



Merry Lea

Environmental Learning Center
of Goshen College

Exploring Nature

3rd - 5th

Program Description

Students explore seasons as spring wakes up around them! Get out on the trails and investigate adaptations, the diversity of life and ecosystem interactions. Dip for pond creatures, play concept-reinforcing games and experience spring in Indiana.

Program Objectives

Students will:

- Discover how a habitat affects the survival of a living organism
- Explore what it means to be non-living and living and the characteristics of a living organism
- Discover there is great diversity among plants and animals
- Learn what living things need to survive

Program Outline

1. Hike

Students head out on our trails to get a close-up view of what plants and animals are doing this time of year. They participate in age-appropriate scavenger hunts, games and other hands-on activities.

2. Vernal Pond Exploration

While on the hike, students stop at one of our vernal ponds to search for macroinvertebrates and amphibians living in the water.

3. The afternoon is filled with a variety of age-appropriate activities. Options include:

- Songs
- Games
- Stories
- An introduction to Northern watersnakes

Vocabulary

- Food Web
- Ecosystem
- Non-living
- Adaptation
- Habitat
- Living

Quick Facts

Season	Spring: April - May Summer: June
Grades	3rd - 5th
Program Length	4 hours
Maximum # of Students	80 Students

Standards Correlations

3.LS.2 Plan and conduct an investigation to determine the basic needs of plants to grow, develop, and reproduce.

4.LS.3 Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior and reproduction in different ecosystems.

5.LS.2 Observe and classify common Indiana organisms as producers, consumers, decomposers, or predator and prey based on their relationships and interactions with other organisms in their ecosystem.

See *Standards Correlations for Exploring Nature* for more academic connections.