



WELCOME TO
THE 2019 FRPA
CONFERENCE!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- Understand how staff use the NRPA Wildlife Explorer program and adapt it to their unique facilities and constituents
- Gain ideas to take back to your own institutions and how to look for partners in the system/area you are already in.
- Understand how staff marketed the program using NRPA marketing materials along with their own materials

Who We Are



- Science Museum inside of a city park
 - Indoor exhibits and classroom
 - Outdoor science and butterfly garden
 - Acres of pine forest and trails



Wildlife Explorers Booklet



- NRPA's website:
<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/wildlifeexplorers/>
- Contributing partners:
 - National Wildlife Federation
 - Cornell Lab of Ornithology
 - NRPA

Wildlife Explorers, Nature Learning | <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/wildlifeexplorers/>


NRPA National Recreation and Park Association
Because everyone deserves a great park

ABOUT NRPA | MEMBERSHIP | NRPA CONNECT | STORE | BLOG |

OUR WORK | CAREERS & EDUCATION | CERTIFICATION | CONFERENCE & EVENTS | PUBLICATIONS & RESEARCH

HOME | OUR WORK | NRPA PARTNERSHIPS | INITIATIVES | WILDLIFE EXPLORERS


Wildlife Explorers



Wildlife Explorers is NRPA's turn-key initiative that connects youth to nature by leveraging existing out-of-school programming happening at local park and recreation centers.

- **Target age range:** 5 to 10 years old
- **Program length:** 6 weeks (meeting 1-3 times per week)
- **Activity length:** 45 minutes to one hour per week
- **Location:** Any park or recreation center, schoolyard, or outdoor space
- **Staffing:** No experience with subject matter required

Take It Outside: The Key to Engaging Young Children with Nature



It's been clinically proven to enhance children's growth and development, their cognitive, creative and problem-solving abilities, as well as help with their physical health, social relationships, self-discipline and reducing stress levels. It's free and it's right outside your door — It's nature!

[Read More](#)

Wildlife Explorers Program Update

[Get the Wildlife Explorers Workbook](#)


The workbook includes an easy to follow six chapter curriculum complete with activities for youth and a guide for facilitators. Download the curriculum today and bring Wildlife Explorers to your community. The workbook is also now available in Spanish.

To get a free PDF copy of the Wildlife Explorers Workbook and Leader's Guide (one file), just enter your contact information below. *Don't worry, we will never share your information.*

[Get the Workbook](#)

Wildlife Explorers, Nature Learning | <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/wildlifeexplorers/>

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Wildlife Explorers Program Update



In August, five agencies completed implementation of the Wildlife Explorers program...

[Read More](#)

Resources

- Wildlife Explorers Games and Activities
- Blog from NRPA with tips for leading a nature discovery program
- Blog containing tips from a Wildlife Explorers program leader in San Jose, CA
- Blog: Newbies to Nature: Training Your Instructors
- Blog: Bringing Nature to Kids in Urban Environments

Setting up the program

- Permission to use Wildlife Explorers logo in accordance with my employer's policy
- Creating a flyer: identify partners
 - Had to find a place with a body of water
 - City facility
- Publishing program in the city's recreation guidebook



How I used the booklet

- Free, walk-in program on Saturdays
- Children 5-11 must be accompanied by a parent
- Condensed pages into a booklet, double-sided
- Only printed one chapter per week



WELCOME WILDLIFE EXPLORER!

Did you know that scientists are a kind of explorer? They search for new discoveries and ideas. You can be a scientist, too! Science starts with curiosity and observation. If you keep your eyes and ears open and record what you notice, then you are practicing science skills. It's a great way to explore a park. Let's get exploring!

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Chapter 1: Nature Doesn't Rest

- Simple, longitudinal studies



Weather Watching

Weather can be warm, cold, or anywhere in between, depending on where you live. It can even change a lot from day to day in the same place! Keep a weather record to see how the weather changes.

WEEK 1	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	TEMPERATURE: _____	SKY: CLOUDY / MOSTLY CLOUDY / PARTLY CLOUDY / NO CLOUDS	WIND: WINDY / LIGHT BREEZE / NO WIND	PRECIPITATION: LIGHT / MEDIUM / HEAVY	RAIN / SNOW / NO PRECIPITATION / OTHER: _____	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: _____
WEEK 2	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	TEMPERATURE: _____	SKY: CLOUDY / MOSTLY CLOUDY / PARTLY CLOUDY / NO CLOUDS	WIND: WINDY / LIGHT BREEZE / NO WIND	PRECIPITATION: LIGHT / MEDIUM / HEAVY	RAIN / SNOW / NO PRECIPITATION / OTHER: _____	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: _____
WEEK 3	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	TEMPERATURE: _____	SKY: CLOUDY / MOSTLY CLOUDY / PARTLY CLOUDY / NO CLOUDS	WIND: WINDY / LIGHT BREEZE / NO WIND	PRECIPITATION: LIGHT / MEDIUM / HEAVY	RAIN / SNOW / NO PRECIPITATION / OTHER: _____	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: _____
WEEK 4	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	TEMPERATURE: _____	SKY: CLOUDY / MOSTLY CLOUDY / PARTLY CLOUDY / NO CLOUDS	WIND: WINDY / LIGHT BREEZE / NO WIND	PRECIPITATION: LIGHT / MEDIUM / HEAVY	RAIN / SNOW / NO PRECIPITATION / OTHER: _____	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: _____
WEEK 5	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	TEMPERATURE: _____	SKY: CLOUDY / MOSTLY CLOUDY / PARTLY CLOUDY / NO CLOUDS	WIND: WINDY / LIGHT BREEZE / NO WIND	PRECIPITATION: LIGHT / MEDIUM / HEAVY	RAIN / SNOW / NO PRECIPITATION / OTHER: _____	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: _____
WEEK 6	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	TEMPERATURE: _____	SKY: CLOUDY / MOSTLY CLOUDY / PARTLY CLOUDY / NO CLOUDS	WIND: WINDY / LIGHT BREEZE / NO WIND	PRECIPITATION: LIGHT / MEDIUM / HEAVY	RAIN / SNOW / NO PRECIPITATION / OTHER: _____	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: _____

