

Palmyra, Wisconsin

PALMYRA ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

GRADES K5-8



Trek through the "wilderness" of the Kettle Moraine State Forest (KMSF) near Palmyra, Wisconsin, approximately 40 miles southwest of Milwaukee. Travel time is about one hour. Explore nature at her best: deciduous forests, pine plantations, marshlands, prairie and pond life, climb moraines and look into kettles. You can see some of the finest examples of glacial topography on the planet!

Palmyra Environmental Learning Center may be scheduled for 4 hours or less between 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. for a maximum of 65 people. Teachers may choose to bring bag lunches or cook "pre-cooked" hot dogs and sausages over the fire. Please provide your own cooking utensils and aluminum foil. (Cookouts can be year-round.) All programs can be selected any time of the year (except Pond Study).

Glacial Geology

A guided hike will show the effects of the most recent ice age. Imagine what a glacier standing a mile high (not wide) could do to the land and see how the land changed in response! The hike transverse moraines allowing students to learn what makes a kettle, and in some areas of the forest view glacial erratics. We will discover how the last continental glacier still affects our daily lives.

Natural Communities

Students will hike the trails of the KMSF to observe various communities that exist there, comparing their urban community with these communities. They will begin to notice the similarities and differences of these communities including the habitats of animals and humans. Comparison of water resources and uses, food accessibility and origins will be noted. Modes of transportation and mobility, and methods of communication used by the inhabitants, will also be discussed.

Birds & Trees

Students will learn about the habits of birds, their habitats and migration, while also discovering the different methods to identify trees (using their leaves, leaf buds, bark, overall branching patterns, flowers and/or fruit). Students will explore the different uses of the wood and other "products" made from trees, as well as other topics including the importance of trees worldwide, how to age trees and tree diseases. We will also discuss how to attract birds and create feeding stations.

Native American Lore

This program presents an overview of Native American life. Topics include clothing, food gathering, medicine, and respect of Mother Earth. Programs can be tailored to concentrate on specific areas such as food preparation - "How are you going to cook that?" "How do you save the leftovers?" "Where do you get fresh fruits and vegetables in the middle of winter?"



Animal Tracking & Animal Homes

Identifying and/or recognizing animal movement, often referred to as tracking, incorporates much more than just looking for footprints. If conditions are not good for animals to make tracks (dry ground, frozen ground/no snow), tracks will be hard to find so we utilize other means of tracking animals; through signs of habitation, food and scat.

Prairie & Edible and Non-edible Plants

Much of this part of Wisconsin was once covered by several types of prairie. We will view the various stages in the "life" of a prairie. Various plants and their uses will be discussed including the importance of this ecosystem in our everyday life. Learn how to categorize plants as edible, medicinal, non-edible, or poisonous, while emphasizing the importance of NOT eating plants that are unfamiliar. Fall and late spring are best to see plants.



Pond Study (Grades 3-8 only)

Water is a vital natural resource and we emphasize the importance of respecting aquatic habitats. ALL participants will be expected to enter an ephemeral kettle pond filled with many wonderful & exciting species. This habitat can be very easily damaged and is available only in spring: if there is sufficient water in the pond; and, only to a small number of groups - first come, first served. Come learn the old fashioned way - get wet and muddy! **Insect repellent or sunscreen CAN NOT be worn so as to protect this vital resource.** THIS PROGRAM IS FOR THIRD GRADE AND ABOVE, IN MAY & JUNE ONLY.

Insects

During a guided hike we will discuss the benefits of insects and visually identify as many species as we can, discussing each one's role/job in its habitat. We will NOT be collecting/killing insects as they are far more important to us alive. We will attempt to keep a running list of insects sighted and send the list home with the teacher.



Instrument Study

(Grades 5-8 only)

During a hike in the Kettle Moraine State Forest, students will be introduced to the method of reading landscapes using several scientific instruments and the field measurements taken by natural scientists: degree of slope, DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) of trees, tree height, air and soil temperatures, wind speed, and find cardinal points with a compass. For Grades 5-8 only. Basic math skills are also a prerequisite.

I Want to Discover

(Grades K-2 only)

A gently guided, fun, journey through the meadows and/or forests of the KMSF. Inspired by the interests of the young child to promote & nurture a desire for a continuing love, care and further exploration of the natural world and the child's place in it.

Winter in the Forest & Winter Survival

Come see winter in its full beauty by enjoying a walk in the winter forest. Plants, animals and human techniques to survive will be discussed.



Reading the Landscape & Conservation

On a hike through the KMSF, students will observe the visual clues of past use of the land at KMSF. They will observe its use for farming and now its recreational use and affect on the land (the effects of pollution, erosion and soil compacting - ideas will be shared as to how these effects could be minimized or corrected). Observation of animal habitats and vegetation will indicate further land usage. Conservation, preservation and land ethics will be discussed, as well as the use of rain gardens and gray water. It is hoped that these observations and discussions will encourage students to ponder their future existence.

Naturalist's Choice

Combining material from any of the above mentioned programs, this program highlights the beauty found in the KMSF by discussing anything that the students, teachers or naturalists find of interest along our hike. If advised before the program, our naturalists will relate the hike to current or upcoming curriculum. This program is never the same!

Bus Contractor for MPS Schools only: Joy Farm (353-9200)

Bid #B5623 Cost of Bus: \$168

Mail or fax attached application today. Phone reservations will not be taken until on or after October 3, 2011.