



Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center

Interpretive Program Guide

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center is operated by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Programs and exhibits relate to the protection and management of Missouri's fish, forest and wildlife resources. All interpretive programs are conducted by experienced naturalists and provide interactive learning experiences.

The nature center is located just east of the intersection of Interstate 55 (Exit 99) and Kingshighway (State Highway 61) within Cape Girardeau's County Park North. It is open Tuesday through Saturday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

What to Expect

The nature center has an auditorium, classrooms, freshwater aquariums and opportunities for wildlife viewing. Hands-on exhibits for all ages allow explorations of the natural communities found in southeast Missouri – forest, marsh, swamp, and river. Visitors also learn about the connections between people and the land through exhibits of Native American artifacts and primitive tools used to harvest plants and animals. Three miles of nature trails traverse the "White Oak Trace" featuring rolling river hills with sinkholes, deep hollows, and ravines covered with prominent stands of tulip poplar and oak.

RESERVATION GUIDELINES

- To arrange a naturalist-guided program, call (573) 290-5218 at least two weeks in advance. Field trips in the spring may require advanced reservation of up to six months. A 24-hour notice of cancellation is requested.
- Programs may be scheduled Tuesday through Friday for groups of ten or more participants. Groups are limited to one program topic per visit and two naturalist-guided programs per year. Registration for the following calendar year begins September 15.
- The center requires a ratio of one adult per 10 children. Additional adults for groups with younger children or special needs are recommended. Adults should remain with the group at all times and are responsible for group management. Please let us know in advance if members of the group have special needs such as learning or physical challenges.
- Many of the programs do not occur in the exhibit gallery or on the trails. Additional time to explore these areas may need to be added to your visit. Please let us know if you plan to spend more time in addition to the program.
- After your reservation has been made, a confirmation letter will be emailed to you approximately two weeks before your visit. Please call the nature center staff immediately if your program needs to be changed.
- If you are unable to schedule a guided program, your group is welcome to visit anytime during our regular business hours. We ask that all groups notify us before visiting the nature center with the approximate number of students and time of arrival.

Pre-Kindergarten

Program times are one hour with two 30 minute rotations. All programs include an indoor and outdoor portion.

Fantastic Frogs

*March 15-October 15

Welcome to the world of frogs! Find out what makes these amphibians so fascinating and important. Where do they live and what do they need? Explore the frog life cycle through an interactive story. Visit our ponds to look for frogs and where they live.

Let's Go Fishing

What do you need for a successful fishing trip? Identify the equipment needed to catch the "big one" and listen to a story about when to keep a fish and when to release it. Learn some local fish before visiting our indoor "classroom pond".

Cycle of Seasons

The world changes with the seasons and so do we! Learn about what makes each season special. We'll discover what animals, plants, and humans do in the autumn, winter, or spring season through stories and activities.

Additional Program Topics

Interactive auditorium programs are designed for large groups and are available upon request. The target grade level range is 3rd-8th. Programs run 50 minutes in length.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Science Standards: 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

Alligators in Missouri? Sirens that swim? You bet! Take a look at a few of the reptiles and amphibians that call southeast Missouri home and discover ways to recognize them.

Mammals of Missouri

Science Standards: 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

Learn fascinating facts about Missouri's wild mammals! Many mammals make their homes in the diverse habitats that southeast Missouri has to offer. Find out who they are, where they live and how they survive as we explore the wild side of Missouri.

Feathered Fliers

Science Standards: 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

Missouri is diverse in its feathered fowl. Explore different habitats and niches to recognize similarities and differences in birds and their specialized characteristics.

Incredible Insects

Science Standards: 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

There are more insects in Missouri than all other animals combined. Discover what they are and why we need them. Investigate the many adaptations insects have that help them survive.

Kindergarten through Second

Programs are one hour with two 30-minute rotations of no more than 30 students per rotation. A third teacher-led rotation may include time in the exhibit gallery or on the trails. All programs include an indoor and outdoor portion.

Super Seeds

Science Standards: K-LS1-1, 1-LS1-1, 2-LS2-1, 2-LS2-2

Hitchhiking? Parachuting? Seeds lead adventurous lives! Go on a hike to look for seeds and organize them into groups by method of travel. Examine plant parts, functions, and life cycles as we reveal the importance of seeds and plants to humans and wildlife.



