



Howell Nature Center

Heal. Grow. Be Wild!

Program Offerings

The instructors at the Howell Nature Center encourage kids to become curious and inquiring students of nature, gaining the knowledge they need to become future leaders in environmental stewardship and conservation.

We can help shape your experience by aligning our curriculum with classroom standards, modifying programs to accommodate the needs of individual students, and providing support in the planning process.

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Contact us at
reservations@howellnaturecenter.org
for questions or to start your booking!



Certain Adventure and Cultural Education programs have an upcharge, as indicated by this symbol

Unless otherwise indicated, programs occur year-round and take place outdoors rain or shine. Please contact the reservations team regarding the availability of a program outside the listed grade and month ranges.

All program selections need to be received in advance according to the expectations set by the reservations team, to ensure we have the resources available to meet your needs. While we do our best to accommodate all our groups, programs are subject to availability and may be changed at our discretion.

Outdoor Education

Waterfront (Apr - Oct)*

Canoeing (2nd and up)

Learn basic paddle strokes and boating safety, then secure your life jacket and develop your canoeing skills on the beautiful Pleasant Lake. (1 Hour)

Canoes have a maximum weight capacity of 450-700lbs

**Canoeing cannot be done in high winds or poor water conditions. In that event, suitable alternative programming will be provided.*

Archery

2nd Grade - Adult

Available March to November

Learn the basics of archery and attempt to hit the bullseye with simple longbow and target arrows. (1 Hour)

Survival I

3rd - 8th Grade

Learn outdoor survival strategies using hands-on activities. Students will work in small groups to build a fire and shelter. (1 Hour)

Survival II

4th - 8th Grade

Take the survival challenge to the next level by adding an extra hour of outdoor skill building. In addition to fire and shelter building, students will boil water. (2 Hours)



Exploring Maps

3rd - 6th Grades

Discover and explore the joy of reading maps. Learn about a variety of maps and their uses, then use map skills in a fun outdoor activity. (1 Hour)

Orienteering

4th Grade - Adult

Participants will learn how to use a compass in this hands-on program. Students will practice their new compass skills to navigate a beginner challenge course. (1 Hour)

Winter Recreation (Dec - Feb)*

Sledding (all ages)

Fly down the hill in an hour of unstructured fun in the outdoors. HNC will provide sleds and a guide to the sledding hills. (1 Hour)

Snowshoeing (all ages)

Enjoy this classic Michigan adventure as you traverse the beautiful trails of the Howell Nature Center. (1 Hour)

Cross Country Skiing (5th and up)

Let our trained instructors take you on a journey along the beautiful trails of the Howell Nature Center. (2 Hours)

**Winter recreation cannot be done with less than 3 inches of snow. In that event, suitable alternative programming will be provided.*

Outdoor Education

Capture the Flag

2nd - Adult

Play this fun game under the guidance of our staff. (1 Hour)

Camp Store and Games

Preschool - 12th Grades

Visit our camp store to find a special memento of your visit to the Howell Nature Center. Play fun games outside when your shopping is complete. (1 Hour)

Games Galore

Preschool - 12th Grades

Learn new group games, expend some extra energy, and have loads of recreational fun. (1 Hour)

Outdoor Cooking

3rd - 12th Grades

Children will start this class by learning how to build a proper fire suitable for cooking. Together in small teams, they'll then prepare and cook their food over an open fire. Along the way, they will learn responsibility by maintaining their cooking areas, utensils, and equipment. (2 Hours)

Wolf

2nd - 12th Grades

Practice your wolf howl and get ready to run! Teams will range over the Howell Nature Center property in this adventurous game of hide and seek. (1 Hour)

Nature Education

Pond & Wetland Studies

Available April to October

Pond Discovery (K - 2nd)

Young adventurers will discover wetland habitats, ecosystems, macroinvertebrates, and the stages of life of different living things in a pond. (1 Hour)

Pond Explorers (3rd - 5th)

Elementary explorers will learn to identify characteristics of different macroinvertebrates, how these adaptations help them survive in their pond habitat, and the difference between observations and inferences. (1 Hour)



Pond Study (6th - 12th)

Middle schoolers will learn to identify, compare, and contrast common macroinvertebrates found in the different areas of a pond. They will hypothesize about what they might find, test their hypothesis, form a conclusion, and share their findings. (1 or 2 Hours)

