



School Program Description

Saginaw Bay Visitor Center Bay City State Recreation Area

Owls of Michigan

Level: 5th Grade & up

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Students will learn about our wetland owls, their unique adaptations, field identification, limiting factors and how to identify them by their haunting calls. Habitat requirements will also be explored and a close look will be taken at the problems facing some of our endangered owls. The program opens with the DNR Natural Heritage slide presentation "Northern Saw-whet Owls & Other Forest Owls" in which the students will learn about problems these birds of prey are facing. Next, students will participate in an Owl ID Lab, which utilizes the Jennison Exhibit Hall Owl Collection and taped owl calls. Students will also explore the owl's food chain through owl pellet dissections. In conclusion, students will play the fast-action fact or fiction game Owls & Crows. Owls of Michigan is an indoor winter program elective, requiring 2-3 hours. May be combined with a winter ecology hike. Program will conclude with a naturalist guided wetland habitat hike, exploring marsh, wooded wetland, wet prairie, pond and thicket habitats.

PROGRAM GOALS:

Designed to stimulate an awareness and appreciation of the owls of Michigan and their dependence on wetland forested and prairie habitat.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be able to distinguish between three common local owls and their calls.
2. Students will be able to list at least one endangered owl and describe one limiting factor.
3. Students will be able to identify the components of habitat and relate them to the needs of an owl.
4. Students will be able to reconstruct the owl's food web through the dissection of an owl pellet.
5. Students will be able define bird of prey, nocturnal, and predator.
6. Students will be able to list three adaptations which make owls unique.

PRE-VISIT SUGGESTIONS:

1. Read aloud to your class the Seneca Indians folk tale, "Why Owl Has Big Eyes" or the Penobscot Indians folk tale, "How Horned Owl Found a Wife". Both can be found in The Wonder Series: Owls On Silent Wings by Ann C. Cooper, Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver, CO.
2. Read aloud to your class Owl Moon, by Jane Yolan, Philomel Books, New York, New York.
3. Discuss with your class Birds of Prey found in your area.
4. Brainstorm a list of myths or facts which your students believe about owls. Keep for discussion after the field trip.

POST-VISIT SUGESTIONS:

1. Draw a class mural in which each student draws his/her favorite owl. Include in the picture each bird's special needs (food, water, shelter and space).
2. Inventory with your class all the animal remains found in their owl pellets. Reconstruct the owl's food web through drawings. Or make a food web mobile!
3. Improve owl habitat in a wetland forest near your school: build an owl nesting box!
4. Project Learning Tree: Web of Life – students take a close look at one particular ecosystem and discover ways plants and animals are connected through webbing with a ball of yarn and group collages.
5. Project WILD: Birds of Prey – students interpret data, and generate and test hypotheses regarding predator prey relationships and bird of prey populations. Too Close for Comfort – students experiment, estimate, hypothesize and summarize reasons to avoid animal discomfort through crowding.

COORDINATING WITH MICHIGAN SCIENCE Grade Level Content Expectations:

Science. Inquiry Process: S.IP.05.11, S.IP.05.12, S.IP.05.13, S.IP.05.14, S.IP.05.15, S.IP.05.16, S.IP.06.11, S.IP.06.12, S.IP.06.13, S.IP.06.14, S.IP.06.15, S.IP.06.16, S.IP.07.11, S.IP.07.12, S.IP.07.13, S.IP.07.14, S.IP.07.15, S.IP.07.16

Science. Inquiry Analysis & communication: S.IA.05.11, S.IA.05.12, S.IA.05.13, S.IA.05.14, S.IA.05.15, S.IA.06.11, S.IA.06.12, S.IA.06.13, S.IA.06.14, S.IA.06.15, S.IA.07.11, S.IA.07.12, S.IA.07.13, S.IA.07.14, S.IA.07.15

Science. Reflection & Social Implications: S.RS.05.11, S.RS.05.12, S.RS.05.13, S.RS.05.14, S.RS.05.15, S.RS.05.16, S.RS.05.16, S.RS.05.17, S.RS.05.19, S.RS.06.11, S.RS.06.12, S.RS.06.13, S.RS.06.14, S.RS.06.15, S.RS.06.16, S.RS.06.17, S.RS.06.18, S.RS.06.19, S.RS.07.11, S.RS.07.12, S.RS.07.13, S.RS.07.14, S.RS.07.15, S.RS.07.16, S.RS.07.17, S.RS.07.18, S.RS.07.19

Life science Organization of Living Things: L.OL.05.42, L.OL.05.41, L.OL.06.51, L.OL.05.52

Earth Science Solid Earth: E.SE.06.11, E.SE.06.13, E.SE.06.14

Life Science Heredity: L.HE.05.11, L.HE.05.12, L.HE.07.21

Life Science. Evolution: L.EV.05.11, L.EV.05.12, L.EV.05.21

Earth Science Earth System: E.ES.07.41

Life Science Ecosystem: L.EC.06.11, L.EC.06.21, L.EC.06.22, L.EC.06.23, L.EC.06.31, L.EC.06.32, L.EC.06.41

COORDINATING WITH M.E.A.P. SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT STANDARD BENCHMARKS:

Geographic Perspective

II.2—I.e.1, m.s.1, m.s.4, m.s.5, h.s.1, h.s.2

II.4—I.e.5, m.s.3, h.s.3

II.5—I.e.1, m.s.1, h.s.2