of a huge pile of socks. They are given a pair of thick gloves to put on. On a signal, each player with gloves on tries to put as many of the socks on his feet as possible in the time allowed.
	Trust Walk	Blindfold all players and have them line up single-file with hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. An adult or teen volunteer stands at the front of the line and leads the group on a blindfolded walk through uneven terrain.
	What's This	Have the group sit in a circle while one person sits in the middle blindfolded. One at a time, take an object out of the bag and have the blindfolded person hold it. Others in the circle can give clues about the object. The blindfolded one must try to guess what the object is.
Rope	Silent Shapes	Have kids line up and everyone grab onto the rope. Explain that this is a group challenge activity in which they cannot talk. When you call out a shape, the group must figure out how to arrange themselves in that shape, holding on to the rope all the while.
Chalk	Chalk Walk	Draw two lines with chalk. Have kids get into two lines. The starters are spun around 20 times and then must race to the end of the chalk line and back. Continue until each player has gone. The team that finishes first is the winning team.

	Chalk Murals	Have kids work in teams to create nature murals on the sidewalks.
	Draw Yourself	Have kids work in pairs to trace the outlines of their bodies with chalk on the sidewalk. Then they can fill in their own features and draw themselves doing something they enjoy outdoors.
	Head Autograph	Give each person a pencil and paper. On a signal, everyone places the paper to their forehead and tries to write their name. This done, he/she passes their paper to their neighbor who, when called upon, tries to read the signature.
	Plenty of fish in the sea	As children arrive, have them write their name, grade and favorite hobby. Collect the cards and let each one draw a card. On a signal, have each try to find the person whose card they drew. After a set amount of time, stop and see who did find their match.
	Signature Hunters	Give everyone a pencil and a sheet of paper on which, down the left side, is lettered a word or words associated with the group/organization. On a signal, each person is to get signatures from those whose names begin with any of the letters. The first player to obtain a signature by every letter is the winner.
	Pirate Maps	Have the kids work in teams to hide an object outside in a certain area. Allow them 10 – 15 minutes to draw a map that will guide another team to their "buried treasure". Have teams swap maps and find each others treasures.



The Nature Conservancy	The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. Our vision is a world where the diversity of life thrives, and people act to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives.	http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/minnesota/
US Fish & Wildlife Service—Wildlife Refuges in MN	With 80% of the U.S. population currently residing in urban communities, the challenge to ensure our natural resources are conserved and valued by the American people has become complex. To ensure that we nurture a new conservation constituency, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service must promote strategies to engage these audiences in meaningful, collaborative ways that build sustainable, broad-based support for the their mission.	https://www.fws.gov/midwest/news/minnesota.html
Wilderness Inquiry	Travel the world with Wilderness Inquiry! We provide great outdoor adventures for adults and conduct award-winning programs introducing youth, families, and people with disabilities to the natural world.	https://www.wildernessinquiry.org/



MN DNR – State Water Trails	There are dozens of state water trails that can be found on nearly every major river in Minnesota.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/watertrails/index.html
MN DNR— Wildlife Management Areas (refuges)	There are 1,440 public wildlife areas - divided into over 1,600 sub units - with 1.29 million acres of habitat across the state. Recreation for hunters and trappers, including small game, big game and waterfowl. Wildlife watching opportunities include: upland birds, waterfowl, mammals, and more.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/wmas/index.html
MN DNR— Scientific and Natural Areas	Scientific and Natural Areas are open to you 24/7 for hiking, birdwatching, nature photography, and other activities that do not disturb natural conditions.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/snas/index.html
Minnesota Master Gardeners (also Junior Master Gardener program)	The University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener™ program is an internationally recognized volunteer program. The activities of the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners benefit schools, community gardens, youth programs, environmental education programs, farmers markets, and much more.	http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/master-gardener/ http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/master-gardener/junior-master-gardener/
Minnesota Master Naturalist Program	The mission of the Minnesota Master Naturalist Program is to promote awareness, understanding, and stewardship of Minnesota’s natural environment by developing a corps of well-informed citizens dedicated to conservation education and service within their communities.	http://www.minnesotamasternaturalist.org/
National Park Services	The Mississippi River offers teachers a perfect opportunity to link subject matter across the entire curriculum - science, history, cultures, geography, reading, writing, art, music, computer learning, and more.	https://www.nps.gov/miss/index.htm
Nature Centers	The Sharing Environmental Education Knowledge website is a clearinghouse of information and resources for Minnesota environmental education curriculum and sites.	https://www.seek.state.mn.us/destinations-detail/378#destinations
Nature Explore	Working with advocates like you, Nature Explore transforms children’s lives through research-based outdoor classroom design services, educator workshops, and natural products .	https://natureexplore.org/
Sierra Club	Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America’s oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.	http://www.sierraclub.org/minnesota

