



Merry Lea

Environmental Learning Center
of Goshen College

Exploring Nature

K - 2nd

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 there is great diversity among plants and animals
- Learn about sequencing through life cycles and the seasons, exploring what plants and animals are doing in the spring
- Explore what it means to be “non-living” and “living”
- Learn what a habitat is and what it provides for living things

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

- Seasons
- Living
- Ecosystem
- Senses
- Habitat
- Non-living
- Life Cycle

Quick Facts

Season	Spring: April - May Summer: June
Grades	K - 2nd
Program Length	4 hours
Maximum # of Students	80 Students

Standards Correlations

K.PS.1 Plan and conduct an investigation using all senses to describe and classify different kinds of objects by their composition and physical properties.

1.LS.3 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

2.LS.1 Determine patterns and behavior of parents and offspring, which help offspring to survive.

2.LS.3 Classify living organisms according to variations in specific physical features and describe how those features may provide an advantage for survival in different ecosystems.

See Standards Correlations for Exploring Nature for more academic connections.