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Leaf It to Me

Each spring, something amazing happens. Bare trees grow a whole new set of leaves. But the show doesn't last long, and only those who pay close attention get to see the magic in action. Follow the steps below to catch it this year!

- Find a tree with a low branch that you can easily see. If the tree doesn't have leaves on it yet, no problem.
- At least once per week, visit this tree to see what has changed.
- On each visit, fill out one of the boxes below. Record the date and time, draw the branch, and write down anything interesting you notice.

	What does it look like? Draw it.	Describe it.
WEEK 1	DATE: _____ TIME: _____	_____
WEEK 2	DATE: _____ TIME: _____	_____
WEEK 3	DATE: _____ TIME: _____	_____
WEEK 4	DATE: _____ TIME: _____	_____
WEEK 5	DATE: _____ TIME: _____	_____
WEEK 6	DATE: _____ TIME: _____	_____

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Chapter 2: Exploring Essentials

- Using art in environmental education



Mapping The Park

Do you have a favorite place in your park? Do you think animals have favorite places here, too? Make a map of the park showing these places.

- In the box below, draw the park. Start by drawing the perimeter around the park. This might include sidewalk, fence, neighboring yard, street, creek, or a row of trees.
- Add the most noticeable landmarks, such as a community center, playground, pond, parking lot, or big trees.
- Make a star on the map where your favorite place is.
- Draw the path you take to get to your favorite place.
- On the map, mark the locations of plants or animals (including neat insects) that you have seen.

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Making Camp

Have you ever been camping? Imagine you are only as big as a mouse or maybe even smaller, like a ladybug. Find a little section of ground and use materials you find outside to build a campground for your small self.

- First, lay out your campground. Think about a place for tents and campfires, a picnic area, hiking trails, and maybe a lake or river. Draw a map of your campground in the box.
- Now gather sticks, bark, rocks, leaves, and other things, and use them to build the campground. Make tents, cabins, fire rings, picnic tables, trails, signs, and anything else you'd like to find in a campground.
- Give your campground a name: _____

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Chapter 3: Homey Habitats

- Added another environmental education lesson plan to supplement this chapter
- Quick Frozen Critters <https://kidszoo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Quick-Frozen-Critters.pdf>

Animal Homes

When you walk through your neighborhood, you see houses people live in. But, you'll also pass the homes of many animals — they're just not as easy to spot. Take a walk through the park and keep a record of the animal homes you observe. Insects are animals too, so be sure to also look for their homes.

Draw and describe the animal homes you see in the boxes below.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR:

- A tree hole
- A hole in the ground
- A bird nest
- A leafy squirrel nest
- A big log
- A rolled-up leaf
- Holes or tunnels in tree bark

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Habitat Hunt

A good habitat has everything an animal needs to survive. But not all animals need the same habitat. Did you know the park you're in might have many different kinds of habitats? Explore the habitats around you and see how many things on this scavenger hunt list you can find:

- ☐ Insect
- ☐ Spider
- ☐ Spider web
- ☐ Place where a bird can hide
- ☐ Plant that is as tall as you
- ☐ Mammal
- ☐ Leaf with pointy edges
- ☐ Animal making noise
- ☐ Something a bird can eat
- ☐ Animal track
- ☐ Something smooth
- ☐ Hole in a tree
- ☐ Rock bigger than a baseball
- ☐ Bird nesting material
- ☐ Place where animals can get water

What was the most colorful thing you found? _____

What was the coolest thing you found? _____

What would you name the habitat you are standing in? _____

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Chapter 4: Critters Big and Small

- Simple instructions using commonly seen animals

Squirrel Sightings

No matter where you live, squirrels probably live nearby. Head outside for a closer look at these bushy-tailed rodents.

Can you spot the following tree squirrel behaviors? Check off each one you see.