Seasonal Activity & Service Project Ideas



NATURE FOCUSED	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	ALL SEASONS
	Animal Tracking Build An Igloo Eagle Watching Ice Fishing Owling Scat Hike Snow Forts Winter Camping Winter Survival	Archeology Dig Bird Banding Collect Owl Pellets Flower Pressing Fly Fishing Fossil Collecting Gardening Maple Syrup Making Migratory Bird Watching Morel Mushroom Hunt Plaster Track Casting Pond Study Puddle Splashing Rock Collecting Stream Study Tree Fort Building Wildflower Hike	Beach Combing Berry Collecting Caving Camping Geocaching Fishing – Bait Cast Fly Fishing Jam Making Night Crawler Hunting Puddle Splashing Pond Study Rock Collecting Stream Study Wild Edibles	Animal Tracking Cider Making Fall Colors Hike Fall Colors Photography Hawk Watching Hunting Leaf Collecting Rock Collecting	Adopt-A-Tree Alphabet Hike Animal Calling Animal Tracking Basic Survival Bird Watching Blindfold Hike Build Gnome Homes Campfire Cooking Campfire Sing Along Cloud Watching Explore with Magnifying Glasses Junior Master Gardener Junior Park Naturalist Native Tool Making Nature Drawing Nature Photography Nature Whistles Night Hike Orienteering

Izaak Walton League	We are one of the earliest conservation organizations to set an aggressive course to defend wild America by changing public policy. Almost every major, successful conservation program that America has in place today can be traced directly to a League activity or initiative.	http://www.minnesotaiakes.org/
Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts	Providing leadership and a common voice for Minnesota's Soil and Water Conservation Districts.	https://www.maswcd.org/
MinnAqua Program	MinnAqua is a fishing and aquatic education program. We partner with community organizations, schools and angling groups that want to teach adults or youth how to fish and protect aquatic habitat.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/minnaqua/index.html
MN Department of Natural Resources - Natural Resources Education	A variety of free information, resources and trainings are available to help educators introduce children to nature resources topics. Programs examples include; Project Wet, Wild, and Learning Tree...	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/education/index.html
MN DNR—Fishing in the Neighborhood	Fishing in the Neighborhood (FiN) is a DNR program aimed at increasing angling opportunities, public awareness and environmental stewardship within the seven-county metro region.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/fishing/fin/index.html
MN DNR – State Forests	Minnesota state forests are open for all to enjoy. Miles of trails to accommodate every kind of activity: hiking, hunting, mountain biking, OHV riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, and more.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_forests/index.html
MN DNR—State Parks	With over 75 Minnesota state parks, there is a park within 50 miles of every resident. Some parks have year-round naturalist services and may be able to provide programs or help you plan a field trip.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/map.html
MN DNR—State Trails	Minnesota state trails offer something for everyone in every season. These trails link urban places to country spaces and let you explore all the beauty of Minnesota at your own pace.	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_trails/index.html

