



The Forest Around Us

A program about the forest ecosystem

Overview:

The Forest Around Us is a two and a half hour journey through a woodland dunes forest. During the program, your students will learn how a forest functions and about the plant and animal species that dwell there.

Purpose:

To learn why forests are important ecosystems and how they benefit our lives

General Objectives: to give students the knowledge to . . .

1. discuss the benefits of forests for wildlife and humans.
2. explain the importance of biodiversity.
3. understand how humans can influence the natural environment.
4. name at least three tree species, identify animal signs, make observations relative to different plants and use forestry measurement techniques.
5. use and critically think about information gathered from investigations.

Wisconsin's Environmental Education Model Academic Standards:

1. Standard A.8.5 Use the results of their investigations to develop answers, draw conclusions, and revise their personal understanding
2. Standard B.8.3 Explain the importance of biodiversity
3. Standard B.8.10 Explain and cite examples of how humans shape the environment
4. Standard B.8.8 Explain interactions among organisms or populations of organisms
5. Standard A.8.4 Use critical thinking strategies to interpret and analyze gathered information (see SC Inquiry)

The forest around us:

During the program students will survey a plot of land along a Woodland Dunes trail. They will use a key to learn about the groundcover in the forest, identify animal signs, complete a tree inventory and learn how to identify different types of lichen. This exploration will lead to activities highlighting the ecological, structural and functional diversity of a forest and the many interactions that take place within it. Through these activities, your students will gain a better understanding of forest ecosystems and why they are an important resource not only for plants and other animals, but humans as well.

Note: We will meet your class at the **Conifer Trail trailhead on Columbus Street** in Two Rivers. I will send you a map with directions to the trailhead. **Students should dress warm. The entire program takes place outside.** Even on a mild day, jackets and long pants should be worn.

Please make sure your students have had a bathroom break before arriving at Woodland Dunes. The nearest bathroom is at the Nature Center, a short drive or 10 minute walk from the trail.