Nature Education

Nature Activity Hike

Preschool - 2nd Grade

Available in all seasons

Take a guided nature hike and explore nature with four of the five senses: touch, smell, hearing, sight. Students will play interactive games that practice observation skills, gaining confidence in the outdoors. (1 Hour)

Nature Scavenger Hunt

1st - 4th Grade

Available in all seasons

Experience nature while working as a group to find as many objects as possible. Who will get a bingo first? (1 Hour)

Edible Plants

4th - Adult

Available April to October

Get a real taste of nature! Hike outdoors with our experienced naturalists and learn about some tasty woodland treats, as well as important plants to avoid. (1 Hour)

Investigating Insects

Preschool - 4th Grades

Available April to October

Who is creeping and crawling in our backyards? Students will learn all about insects and their life cycles, explore the characteristics of insects, and go on an outdoor bug hike. (1 Hour)

Winter Hikes (Nov - Feb)

Winter Wonders (Pre - 2nd)

Explore a winter wonderland at the Howell Nature Center! Learn about the seasons and how humans and animals change our behaviors to stay warm. (1 Hour)

Winter Scavenger Hunt (3rd - 4th)

Experience nature while working as a group to find as many objects as possible. In this version, we'll discover unique aspects of nature that can only be found in winter! (1 Hour)

Nature In Winter (3rd - 8th)

How do animals survive winter? Learn about exciting animal adaptations to our cold Michigan winters through activities and a guided nature hike. (1 Hour)



Nature Education

**Can be done
indoors!**

Adaptations

4th - 8th Grades

Learn how wildlife survive in challenging environments, then design and name your own wild "discovery". (1 Hour)

Skins and Skulls

4th - 8th Grades

See real animal skins and skulls up close! Students will learn about the amazing adaptations of herbivores, omnivores, and carnivores; and participate in a fun identification challenge. (1 Hour)

Food Webs

4th - 8th Grades

Students will explore the movement of energy through an ecosystem, and how cause and effect relationships will impact a food web. (1 Hour)

Predator and Prey Games

K - 8th Grades

Through fun and active games, students will learn important concepts in predator and prey relationships at an age-appropriate level. (1 Hour)

Wildlife Education

Zoo Enrichment*

3rd - Adult

Take the challenge to enrich the lives of animal residents in Livingston County's only teaching zoo! Use expert knowledge on animal behavior to formulate a custom creation for select zoo residents, then put your creation to the test in a guided zoo tour where your enrichment is delivered to wildlife for you. Truly a one-of-a-kind experience! (2 Hours)

**Zoo Enrichment includes a tour of our wildlife park and cannot be combined with the programs Wild Wonders Tour I or II.*

Wild Wonders Tour I

All ages

Learn about the adaptations of Michigan wildlife in an expertly guided tour of Livingston County's only teaching zoo! (1 Hour)

Wild Wonders Tour II

6th Grade - Adult

Learn about the adaptations of Michigan wildlife in an expertly guided tour of Livingston County's only teaching zoo! In this extended tour, students will have the opportunity to delve deeper into the natural history of the individuals and species who reside in our Discovery Park. (2 Hours)



Wildlife Education



Live Wildlife Education Presentations

Programs with live animals

Two or more wildlife ambassadors are featured in these programs along with biofacts, hands-on interactives, and fun educational activities.

MythCrackers: Common Animal Myths

Are owls truly wise? Do turtles come out of their shells? You'll find the answers to these questions and more! This program addresses common wildlife myths and, together with the audience's help, we'll find out if they are "correct" or "cracked" while learning about wildlife.

Wild Super Powers

What do Batman, Spiderman, and Cat Woman have in common? They base their powers on amazing wildlife adaptations and abilities! Learn all about wildlife "super powers" that help them survive in the wild.

Wildlife In Your Backyard

We share our world with wildlife, even our backyards! Meet some of our Wildlife Ambassadors and learn about the wildlife found around our homes, including their characteristics and behaviors, how they can benefit us, and what we can do to help them survive in the wild world.

Wild Rehab (3rd Grade & Up)

As Michigan's largest wildlife rehabilitator, the Howell Nature Center treats thousands of wild animals every year — from common to endangered species — with the hope of returning these animals to their homes in the wild. But what does wildlife rehabilitation entail? Learn more about threats to wildlife, what we do, and what you can do to help.

Interactive Wildlife Education Programs

Programs without live animals

These engaging programs offer an exciting "adventure-in-learning" with biofacts, hands-on interactives, and fun educational activities.