Organization	What They Provide	Website
American Heritage Girls	Building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country.	https://www.americanheritagegirls.org/find-troop-location/
Audubon Minnesota	Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. Since 1979, Audubon Minnesota has delivered conservation results by focusing on three program areas supported by science, education, and advocacy.	http://mn.audubon.org/
4-H	Offers age-appropriate, hands-on learning via short-and long-term projects and activities.	http://www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-h/
Boy Scouts	One of the largest youth organizations in the United States, the BSA's goal is to train youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of outdoor activities, educational programs, and, at older age levels, career-oriented programs in partnership with community organizations.	http://www.boyscouttrail.com/links/_minnesota.shtml
Campfire USA	Camp Fire provides young people with the opportunity to find their spark, lift their voice, and discover who they are.	http://www.campfiremn.org/
Children and Nature Network	Together we are creating a world in which every child can play, learn and grow in nature.	http://www.childrenandnature.org/
Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa	Conservation Corps provides hands-on environmental stewardship and service-learning opportunities to youth and young adults while accomplishing conservation, natural resource management and emergency response work.	http://www.conservationcorps.org/
Environmental Learning Centers	The Sharing Environmental Education Knowledge website is a clearinghouse of information and resources for Minnesota environmental education curriculum and sites.	https://www.seek.state.mn.us/destinations-detail/378#destinations
Girl Scouts	Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.	http://www.girlscoutslp.org/ http://www.girlscoutsv.org/

	Scavenger Hunt Shelter Building Star Gazing Stick Races Survivor Man Treasure Maps Tree Climbing Themed Nature Walks	Hiking, Fishing Bird Watching Hunting
		Archery Biking Canoeing Disc Golf Horseback Riding Kayaking Kite Flying La Crosse Lazer Tag
		Archery Biking Canoeing Disc Golf Horseback Riding Horseshoes Kayaking Kite Flying Lazer Tag Shuffleboard Skateboarding Snorkeling/Swimming Toy Boat Racing Tubbing
		Biking Canoeing Disc Golf Horseback Riding Kayaking Kite Flying
	Broomball Cross County Skiing Ice Skating Sledding Snowboarding Snow Man Building Contest Snow Mobiling Snowshoeing Winter Olympics (challenge course)	
NATURE FOCUSED	OUTDOOR RECREATION	

SERVICE PROJECTS	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
	Buckthorn -Removal Christmas Bird -Count Lure Retrieving	Bluebird Houses Butterfly Garden Gardening Landscaping Litter Cleanup Mulching Trails Nature Mural Nest Box Maintenance Owl Pellet Collecting Prairie Restoration Rain Gardens Ravine Cleanup Shoreline Cleanup Sinkhole Cleanup Stream Monitoring Trail Clearing Tree Planting Tree Tube Repair Turtle Rescue Wildflower Garden	Bird Banding Build Nature Explorer Play Area in - Community Butterfly Garden Butterfly Tagging Dragonfly Survey Exotic Species -Removal Frog and Toad Calling Survey Gardening Gopher Mound -Control Invertebrate Studies Mural Painting Gardens (Flowers, Veg. Rain garden) Schoolyard Birding -Station Schoolyard Garden Schoolyard Habitat -Site Shoreline Cleanup Sidewalk Chalk Art Storm Drain -Stenciling Stream Monitoring Trail Clearing Trail Mulching Tree Planting	Buckthorn -Removal Butterfly Tagging Direct Seeding Gopher Mound -Control Litter Cleanup Migratory Bird -Count Mulching Trails Mural Painting Bluebird House Maint. Owl Pellet Collecting Prairie Restoration Raking Seed Collecting Shoreline Cleanup Stream Monitoring Trail Clearing Woodworking for Wildlife

