

## Environmental Education Programs

We offer year round opportunities for children, adults, and families to connect with nature. Our facility provides access to the habitats, flora, and fauna native to Illinois. Woodlands, wetlands, and prairies serve as outdoor classrooms for exploration and discovery.

Whether you come to us to or we go to you, TNI educators help expand understanding and appreciation of the natural world. We help foster scientific capability using innovative teaching tools and techniques. Interaction with live animals, mounted specimens, monitoring equipment, and natural objects are some of the tools we use to connect children with nature.

All of our programs include specific academic activities that meet IL state standards and national environmental education standards.

### **Field Trip-On Site**

- Talahi Lodge (2 hour program) \$3/child  
Includes program of your choice and a hike

- Talahi Lodge (3+ hour program) \$4/child  
Includes program of your choice, hike, and team challenge or research

### **In School and Outreach**

- One hour program (up to 30 people)  
\$2/child

- Afterschool program and scout program  
series \$2/child

## MISSION

*Our Mission is to foster awareness and appreciation of the natural world through preservation, restoration, and education.*



*Talahi Lodge*

### **Community Outreach**

- Over 15,000 visitors hike and use the nature preserve, including K-12 fieldtrips, hikers, educators, birders, and scout groups
- Discovery Day Camp serves approximately 400 area youth annually, for the past 40 years
- TNI is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, funded by donations and grants
- Privately owned and operated 450+ acre nature preserve undergoing continual stewardship and restoration efforts
- Over seven miles of marked trails to explore
- Home to over 300 types of native plants, 150 species of birds, and many other creatures



**2213 S Levis Ln.,  
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618-466-9930**

[www.thenatureinstitute.org](http://www.thenatureinstitute.org)



**Field Trips  
at TNI**

- The Nature Institute is open for field trips from Public Schools, Private Schools, and Home School Groups from August to May.
- We offer a wide variety of topics and activities to choose from to coincide with classroom lessons.
- Sign-up for fieldtrips is done online, visit our website to schedule today!

## Pre-School and Kindergarten

Field trips for young children should be full of exploration and using their senses. We will go on a color hike, smell some plants, and look for animal signs.

- Fall on the Preserves
- Spring on the Preserves
- Pond Study
- Insects
- Animal Signs and Tracks
- Worms

## 1st Grade-3rd Grade

As children get older they can graduate from exploring to understanding. We will hike and explore using our senses, and we will learn to identify some of the plants and animal signs we encounter. We learn and understand the differences between forest, prairie, and wetland habitats.

- Fall on the Preserves
- Spring on the Preserves
- Pond Study
- Recycling and Composting
- Bird is the Word
- Scat
- Winter Ecology
- Seeds
- Geology



## 4th Grade-6th Grade

As students understand nature more, many want to help save it. With older students, we explore concepts of conservation and the role they can take as stewards of the natural world. We also focus on topics that are harder to understand such as Geology and Ecology, where hands-on learning and tangible examples are invaluable. We are happy to incorporate a stewardship project with their trip.

- Geology
- Survival Skills
- GPS, Compass and Map Reading
- The Mississippi River Conservation Game
- Living History
- River Watch
- Forest Ecology
- Prairie Ecology
- Aldo Leopold and Land Ethics

## Middle School and High School

As students reach middle school and high school they are ready to be challenged and desire to take action on what they believe in. Our field trips can introduce the social issues related to conservation and stewardship, and the challenges our world faces. We can bring up relevant topics, ask questions, and give them an opportunity to share their voice. In the coming months we will be developing more programs to reach these students.

- The Mississippi River Conservation Game
- Stewardship Project
- River Watch
- Any Citizen Science Project
- Invasion Ecology
- Aldo Leopold and Land Ethics



## **What to Bring**

*Students need to have:*

- Name Tag
- Closed Toed Shoes (able to get muddy)
- Proper clothing for the weather
- Lunch

*Teacher should have:*

- 1 chaperone for every 8 students
- Students split up into groups (approximately 12 per group)
- Transportation
- Payment

\* If you would like to bring hotdogs and marshmallows to cook over a campfire, please let us know. We have a large fire pit and roasting sticks. You will need to provide your own food.

**If you have specific topics that are not listed, we can customize a program to fit your needs.**