



Ottawa County Parks Nature Education Center

Field trip information for Scouts



The Ottawa County Parks Nature Education Center's (NEC) holistic approach to youth programs is that all children are born with an innate sense of wonder about the natural world. Our programs are designed to grow a sense of wonder and appreciation of nature through positive hands-on outdoor experiences. Small group sizes allow NEC staff to use a variety of techniques to engage children and assist them in their explorations throughout the seasons.

The following are a few programs that will assist your scouts in completing the requirements for a Naturalist Activity Badge.

Basics of Birding: This 1.5 hour program for upper elementary students is divided into two parts. One 45 minute section focuses on migration flyways, why birds migrate, and the dangers of migration. The second section will provide instruction on how to use binoculars and will provide field experience to observe birds at the feeders and on the trail. All scouts completing the program will be able to check out binoculars from the Nature Education Center when accompanied by an adult.

Poisonous Plants and Venomous Reptiles: There is only one venomous reptile in Michigan and only a few poisonous plants. There are also many "look alike" plants and reptiles that are often mistaken for the poisonous ones. This one hour program will help scouts identify the differences between the look-a-like and the poisonous plants and animals and confront misconceptions of venomous and poisonous organisms being "bad."

The Food Chain Connection: What is a food chain? How are producers, consumers, and decomposers connected to each other? This one hour program, filled with explorations and a group game, will focus on different food chains in an ecosystem and how humans can impact the balance of nature.

Fees: Program fees are based on the number of people and the length of the program. Our goal is to have no more than 15 people per naturalist. A group of 30 people (adults and children) for a 1.5 hour program would cost \$50. Your exact fee will be determined when you register.

If you need a program that addresses other specific requirements needed for a particular badge, please contact Kristen Hintz at 616-786-4847



Ottawa County Parks &
Recreation Commission