Resource Contacts



MINNESOTA



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

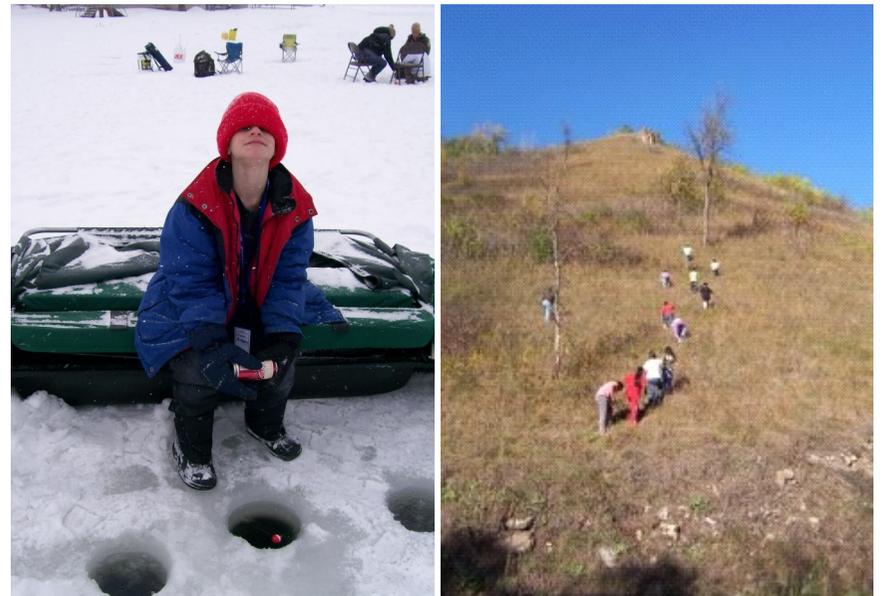


BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA



Girl Scouts®

Name of Volunteer	Skills or Interests Willing to Share
Sara G. (Program Leader)	Fishing, camping, kayaking, owls, bird watching, gardening, fossils, morels, nature art
Maria A.	Campfire cooking, hiking, Spanish-speaking
Dan M.	Outdoor sports, gardening, farm tours, fishing
Virginia M.	Bird watching, wildflowers, gardening, maple syrup making
Riley S.	Leave No Trace, camping, knot tying, campfire cooking
Walter K.	Hiking, fishing
Marisol F.	.Nature Art, hiking, gardening, Spanish-speaking



Planning Field Trips

Finding Local Green Spaces

When planning outdoor activities and fieldtrips for your program, it is helpful to first list all of the accessible green-spaces in, near and within 30 miles of your meeting location and community. Use Google Earth or Google maps to explore the green spaces in your community.

For example, in preparing an annual activity schedule for the St. Charles Project GO program, the list on page 19 of close, usable outdoor locations was compiled. This allowed program leaders to match activity ideas with suitable nature sites nearby.

Incorporating Volunteer Skills & Interests

Making a list of your own personal outdoor skills and interests as well as the skills and interests of your volunteers will help you in planning your activity schedule.

Consider using a Skill & Interest Survey to inventory your volunteer assets and compile a detailed list of outdoor skills and interests you and your volunteers are able to share with the children in your program. An example skills inventory is found page 20.



Nature Locations near to St. Charles	Transportation Required?	Equipment or Resources available at location:
Jessen's Park	No	Playground, sledding hill, disc golf, forested hiking trail, fishing pond, picnic shelter
St. Charles City Park	No	Playground, ball fields, picnic shelter, drinking water, biking trail, river runs through park
Public Bike/Walking Trail	No	Runs along the river
Cemetery	No	Old evergreens, good for birding activities, owling
School Forest	No	Walking trail
Kieffer Park	No	Playground, prairie area, forested walking trail
Whitewater State Park	Yes, 6 miles	Picnic shelters, beach, indoor nature center, group camp, fishing access, drinking water, free naturalist programs, birding kits, geo-caching equipment, snowshoes
Vermilya Wildlife Refuge	Yes, 6 miles	Stocked fishing pond, creek to explore
Upper Mississippi River National Fish & Wildlife Refuge	Yes, 25 miles	Boat launches, fishing piers, free ranger led programs, access to USFWS canoes and fishing poles and ed. Kits.
Chesterwoods Park	Yes, 15 miles	Stocked fishing reservoir, picnic shelters, volleyball net, beach, walking trails, biking trails, canoes, kayaks and paddleboats for rent
Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park	Yes, 40 miles	Cave tours, free naturalist programs, hiking trails, picnic shelters, historic site, horse riding trails
Quarry Hill Nature Center	Yes, 30 miles	Nature library, free naturalist programs, skis and snowshoes for rent, fossil collecting site, live animals in nature center