All of the classes listed below meet many of the State science and social studies standards. Classes without asterisks are designed for younger students. Classes with asterisks (*) are designed for upper elementary students. Classes can last between 45-120 minutes long. Most activities require students to be outside for varying lengths of time and appropriate attire for the weather is required. School District and other groups can choose classes that fit their particular curricular needs.

If you have a topic you would like taught at the Outdoor Center, let us know and we'll try to meet your needs!

Ask us about our Adventure Challenge Course. It is the perfect class to set goals, build trust and learn to work cooperatively. Sessions last 2 –5 hours depending on the goals of your group.

**Flying South** Learn how birds migrate or survive the winter in MI. Students are able to make pinecone bird feeders.

**The Giving Tree** Learn how trees provide homes and food for animals; Participants make a “natural” potpourri bag.

**Getting Down and Dirty** Learn the “ingredients of soil” and hike to find those items. Students make their own soil using organic matter and screens as decomposers.

**Creepy Crawly** Discuss how spider adaptations help them survive in almost every habitat imaginable; go on a spider hunt; play spider games.

**Hide and Seek** Discuss how/why animals hide in nature. Discuss predator/prey relationships; play a camouflage game.

**Six Legged Wonders** Discuss insect parts, adaptations and the important role insects play in nature. Play insect games.

**Hitchhikers** Discuss the characteristics of plants. Put on socks to catch seeds while hiking through a field; look at them under a microscope to see their incredible holding power.

**Tricky Tracks** Students in all grades love this activity. Students discuss how animals’ feet help them survive in nature. Hike through the woods to look for tracks. Then it’s back to the classroom to use animal track stamps to create a mural for the school.

**“Oh Nuts”** Discuss squirrels’ predator/prey relationships and habitat. Students use colored beans to play a squirrel winter survival game in the woods.

**“Oh Deer”** Discuss habitat and specialized adaptations of the white-tailed deer. Students love to play the Project Wild game, “Oh Deer,” as they watch a deer population rise and fall through a series of simulated years.
**Quick Frozen Critters** Discuss how animals survive in winter (hibernation, dormancy). Students try to stop their “animal” from freezing as they take it outside to build it a shelter. This simulation only works in the colder months.

*Awesome Amphibians* Discuss characteristics of amphibians. Using pretend amphibians students observe thermometers in different habitats to see where these cold blooded animals survive best.

*Lively Links* Discuss the food chain. Producers, consumers, omnivores, herbivores and carnivores are all words students will be using at the end of this class. Students play a food chain survival game of tag.

*Rotting Log* Discuss producers, consumers and decomposers. Students hike through the woods to discover the amazing activity inside the rotting trees.

*Black Bear Ed* Learn about the characteristics and habitat of the American Black Bear; Students get a chance to see a bear up close (It’s been Stuffed!) Outside they play a game to simulate a day in the life of a bear.

-THE FOLLOWING FOUR COLONIAL ACTIVITIES ARE DONE AS A GROUP-

*Colonial Games* Learn about different colonial games and get a chance to play many of them.

*Colonial Tools* Learn about tools and get a chance to use a colonial drill to make whirligigs/buzz saws.

*Rope Making* Students get the chance to make their own rope the old fashioned way and learn some interesting colonial facts while they work.

*Candle Making/Tin Smithing* This class is a favorite for upper elementary students. Learn about colonial candle making and tin smithing. Students make their own candles and complete a tin punching activity (additional cost for this class).

*Whooo Goes There?* Students see a slide presentation on different nocturnal animals. Find out what owls eat for dinner by dissecting own owl pellets. (additional cost for the pellets)

*Air Quality* Discuss “Good” and “Bad” ozone and how humans contribute to both. Students monitor UV rays with a meter and determine how best to protect themselves from the sun. (MEAP type experiment) Students discuss things they can do in their daily lives to conserve energy and improve air quality.

*Rock On* Learn about the rock cycle and rocks that are commonly found in MI. Then they complete a “Mystery Minerals” activity. To wrap up, students take a trip to the Geology Hill to find and identify a variety of MI rocks.

*Pond Studies* Learn about pond habitat and succession. Then it’s off to the pond to collect water samples and measure temperature, ph and clarity. Back at the classroom students use our videoscope and stereoscopes to discover the wonders of microscopic life. Students draw conclusions about the water quality based on their observations.
*Wonderful Wildlife* Discuss predator/prey relationships, the food chain and the interdependence of ecosystems. Then students hike through the Proud Lake Recreation Area to look for signs of wildlife in a number of different ecosystems.

*Water Cycle* Learn about the water cycle and the variety of ways water can be purified. Surprisingly, many students discover where their water at home comes from. Then they walk along the Huron River and collect samples of water to filter through a natural purification system.

*Forest Community* Learn about forest succession from field to climax forest. Hiking through the Proud Lake Recreation area they observe all of these areas and are able to sample some wild edibles.

*GPS/Orienteering* Learn GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) basics and then working in teams, students complete a scavenger hunt using our handheld units.

*Wild About Weather* Students learn weather basics through fun and interesting experiments. Students then visit our weather station at the center to collect data. Using this information, students analyze data and make predictions about future weather.

*Wilderness Survival* Learn to build a fire and shelter, basic first aid and survive in an emergency.

*Initiative Games* Learn to work cooperatively in groups. Students are active and use creative problem solving to complete their given task.

*Wild Edibles* Students hike through the Proud Lake Recreation Area discovering the abundance of edible plants and relating them to past cultures.

*Michigan Mammals* Learn the characteristics of all mammals and hike through the woods looking for signs of their habitat and tracks.

*Predator/Prey Simulation* This class is for Upper Grade students only. Students become the predator and prey in this simulation looking for signs and symbols in the woods for survival. Students are debriefed after the simulation to discuss the complexities of animal survival. This is a seasonal activity.

*Creative Writing* Students are given instruction on Process Writing and Poetry Forms before going outside to discover the many topics nature has to offer.

*Tree Identification* Use tree guides to discover the types of trees found in pioneer and climax forests. A tree bore is used to check the age of certain trees and discuss historical events and climate changes in the tree’s life.

*Native American Myths and Crafts* Learn about Native American Myths that try to explain natural phenomena. Students can create Wampum, Sand Paintings and other Native American crafts.