



Nature Program Ideas from Other Libraries or Park Programs

It's nice to see what other nature programs are offered in other parts of the U.S. Some of these might be adapted for Idaho Family Reading Week or used throughout the year. We included descriptions and possible age ranges when it was available.

Winter Sleepers

Enjoy a story about a bear at rest in Karma Wilson's story, *Bear Snores On*. This enchanting story engages children in learning about animals looking for shelter. Children learn about hibernation and how some animals spend the winter. Participants will create a bear lair.

Turkey Time

In the book *Little Tom Turkey*, by Frances Bloxam, children discover what the real lives of wild turkeys are like. They will learn about hens, toms, poults, caruncles, wattles, and snoods. Children will even perform the turkey strut and learn the turkey call! Each child makes a terrific turkey to take home.

Squirrel Tales

Preschool-Grade 1

Children help tell the story, *Nuts to You*, by Lois Ehlert. They learn about Bushy Tail and how he makes a home in a woods or in a backyard. Each child makes a squirrel puppet in a nest.

Pass the Pumpkin

Pumpkin Circle: The Story of a Garden, by George Levenson shows the life cycle of a pumpkin. Children will learn how pumpkins grow and create some fun pumpkin projects.

Tracks & Scat!

Wild Tracks, by Jim Arnosky shows the actual size of many different animals we might see in Idaho. And kids love to talk about animal scat! Children will get to take home a nature journal to record any signs of animals they may see.

My, What Large Antlers You Have!

Children help recreate parts of the story, *Imogene's Antlers*, by David Small. It's fun to imagine Imogene's problems with her new headgear. A hands-on look at real animal horns and antlers is exciting as children create their own pair of antlers to wear.

Owling

Younger children participate in the telling of *Goodnight Owl*, by Pat Hutchings and older children hear Jane Yolen's *Owl Moon*. Everyone gets to see mounts and artifacts of these nighttime prowlers and create an owl puppet for a "hooting" good time.



More Nature Program Ideas

Stories in the Snow

Children help fill a giant mitten with animals during the reading of *The Mitten*, by Jan Brett. Puppets, animal skins and mounts will be used to share information about how animals adapt to winter. Each child will create a mitten with the story characters so they can retell the story themselves.

Winter's Gifts

Help gather the colors of the winter season as Little Bear meets different animals in *The Snow Tree*, by Caroline Repchuk. To celebrate the holiday spirit, children will decorate a tree and make an ornament.

Snow Clues

In the Snow, Who's Been Here? by Lindsey Barrett George, is a book showing animal signs in winter. Children uncover animal tracks and other clues to see who has been out and about on a snowy day. Children create an animal sewing card.

Paper Making

Grades 2-8

Students create their own homemade sheets of recycled paper after a demonstration of the papermaking process.

Birds of a Feather

Using the book *The Remarkable Egg*, by Adelaide Holl, children find out that birds come in all shapes and sizes. They will learn about feathers, beaks and feet as the whole class "builds" a bird. Children will decorate a pair of binoculars to try out in their own backyard.

Web Weavers

The Very Busy Spider, by Eric Carle engages children in a captivating story as children learn that spiders spin webs. Children play on a room-size web to learn more about how spiders live. They spin their own sparkly web with glue and glitter.

April Showers

Eric Carle's story *Little Cloud*, introduces children to the water cycle. Using dramatic play, the children become raindrops in a story of the water cycle. Each participant creates a special 3-D cloud.

'Tree'rific Colors

Children enjoy the colors of Autumn with Zoe Hall's *Fall Leaves Fall*. They participate in helping a tree change into its fall dress. Everyone creates a special tree with fingerprint leaves.

In-Library Fishing

Grades 2-6

Children enjoy a fun-filled indoor fishing experience while learning about fish and where to find them. Children will practice using equipment safely.



More Nature Program Ideas

On The Trail of the Monarch Butterfly

Grades 2-4

Children take an imaginary journey with the monarch butterfly as they participate in a life cycle story about the monarch's travels to Mexico.

Tales of Tracks & Trails

Grades 2-5

Children discover the tales told by our wild animal neighbors. The program includes an engaging slide show of animals and their clues, an interactive wildlife mystery story and an opportunity for each child to create their own wildlife track guide.

The Adventures of Canada Goose

Kindergarten—Grade 1

Children follow Canada Goose as she spends her fall trying to decide what to do for the winter. A seasonal hike follows the show.

Let's Get Growing

Preschool-Grade 1

Children participate in a planting story, *Jack's Garden*, by Henry Cole and learn the many shapes and kinds of seeds we can grow. They create a seed necklace with directions for transplanting and caring for a plant.

The Backyard Invertebrates

Grades 2-4

Students enjoy a slideshow about insects, spiders, and animals without backbones. Students will meet live creatures as they search through soil and wood samples.

