Merry Lea’s Mission
- Providing a natural sanctuary for northern Indiana’s plants & animals;
- Providing environmental education for people of all ages;
- Providing a setting for re-creating opportunities that benefit the human body & spirit while not exploiting the land or excessively disturbing its ecosystems.

Merry Lea’s PreK-12 Programming Mission
- Facilitate experiences in the outdoor world which inspire exploration, foster a sense of wonder, & share joy.
- Share information about ecosystems & natural processes of northeastern Indiana.
- Provide interest in life-long investigations.
- Encourage stewardship, a sense of place, & hope.

Staff:
Carol Good-Elliott, carolg@goshen.edu
School Program Scheduler, Environmental Educator
Jane Lodier, jane@goshen.edu
Environmental Educator
Dave Ostergron, daveo@goshen.edu
Director of the Graduate Program in Environmental Education, Associate Professor in the Sustainability and Environmental Education Department (SSEED)

School Programs
Merry Lea
Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College
P.O. Box 263
Wolf Lake, IN 46796
merrylea.goshen.edu
P. 260-799-5869
F: 260-799-5875
On-Site Program Fees
Field trips to Merry Lea: $6.50 per student
Other field trips: $6.00 per student
Winter field trips: $5.00 per student
Summer field trips: $3.50 per student
Custom field trips: negotiable
No charge for teachers or aides.

On The Road
Following are programs we can bring to your school. Program length can vary from 1 to 1.5 hours. In order to maximize the quality of contact between our staff and your students, these programs are designed for presentation to just one class at a time. These programs are primarily available January through mid-February and during the summer. Check with us for other possible availability.

Elementary Grades:
- Amazing Green Machines (plants, of course!)
- Exploring Your School’s Habitats
- Flying Feathered Friends (basic ornithology)
- Geology of Indiana
- Insects of Indiana (basic entomology)
- Mammals of Indiana
- We Like Worms! (includes an introduction to worm composting)
- What Do They Do in Winter?

Middle School Grades:
- Exploring Your School’s Habitats
- Soils
- Water Quality

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On-Site Program Cancellation Policy
Reservations for some of Merry Lea’s programs fill quickly, and quality experiences require the help of volunteers and advance preparation. Last minute cancellation is disruptive to us and may prevent a wait-listed group from coming.

Therefore, if you cancel a program that involves Merry Lea’s staff or volunteers, you may incur cancellation fees as follows:
- Cancellation less than 48 hours before scheduled date: 100% of scheduled fee
- Cancellation 48 hours to 3 weeks before scheduled date: 50% of scheduled fee
- Cancellation 1 to 3 weeks before scheduled date: 25% of scheduled fee
- Cancellations more than 3 weeks before the scheduled date will not incur a cancellation fee.

This cancellation policy will not apply to cancellations due to dangerous weather, unscheduled school closings, or unforeseen emergencies.

Please double-check your master calendar and transportation reservations well in advance of your visit to Merry Lea.

Scheduling Policy
When scheduling a field trip to Merry Lea, call or email on or after:
- September 1 for spring trips
- April 1 for fall trips
Anytime for winter or summer trips.
Field trips are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

When you call or email to schedule, please have the following information ready:
- Your name and the name of other teachers coming
- School name, address, and phone number
- Grade level
- Number of students and classes
- Which program you want
- Preferred days for your field trip
- Email address, if you have one.

On the opening day of registration periods, calls may be made and an email sent before Merry Lea’s office is open. You may leave a voice mail message with the information indicated above. We will process the requests in the order in which they arrive.

We cannot schedule rain dates for programs, due to the demand for our programs. If your program needs to be cancelled due to dangerous or inclement weather, we will do our best to reschedule for our programs. If your program is postponed due to unforeseen emergencies, this cancellation policy will not apply to cancellations due to dangerous weather, unscheduled school closings, or unforeseen emergencies.

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Chaperone Policy
Chaperones are free up to a ratio of 1 chaperone to 5 students. Beyond this 1:5 ratio, chaperones are charged at the student rate.

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“Where Earth & People Meet”

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School Program Offerings

Autumn Adventures
Grade: K-3
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 80
When: mid-September – early November
Students will learn how animals and plants are adapted to survive winter in Indiana. This program is designed specifically to meet Science Standards for 1st and 2nd grade. The morning of this program will involve students in hands-on activities and instruction. After lunch, students will head to the trails to see how these concepts come alive in the forest, meadows and wetlands at Merry Lea.

Biodiversity
Grade: 5-12
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-September – October
Survey first-hand the diversity of life at Merry Lea. Explore several ecosystems in search of plants and animals there. In each location, students will identify their finds and discuss the interconnections of organisms, insects, plants, humans and all other life.

