



Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association Environmental Education Programs and Field Trips

Field trips are offered Tuesday through Saturday, year-round unless otherwise noted. To register your school or group for a program, call the Buttinger Nature Center at (609) 737-7592 or email bnc@thewatershed.org.

Onsite Programs:

Nature Center Visit

Pre-K/K

1 hour

Held at the Buttinger Nature Center, children will meet the animals in our Discovery Rooms and use their senses to learn more about nature. Weather permitting; a short nature hike may be included.

Butterfly Magic

Pre-K/K

1 hour

Students will learn about characteristics, lifecycle, and behaviors of butterflies found in New Jersey when visiting the Kate Gorrie Butterfly House and the caterpillar nursery in the Buttinger Nature Center. This program also includes a craft that can be taken home. *Program available May through September only.*

Discover the Season (available every season)

Pre-K – 2nd grade

1 ½ - 2 hours

Through these discovery programs, students will explore the magic each season brings to the field and forests of the Watershed Reserve. Various topics may include colors of fall, migration, hibernation, spring renewal, and the plentifulness of summer. Students will also create a large classroom mural after their discovery walk.

Animals and their Habitats

Pre-K – 12th grade

1 ½ - 3 hours

While exploring the Watershed Reserve, students will examine different habitats and discovering evidence left by of a variety of animals. Student will investigate how animals meet their basic needs including where they live and what they eat. They will also learn how to identify animal tracks and other signs left by local wildlife.

Fun with Trees

K – 6th grade

2 ½ - 3 hours

Students will be introduced to a variety of trees during an exploratory walk; learning how they provide food and shelter in the forest. Through play-oriented activities, students will also learn how trees grow. *During the month of February, the focus shifts toward the maple sugaring season. Students will brave the cold winter weather and visit sugar maples, learn how to make maple syrup, and enjoy some of the finished product.*

Insect Safari

K – 12th grade

1 ½ - 2 hours

Using nets and bug boxes, students will discover a vast array of insect life, learning how to find and identify them, and observing a variety of life styles and adaptations. Older students will learn about human attempts to control insect populations and the effects of those efforts upon the environment. *Program available May through October.*

The Food Web

1st - 6th grade

2 ½ - 3 hours

Students will discover the flow of energy from the sun through the food web. Examples of food chains will be studied. Predator and prey relationships will be explored through play-oriented activities and an interpretive hike.

Beautiful Butterflies

1st – 8th grade

1 ½ – 2 hours

Students will learn about characteristics, lifecycle, and behaviors of butterflies found in New Jersey when visiting the Kate Gorrie Butterfly House and the caterpillar nursery in the Buttinger Nature Center. Students will also use sweep nets to explore insect life on the Watershed Reserve. *Program available May through September only.*

Monarchs and Migration

1st – 8th grade

2 hours

Students will learn about migration and why animals Migrate. By playing a game, they will learn about the migration routes of the Monarch butterfly, as well as conservation efforts to protect butterflies and their habitat. Students will also use sweep nets to explore insect life on the Watershed Reserve and tour the Kate Gorrie Butterfly House. *Program available in September only.*

Exploring a Pond

1st – 12th grade

2 – 4 hours

Using a variety of tools (seines, nets, microscopes) students will learn about life in and around the pond. Relationships between the various inhabitants and the human effect on aquatic habitats will be explored. *Program available April though October.*

Native American Lifestyles

2nd – 6th grade

4 hours

Throughout the program, students will learn how early Native Americans utilized the natural resources in this area of New Jersey. A silent hike begins the program yielding many discoveries in the field and forest. Students will learn about the edible and medicinal use of plants, as well as the many ways Native people used animals. A large classroom mural will be created from the information gathered on the ecology hike. In addition, students will be engaged in stories and games from various tribes throughout the country.

How Clean is Your Stream

5th – 12th grade

3 - 5 hours

Students will examine stream life and discuss relationships between the various inhabitants of this world as well as the effect of humans on their environment. Emphasis is on determining the environmental health through chemical testing, biological monitoring, observation and inquiry with watercolors and discussing possible measures to protect it. Be prepared for wet feet and muddy clothes because the best way to learn about the stream is by getting in it. *Program available April through October.*

Offsite Programs:

Nature's Winter World

Pre-K – 1st grade

½ - 1 hour

Learn about the lives of animals in winter through stories and puppets. Discover how different animals survive the challenges of winter by meeting a variety of creatures, including a groundhog, a skunk, a bird and an insect (all puppets) as well as a live turtle. *Program available December through February only.*

Reptiles are Fun!

Pre-K – 2nd grade

½ - 1 hour

Children are introduced to reptiles through a story and a lesson about how they live and survive in the wild. This includes a visit by some live reptiles. *Program available December through February only.*

Downstream- An Outdoor Watershed Activity

5th – 12th grade

1 hour

This play-oriented, outdoor activity illuminates various factors that affect water quality as a stream moves through the natural human environment. Students will examine how the landscape influences the water and they will also discuss/explore strategies for maintaining/improving water quality.

*Please contact us regarding **Exploring the Night** and **Orienteering** programs.