Birds of Prey

Get hands-on with bird wings, feet, and skulls to learn about birds of prey! We explore different types of raptors and their unique characteristics, habitat, diet, and importance to the environment, and activities will help give you a bird's eye view of the lives of these amazing animals.

Fur, Feathers, and Scales

Do you know why reptiles and mammals have teeth but birds don't? Birds, mammals, and reptiles all have unique adaptations to help them survive. Explore them with the help of our educators in this program full of hands-on learning.

Can also be presented with animals.



Adventure Education



High Adventure!

*Available April to October
All high adventure programs have a
weight range of 50 to 250 pounds
and are subject to limited availability*

Zip Line

1st Grade - Adult

Experience the thrill of a ride through the trees on our 500 foot zipline, soaring over a pond with the help of our trained staff.

(1 Hour)

**If children are not 50lbs staff have the right to switch to our Activity Alley Zipline for the safety of participants.*



Climbing Tower (Team Belay)

5th Grade - Adult

Test your rock-climbing skills on our 60 foot climbing tower, one of the tallest in Michigan! Students participate in a team belay system, supervised by our trained belay staff.

(2 Hours)

High Ropes Course

5th Grade - Adult

Take your adventure to higher heights on our new, multi-level High Ropes Course! With 14 different obstacles spread across 2 levels, this course has something for everyone, whether that means starting on the lower 15 foot level or jumping straight to the challenging 25 foot top level! (2 hours)



Adventure Education

Team Building Programs

Adventure Play (*Pre - 2nd*)

Play fun, interactive games to encourage cooperation and communication skills. Learn to be gentle, kind, and safe in a positive manner. (1 Hour)

Team Challenge (*3rd - 12th*)

Usage of low ropes is dependent on age, duration, and maturity level of students
Work with your team to get over, under, or through a series of ground games and low rope elements. Challenge yourself, support your team, and debrief the experience at the end. (1 or 2 Hours)

Professional Team Building (*Adults*)

Learn what it takes to be a high performing team. Make decisions, solve problems, and support team members as a group.

This program is intended for groups in the process of improving team performance and is customized to the needs and goals of your group. Contact us to learn more this option!



Cultural Education

Drumming Around the World

All ages

Students will learn about drums, the world's oldest instrument, and its uses in cultures around the world. This fun, hands-on addition to a Michigan history curriculum involves the use of real drums by students. (1 Hour)



**Can be done
indoors!**

Indigenous People's Use of Natural Resources

3rd - 8th Grades

Learn about everyday life for Michigan's Indigenous People of the past through artifacts and demonstrations. Learn the role of plants and wildlife in Indigenous People's cultures and games. A great hands-on addition to a Michigan history curriculum. (1 Hour)

Evening Traditions

Please select one option per evening

Campfire and S'mores

Preschool - 12th Grades

Sit back and relax under the stars while enjoying the warmth of a fire. Our talented staff will guide the group in songs and stories, and end the night with s'mores.

Capture the Flag

2nd - Adult

Available April to October (limited by daylight)

Play this fun game under the guidance of our staff.

Games Galore

Preschool - 12th Grades

Learn new group games, expend some extra energy, and have loads of recreational fun.

Night Hike

3rd - Adult

Activities are dependent on evening light level

Whooo's moving in the dark? Explore the night-time woods through group games and activities, learning all about Michigan's nocturnal creatures.

Wolf

2nd - 12th Grades

Practice your wolf howl and get ready to run! Teams will range over the Howell Nature Center property in this adventurous game of hide and seek.

Adventure Scrabble

5th - 8th Grades

We take scrabble to the next level in an exciting rendition of this classic game! Race against time and other teams to get scrabble pieces for your team's 'thinkers'. Thinkers will use their creativity, imagination, and word skills to turn the scrabble pieces into words for points.

Dance Party

4th - 8th Grades

Can be done indoors or outdoors

Put on your dancing shoes! Learn classic dance moves and modern group dances in this fun evening program.

Improv Night

4th - 12th Grades

Can be done indoors or outdoors

Exercise your creativity and imagination in this laugh-filled activity! Teams will compete to earn points through song competitions and silly improv prompts.

Skit Night

4th - 12th Grades

Can be done indoors or outdoors

Prepare for a night of fun and hilarity by working with a small group to act out a skit. Students will learn the tips and tricks to make their skits a success, while developing public speaking skills and confidence. That evening, the whole group will gather together to watch the performances.

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to start planning your trip!