<input type="checkbox"/> Clever Climbing Squirrels are treetop climbers. With gripping feet and long tails for balance, they climb high and leap along from branch to branch.	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasure Seeking Acorns and other nuts are favorite foods for squirrels. They stash nuts in trees and bury them in the ground. Then in winter, when food is scarce, they use their sensitive noses to sniff out the hidden snacks.	<input type="checkbox"/> Zigzagging and Zaggging Have you ever seen a squirrel run a little ways, stop, turn and run in a different direction, and so on? This zigzag routine works well for a squirrel being chased by a predator.
<input type="checkbox"/> Chasing and Racing In late winter, squirrels choose mates. Males chase females and try to chase away other males.	<input type="checkbox"/> Busy Building Squirrels make leafy nests in tree holes and on branches. If you spot what seems to be a messy pile of leaves up in a tree, it's likely a squirrel nest, called a dreys.	<input type="checkbox"/> Chatterboxing Squirrels chatter, click, and squeak to talk to each other. They also may flick their tails. What they are usually saying is, "Stay away. This food is mine!"

What else do you see a squirrel doing? _____

Why do you think it is doing this? _____

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Get Into Insects

When it is warm outside, all kinds of insects come out where you can see them. Go on an insect hunt and see what kinds you can find. Draw and write your insect observations below!

	What does it look like? Draw it.	What is it doing? Describe it.
INSECT 1		
INSECT 2		
INSECT 3		
INSECT 4		

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Chapter 5: Wonderful Water

- Needed a body of water.
- Contacted the City library which had a pond on the property

Animals in Water

All animals, including humans, need water to survive. Animals use water in many interesting ways. Animals that live in lakes, streams, and oceans make water their home (example: fish). Other animals use water to cool them off when the weather is hot (example: elephants). Some animals lay their eggs in water, but don't live in the water (example: toads). Most animals drink water, but some get the water they need from the food they eat (example: kangaroo rat).

1. Explore a wet place in the park. What kind of wet place are you exploring? Describe what you see around you.

2. In each box below, draw or describe one living thing you find in or near the water.

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Chapter 6: So Many Birds

- Met at another City site
- Used a sign in sheet to track participation
- Provided binoculars

What Bird Is That?

Now that you can use shape to determine a bird's group, let's add more details to help us identify a bird to its species.

Bird watchers use many different clues to identify birds. Shape, size, color pattern, time of year, and location can help you identify a bird you see. Find a bird near you and let's gather information about it!

What size was the bird? Put a star on the line closest to the size of the bird you saw.

Circle the THREE main colors you saw.

Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Black	Gray	White	Brown
-----	--------	--------	-------	------	-------	------	-------	-------

Did you notice any interesting patterns on the bird? Were there stripes on the head or wings?

Draw the bird, including any patterns you observed.

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BIRD SILHOUETTES

There are lots of different types of birds. Many birds can be grouped by their shape, also known as their silhouette. What kinds of birds do you see in the park?

Songbirds	Crows	Doves	Swallows	Hummingbirds	Woodpeckers
Herons	Geese	Ducks	Gulls	Hawks	Owls

Can you find birds from 3 different silhouette groups? Record the group and where in the habitat you saw each bird.

Group Name (such as owl)	Where You Saw It (such as in a tree)

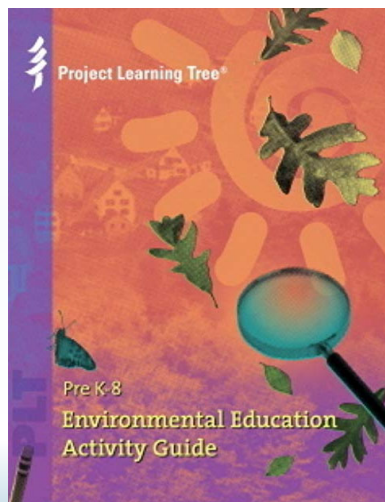
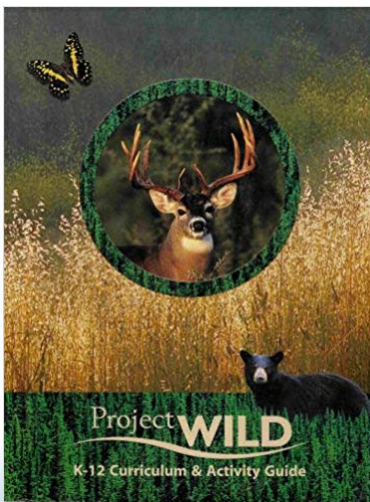
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Completion Ceremony

- Reserved a room with a laptop and projector
- Invited a guest speaker from local university biology department
- Provided refreshments and giveaways



Supplemental Resources



- Curriculum Guides
 - Project WILD (www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild)
 - Project Learning Tree (www.plt.org)

Other Resources

- Binoculars
- Identiflyer



- Binders- Office Depot



Helpful Tips

- Require a parent or guardian to participate with the child
- Contact other sites before the program
- Print one chapter per week
- Use a sign in sheet to track participation
- Collect supplies from participants at the end of every program
- Contact IFAS extension office for free handouts or a guest speaker

Estimated Costs

- 25 binders (about \$225)
- 20 binoculars (about \$80)
- Identifier (about \$60)
- Lemonade and cups (less than \$10)

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FLORIDA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION VISIT FRPA.ORG