Trees and Me

Grades 1-3

Children will create a living tree as they learn about how a tree grows. They will hike out to meet the forest trees and discover the many benefits of trees from summer shade to maple sap.

Arthropod Adventures

Grades 3-6

Two, four, six, eight, ten legs. Students will meet insects and their many-legged arthropod relatives while doing hands-on collection and observation in a variety of habitats. Adaptations, identification, and life cycles will be emphasized.

Lady Bug's Spring Breakfast

Kindergarten-Grade 1

Lady Bug awakens from a winter sleep to discover she is very hungry. She visits her other friends in search of her favorite food, aphids. A hike searching for spring secrets follows the program.



More Nature Program Ideas

Pondering

Grades 2-6

In this pond study program, students will immerse themselves in the wonders of area wetlands. Hands-on collection and observation will help students learn about the amazing adaptations of aquatic creatures.

Caterpillar's Lunchbox

Preschool-Grade 1

Children meet Eric Carle's *Very Hungry Caterpillar* in a live action puppet show. Each participant makes a caterpillar/butterfly ring.

Be a Friend to Bats

Grades 1-6

Students learn how to invite a bat to dinner and find out how many bats live in the area. Children will participate in a lively bat story to learn about echolocation. There will also be a bat lab to explore bat biology, biodiversity, adaptations and a skeleton.

Awesome Owls for Older Kids

Grades 2—5

Students delve into the nocturnal world of area owls and discover facts about the feathers, hearing, and night flying of these beautiful "Tigers of the Sky." They learn to listen for owl calls right in their own backyard. Explore owl pellets too!

Crawly Creatures Beneath Your Feet

Grades 1-2

Visit and discover the creatures that live under a log. An active game of "I Spy" will give children a chance to count the legs, body parts, and wings to help them identify these crawly creatures. A discovery hike gives students the tools to capture bugs and release them unharmed.

Ecosystems

Grades 4-8

Students use the tools of the field scientist to measure, compare, and explore the ecosystems in the nearby county parks. A science inquiry approach will be used to explore a woodland, wetland, or meadow. Students learn the common plants and animals in these natural neighborhoods.

Make Tracks for Home

Grades 1-5

Students learn about wildlife including their habitat needs: food, water, shelter, and space. They take a hike to discover animal clues and homes and make a plaster cast of an animal footprint to take home.

Nature's Neighborhoods

Grades 1-3

There is no place like home! Students explore different natural neighborhoods to learn about the plants and animals that call these places home. Activities include an active participation story.



More Nature Program Ideas

Cricket Song

The Very Quiet Cricket, by Eric Carle is brought to life through the use of puppets and insect sounds. Live crickets will be in attendance to help children learn about cricket fact and folklore. Each child will create a cricket in a cup.

Frog Mystery

Learn about the mysterious changes that happen as a tadpole grows and becomes an adult frog. *Fish is Fish*, by Leo Lionni is the delightful story that is the basis for this frog mystery. Children make a "froggie" face complete with a retractable tongue.

Ladybug Buddies

Students will have a highflying time when participating in the story *Are You A Ladybug?* by Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries. Children learn about the ladybug lifecycle, colors and patterns on ladybugs, and design their own ladybug ring to take home.

Rabbit Tales

Help a cottontail rabbit family explore the world and encounter new adventures with the charming book, *Rabbits and Raindrops* by Jim Arnosky. Children are transformed into cottontail rabbits with wearable crafts.

Sliding with Slug

Slipping and sliding, Slug is out and about. Learn about the slug in garden and forest with Pamela Duncan Edward's book *Some Smug Slug*. Watch out Slug, someone is hungry! Children help tell the story, touch something slippery, and decorate a craft slug.

Spring is Just Ducky

Spring is an exciting time. Is it cold or warm? Is it sunny or cloudy? Children help bring spring to life with the story *Cold Little Duck, Duck, Duck*, by Lisa Westberg Peters. Children will make a spring windsock craft to take home.

Who's in the Pond?

In creating an "indoor pond," children get up close and personal with some pond critters. The program is based on *In the Small, Small Pond*, by Denise Fleming. Each child builds a colorful winged dragonfly.

Wiggly Worms

Wiggle and giggle with the worms while exploring their underground world. Linda Glaser's book, *Wonderful Worms* gives great worm facts in an appealing format. Children look for worms and touch them.

Apple Antics

Travel around the globe to gather ingredients to bake an apple pie. Marjorie Priceman's book *How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World* acquaints children with apple facts from around the world. Each child makes a potpourri pie. (Or make a real pie in the library!)

Many of these ideas are from "Nature in the Parks," a cooperative effort of the UW-Cooperative Extension, the Wehr Nature Center, and the Milwaukee County Park System.