Growing Up Wild

Science Standards: 1-LS1-2, 1-LS3-1

From little swimmers to feathered chicks, wild babies are adapted to survive! Learn about the differences between young and their parents and why it's important to let them stay wild.

A Place Called Home

Science Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS3-1, 2-LS4-1

Everyone needs a place to call home! For some, it's a hole in a tree, the bottom of a pond, or even underground. We'll discover what animals need to survive in their special habitats.

Flutter and Fly

*April 15-October 15

Science Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3, 1-LS1-1, 1-LS3-1

Butterflies and moths seem almost magical with their ability to turn from caterpillar to adult. We'll explore the beauty of their metamorphosis, how they are unique, and how they survive.

Fur, Feathers and Scales

Science Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS3-1, 1-LS1-1, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1

What color is your coat? Is it soft and fuzzy or smooth and sleek? Ponder these questions as we take a close look at the similarities and differences among some of southeast Missouri's animals. Through the use of pelts, turtle shells, and other animal artifacts, you will see and feel how different characteristics help animals survive in various habitats. We'll play a game outside to learn how an animal's covering helps it hide.

Third through Fifth Grade

Programs are from 1½ to 2¼ hours , depending on the group's size and the amount of time spent outdoors. Programs include two 45-minute rotations of no more than 30 students per rotation. A third teacher-led rotation may include time in the exhibit gallery or on the trails. All programs include an indoor and outdoor portion.

Insect Intrigue

Science Standards: 3-LS2-1, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1

Become an insect investigator! Collect insects with nets and explore the basics of insect anatomy and life cycles. Through hands-on activities, you'll discover some of the remarkable characteristics that these animals have for survival.

Tree Explorer

Science Standards: 3-LS1-1, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS1-1

Explore trees from the inside out! How does a tree grow? How does it make food? These questions and more will be answered in this program. We'll explore how trees get water and turn sunlight into food through photosynthesis as we examine trees from the roots to the treetops.

Tools of the Trade

Experience a glimpse of the past. Learn about tools primitive people used to survive, how they were made, and natural resources that were used to.

Wetland Investigator

Science Standards: 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1, 5-ESS3-1

Leap into wetland ecology! Visit a living wetland to dip-net for aquatic insects and explore their amazing characteristics. We'll study animals in the wetland food chain to learn about the roles they play in this unique ecosystem.

What's For Dinner?

Science Standards: 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4, 5-PS3-1, 5-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1

Hungry for a little sunshine? All life starts with the sun! Become familiar with consumers, producers, and decomposers as we explore all the roles in the food chain. We'll build on these connections through constructing our own southeast Missouri food web.



Sixth through Eighth Grade

Programs are from 1½ to 2¼ hours , depending on the group's size and the amount of time spent outdoors. Programs include two 45-minute rotations (except where noted) of no more than 30 students per rotation. A third teacher-led rotation may include time in the exhibit gallery or on the trails. All programs include an indoor and outdoor portion.

Pond Ecology

Science Standards: MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-3, MS-LS2-4, MS-LS1-6

Who lives in the pond? Our hands-on aquatic study will get your students outside to examine real pond habitats on-site. The classroom portion will introduce students to aquatic ecology and the importance of bio-diversity.



Making Changes

***1 hour program which includes two 30-minute rotations**

Science Standards: MS-LS- 2-2, MS-LS-2-5

Ever wonder how much you matter? We'll look at how humans change their environment and how that affects the other living things surrounding them. We'll explore the nature center property and see how our actions can have lasting effects. Learn how you can make a positive impact on the future.

Archery/Wildlife Management

Science Standards: MS-LS2-1, MS-LS2-4

Ready, aim, shoot! Learn the basic steps to shooting a bull's-eye, while we explore the use of archery as a management tool. Investigate urban deer issues through hands-on activities. Each rotation is limited to 15.



Primitive Hunting

***1 hour program which includes two 30-minute rotations**

Think you might have the skills to be a primitive hunter? Track animals and identify the appropriate primitive hunting methods needed to bring home dinner. Experience the challenges of using a real atlatl and dart. Each rotation is limited to 15.