



Dear Teacher,

Thank you for signing up for “Animal Homes” at the Lost Valley Visitor Center in Glacial Park. This new visitor center is located in the center of Glacial Park. Follow the signs from the Harts Rd. entrance to get to the visitor center. If you need further instructions on how to find the facility please contact us at 815-678-4532. In the event of inclement weather on the day of your field trip, please call us to discuss the day’s plans.

Please make sure that all teachers and chaperones attending the field trip are aware of the following information:

1. Your field trip will begin at the Lost Valley Visitor Center. You will be met by a staff member who will give the children a brief program introduction inside the building. This will include rules, the plan for the day, and an introduction to animal homes and the habitats that we will visit. Then the group will go for a hike in Glacial Park. On the hike, they will learn: what animals live in northern Illinois, types of homes animals make, how to spot animal homes in the wild, why homes and habitats are important to animals. The hike is organized so there is plenty of time for exploration and quiet observation of animals in their habitats. After the hike there will be a break to visit the washrooms and the drinking fountains, followed by a program wrap-up.
2. Teachers, chaperones, and students should dress for the weather including appropriate footwear for hiking over hilly terrain. Spring weather is variable and while it may feel warm at school, Glacial Park tends to be windy and cooler because of the hills.
3. Background information as well as pre and post-trip activities are available for this and all McHenry County Conservation District school field trips in your choice of format. Completion of the activities ensures a more successful learning experience for your students.
 - Download information from our website at www.mccdistrict.org; click on the Education tab.
 - Request that information be sent to your email or school address (call Kim Compton or Brian Carroll at 815-678-4532)

Again, we thank you for your interest in the McHenry County Conservation District’s programs. We are looking forward to a day of fun and learning with your class. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 815-678-4532.

Sincerely,

Kim Compton and Brian Carroll
Lost Valley Visitor Center Education Program Staff

Pre-Trip Activity: “What Animal Am I?”

“What Animal Am I?” is a riddle game that involves giving the students a series of clues and the students trying to guess which animal you are describing. This activity introduces the children to the concept of animals and their various habitats.

1. “I make my home inside of hollow trees and build a large nest out of twigs and oak leaves. I love to eat all kinds of nuts. I am also a good climber of trees. “
What animal am I?
(*answer: squirrel*)
2. “I am an amphibian that makes my home in the water, and during the winter, I bury myself under the mud. My call can be heard early in spring at many wet areas. I have smooth skin and webbed feet. I eat insects and can hop around really fast.”
What animal am I?
(*answer: frog*)
3. “I am a very large animal that can weigh up to 200 pounds. I make my home on the ground, usually on soft leaves or grasses. I will flick my white tail into the air when I am frightened. I like to eat grasses and nuts.”
What animal am I?
(*answer: deer*)
4. “I am a large bird that can spread my wings out to 5 feet. I live on the branches of trees and sometimes inside the hollow parts of trees. I hunt at night and have very sharp claws to capture animals with. I make a hooting sound.”
What animal am I?
(*answer: owl*)
5. “I am an insect with six legs. I have colorful wings. I make my home on flowers and other plants. When I was young, I was called a caterpillar.”
What animal am I?
(*answer: butterfly*)
6. “I have red fur and a bushy tail that is tipped in white. I dig my home under the soil. My home is called a den and has many entrances and exits. I am often seen out in an open prairie or field hunting for mice.”
What animal am I?
(*answer: red fox*)

Post-Trip Activity: "Charades"

Now that your students know more about the animals that live in McHenry County, see if they can act out animal charades.

Call a student up to the front of the class and whisper an animal activity to them. They will act out the activity while the rest of the class guesses what the student is doing. Some suggestions for animal activities are:

- a snake slithering,
- a beaver building a dam,
- a groundhog digging a hole,
- a squirrel eating a nut,
- a bird building a nest,
- a human getting home from work.

Etc.

Post-Trip Activity: "Living in a Forest"

Included is a worksheet depicting a forest habitat. Make a copy for each student and have them draw whatever animals they would like that would be living in the forest.



Living in A Forest

