Preschool Science and Nature Outreach Programs

Monthly Themes 2014 - 2015

Bring Nature Inside and Stimulate Science Learning

Expand your preschool’s science learning through guided discovery of the natural world! Moose Hill’s naturalist will help children recognize some of the common creatures that live locally and will direct students in ways to categorize and compare living things. We incorporate Massachusetts’ science education objectives (S.T.E.M.) for preschoolers, encouraging curiosity while developing skills of observing, describing, and sorting.

By focusing on local nature, children develop a sense of place and an awareness of their natural surroundings. To engage your preschoolers, we may incorporate inquiry, manipulatives, storybooks, games, puppets, simple crafts, finger plays, and creative dramatics into the 30-minute programs. Programs start with a general introduction, (What is a forest? What is a reptile?) that then narrows on a specific plant or animal. Regular visits help children to understand seasonal changes and connections between natural things.

Each month, Moose Hill offers a specific topic within a more general theme. The monthly topics are on a three year rotation to accommodate children who are enrolled in your program for multiple years. You are not obligated to participate every month, but by booking multiple visits you will receive a significant discount!

About Mass Audubon

Mass Audubon works to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Together with more than 100,000 members, we care for 35,000 acres of conservation land, provide school, camp, and other educational programs for 225,000 children and adults annually, and advocate for sound environmental policies at local, state, and federal levels. Founded in 1896 by two inspirational women who were committed to the protection of birds, Mass Audubon has grown to become a powerful force for conservation in New England. Today we are respected for our sound science, successful advocacy, and innovative approaches to connecting people and nature. Each year, our statewide network of wildlife sanctuaries welcomes nearly half a million visitors of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds and serves as the base for our work. To support these important efforts, call 800-AUDUBON (800-283-8266) or visit www.massaudubon.org.

Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary

Moose Hill is Mass Audubon’s oldest sanctuary and one of the largest with nearly 2,000 acres. The 25-mile trail system brings you through diverse habitats: explore the red maple swamp via the boardwalk, observe amphibians at a vernal pool, or watch swallows catching insects in the meadows. Each season brings another opportunity to explore nature’s wonders—enjoy a winter stroll, watch migrating warblers, or experience the beauty of the fall foliage. Our bird-feeding station and butterfly garden bring wildlife close to the nature center. Art exhibits are shown continually throughout the year in our gallery. The sanctuary also features Moose Hill Community Farm, a community supported agriculture program that provides shareholders with fresh, local produce throughout the growing season.
July – Green & Growing
What Makes a Habitat a Home? – Sort plastic animals into the correct habits while discovering how animals rely on plants to find food, shelter, and protection.

August – Backyard Visitors
Wild Turkeys – How big is a wild turkey? What does it eat? Learn how wild turkeys find what they need to survive and why they visit yards.

September – Field Animals
Bouncing Bunnies – Play games and use manipulatives to discover how rabbits are camouflaged in nature. Learn how rabbits follow a path to safety with a memory game.

October – Forest Animals
Chattering Squirrels – Red squirrels and gray squirrels and flying squirrels, oh, my! Imaginative play shows kids what each type of squirrel eats and where they live.

November – Harvest Season
Apples for Animals – Learn how apples grow and which animals eat this fruit. Color a simple apple craft to keep and use it in a fun fingerplay.

December – Soil
Rocks to Soil – Investigate soil samples with a magnifying glass to look for tiny bits of rock. Predict how quickly water will flow past different sized rocks. Discover how sand and rocks settle after being shaken together in a bottle of water.

January – Nocturnal Animals
Insect-Eating Bats – The bats of Massachusetts don’t eat nectar, fruit, or blood. Kids discover how bats find insects by playing an active game. Take a look at a bat skeleton while comparing their body to that of a bat.

February – Winter Survival
Tracks in the Snow – Learn what the footprints of some local animals look like. Kids pretend to be different types of animals as they try moving the way deer, squirrels, and bear move.

March - Reptiles
Pond Turtles – How do turtles survive the winter? Discover what pond turtles use for food and shelter with games.

April – Amphibians
Fantastic Frogs – Act out the life cycle of frogs. Kids pretend to be different frogs at a pond, each singing their special frog song (not “ribbit”). Play a frog matching game.

May – Backyard Birds
Bird Beak Diner – Kids discover how a bird’s beak is the tool it uses to get the food it needs with a hands-on activity. Play “Pin the Beak on the Bird.” Please discuss any allergies in your school when scheduling this program.

June - Insects
Ladybug, Ladybug – Ladybugs don’t have to be red, nor do they all have the same spotted pattern. Put together a life cycle puzzle and listen to a ladybug puppet talk about her life as a farmer.

July – Green and Growing
Terrific Trees – Learn how different animals use all the parts of a tree for food and shelter. Manipulatives and imaginative play take kids through the seasons and life stages of a tree.

August – Backyard Visitors
Momma Opossum – Learn how mom opossums are like mom kangaroos when it comes to raising babies. The kids play an opossum game while learning how the animal stay safe.

Any Month Option
Seasonal Walk – We will go outside and explore with our senses!

Fees and Scheduling
▲ “Theme of the Month” 30-minute program
  1 – 4 months per year: $60 per class
  5 – 12 months per year: $50 per class
  “Theme of your Choice” 30-minute program
  Schedule any number: $65 per class
▲ Class size: Maximum 18 students per class. Schedule us for back-to-back classes!
▲ Ages 3 to 5. Programs are adapted to the age of the class. Those for fives are enhanced to include some different learning experiences and those for young threes can be shortened.
▲ Year and Topics: The year runs July to June. Topics change monthly on a 3 year cycle.
▲ Additional fees: A surcharge will be applied to sites beyond a 30-minute drive and/or when the break between programs exceeds 1 hour.
▲ To schedule programs, call 781-784-5691 or email moosehilledu@massaudubon.org