

MEAD EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

One of the goals of the Mead Wildlife Area is to provide wildlife and environmental education programs, including tours, presentations, and activity based programs, for children and adults. Volunteers from the Friends of Mead/McMillan Association, the UW-Stevens Point, and the local community also help to meet this goal.

The Mead offers a wide variety of all day environmental educational programs to area students.

Your day would start out with

Standard Introduction

- History of Property
- Role of Wildlife Properties
- Rules and regulations
- Operational procedures for day
- Scheduled Bathroom Break

Stations Program Options

We offer six standard program topics:

1. Wetland/Pond Study; students learn about the values of wetlands and how they relate to our everyday lives and the quality of our environment.

Students collect samples of pond water using D-nets, observe their finds through a microscope or shallow pan and discover the macro life of “wonderful wacky water critters”.

Other points covered

- Vernal ponds
- Wetland types (Shallow marsh, sedge meadow, shrub swamp)
- Emergent / sub-mergent plants – 50/50 concept
- Key wildlife species incorporated

Activities:

- Wetland Metaphor
- Go Fish

2. Orienteering; students learn how to use a compass and navigate in natural environments.

Parts of a compass, how compasses are valuable to us when we venture into the woods or other wild places to hunt/hike and how to measure distance of travel by pacing are also discussed.

Activities:

Students compete with other classmates in running a compass course to find duck decoys with clues about different animals at the Mead.

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3. **Forestry**; students explore the different habitat layers of a forest and how these layers are used by a diversity of wildlife species or learn tree identification.

Other points covered

Forest Management for wildlife – soils
hydrology
snags
habitat layers

Cutting prescriptions (clear cutting, select cuts)

Students learn how to use keys or field guides of:

Forest Trees
Birds
Flowering Plants
Nests

Activities:

Tree ID
Scavenger Hunt
Forest Animals
Leaf Race

4. **Grasslands**; students explore the values and types of grasslands as well as the wildlife species that use them.

Types of grasses with individual species identification

Cool vs. warm season grasses

Grassland wildlife species

Grassland bird nesting and factors influencing success

Grassland Management – burning, mowing, etc

Succession

Grassland establishment

Activities:

Prairie Jeopardy
Press Conference-Ask questions of the “Prairie Animal Experts”
Plant Prairie seeds, native plants or warm season grasses
Game of Predator/Prey

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5. Heritage; students learn about Native American history at the Mead, furbearer ecology and identification, and why hunting and trapping are important for the management of many species.

Other points covered

Hunt / Trap /Fish

History (survival, trading/economic recreational, tradition)

Native American history and use of wildlife resource

Traps-live, leg hold, conibear

Furs of common furbearers and their natural history

Activity:

Do You Know Your Furbearers-students touch and try to identify real Wisconsin mammal pelts

Heritage Bowl Game

6. Renewable Energy; students learn about the five renewable energy components of the new Mead Education and Visitor Center.

Wind electric generation

Solar photovoltaic electric generation

Solar hot water

Geo-thermal heat

Wood biomass energy

Activities:

Solar Ovens-students can make one using a shoebox or sample something made in our "Oven"

"Rethinking Your Trash"-students discuss renewable and non-renewable sources of energy and try to rethink where the by-products of these sources end up and some new ways or ideas of reducing, reusing, or recycling their "Trash".

"Wind Wise"-students compete as a team to create the best wind turbine for a make believe company using a variety of provided materials.

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We also offer five specialty program topics: (depending on availability)

1. **Bird Feeding and Observation**; students learn how to feed and identify birds, where to find them and some techniques for getting a closer look.

Activities:

- Take a hike and view birds with binoculars
- Make a simple bird feeder
- Listen to some common bird calls and see if we have them at the Mead

2. **Mobly the Owl**; students get to meet a live member of the wildlife world close up.

Look at and discuss animal adaptations and how they allow species to survive and be successful also discuss the five basic needs.

Activity:

- Take pictures of a real owl
- Touch real owl feathers
- Ask questions

3. **Wildlife Management**; students learn what wildlife management is and why it is needed today.

Discuss and learn about wildlife research and how we determine what wildlife need to survive

- Explore uses of wildlife
- Hunting, trapping, and fishing
- Ecological stability
- Environmental indicators

Activities:

- Radio Telemetry demonstration
- View equipment used for wildlife management
- Wildlife Management Jeopardy

4. **Nature Journaling**; Students make or bring their own nature journals and then use them as a tool for closely observing the natural world at Mead. They participate in a variety of sensory, observation, and reflection activities. Through writing and drawing about their experiences in the outdoors, they develop a deeper awareness of the environment and can express themselves in creative and personally meaningful ways.

Activity:

- Make a journal with or without some pre-made pages of their day at Mead.
- After a brief overview of nature journaling, students record in their own journals.

5. **Nature Trail Hike** (Teacher or Mead staff led); students discover different plants, animal signs, and sounds as they walk along a trail.

Activity:

- Nature Scavenger Hunts (designed for a variety of ages and trails)

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