Exploring Nature
Grade: preschool-5
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 80
When: mid-September – mid-October
Discover what’s happening in nature that makes a particular season unique. Students visit several natural communities. Games, scavenger hunts and other activities using the senses help explain such concepts as adaptations, diversity of life and interactions between living things. Each grade level has a different main focus and activities. (See also, Winter Nature)

Farncraft
Grade: preschool-5
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 80
When: mid-September – mid-November
Participate in fall activities on an early 20th century farm. Several stations demonstrate different aspects of farm life and actively involve students. Stations may include cider-making, corn grinding, care of farm animals, making muffins, harvesting in the garden and more. Though primarily designed for preschool-3rd grade, this program has been successfully adapted & repeatedly taught for students as old as 5th grade.

Feathered Frenzy
Grade: 3-10
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-April – January
Anson questions about birds, their seasonal adaptations and behaviors! Students will inspect mounts, examine feathers, explore flight and make nests. Outdoors, students will learn correct use of binoculars and see them in action and identify birds in a variety of habitats.

Forest Tree Population Dynamics
Grade: 5-12
Length: 4-5 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-September – mid-November
Experience the science of forestry in this daylong exploration. Students identify trees, use various methods and tools for collecting qualitative and quantitative data about trees, and discuss succession and competition. Students will also visit a sunny, tawny woodland at Merry Lea, which is part of a long-term forestry study.

Land Ethics
Grade: 5-12
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-September – October
During an extended hike, students will increase their awareness of the land and explore ways they can become better stewards of that land. Students will discover how land is a community that yields a cultural harvest. They will also explore the meaning of “land ethics.” This program is based on the writings and ideas of Aldo Leopold, known as the father of wildlife management. Leopold was a conservationist, forester, teacher, writer, philosopher and outdoor enthusiast. His best-known book is The Sand County Almanac.

Nature’s Recyclers
Grade: 1-5
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-September – October
Students become detectives to search for many of nature’s recycling as they can find. In the process, they learn that there is nothing in the natural world that is not eventually recycled – broken down to its basic parts to be used again by some other part of the natural system. Students discover how this happens and why it is important to the environment.

Prairie Restoration
Grade: 9-12
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-April – October
Learn about and participate in the on-going prairie restoration work at Merry Lea. Students will visit and explore the differences between prairie, savanna, and woodland ecosystems. Restoration processes will be examined through discussions on identification, planting, management, prescribed burns, protection and extermination.

Rock Cycle: Geology of Merry Lea
Grade: 5-12
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 80
When: mid-September – October
Dig into northeastern Indiana’s rich geological history! Students start inside for a slide introduction explaining glaciers and their impact on this area. The rest of the program time is then spent outside experiencing the results of glacial activity firsthand. Students hike down an esker, moving through layers of top soil and glacial till until they finally reach a peat bog at the bottom. Students also explore and identify rocks in an abandoned gravel pit discovering the variety of minerals left behind by receding glaciers.

Trees Are Terrific!
Grade: K-8
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 50
When: mid-September – mid-November
This program introduces students to the marvelous world of trees. Students explore tree anatomy and physiology, life cycles, categories of trees, tree identification, uses of trees, and how trees fit into their ecosystems.

Water Quality
Grade: 5-12
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-September – October
What, if anything, is wrong with our water? How did it get that way? What can be done about it now? All these questions are addressed as students use modern equipment and techniques to perform a variety of water sampling experiments. The importance of water and the effect humans have on water are emphasized in this program. Other topics include chemical and biological pollution, erosion and silting.

Wild Edible Plants
Grade: 5-12
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 35
When: mid-September – January
Students will discover a snack growing at Merry Lea — wild edible plants! On the trails students learn to identify and harvest plants and sample what they find. Other topics include survival plants and non-food uses of plants.

Winter Nature
Grade: K-8
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 80
When: mid-September – mid-February
Enjoy the wonders of winter! Students explore how people, plants and animals cope with winter. Outdoors they search for signs of life in the wintry woods and meadows. Some indoor activities are also included to allow time for warming up.

What’s Buggin’ You?
Grade: 3-10
Length: 3-4 hours
Maximum Students: 60
When: mid-September – October
Students learn what a “wetland” is, how to recognize different kinds of wetlands, what lives in wetlands, & the many important functions wetlands have. A short indoor slide show introduces students to these fascinating ecosystems that once covered most of northern Indiana. The rest of the time is spent outdoors walking in a marsh, discovering some of the plants and animals living there.

Programs in Nature are weather-dependent and may be postponed or cancelled due to unsafe conditions. For more information or to register, visit our website or call Merry Lea’s Education Department at 260-827-2222.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Merry Lea Education Center
Bentz Road
Kendallville, IN 47250
Phone: 260-827-2222
Email: info@merylea.org
Website: www.merylea.org