

PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

"Learning to live well with self, others, and the environment . . ."



PROGRAM PLANNER For Environmental and Outdoor Education *Day Visits and Residential Programs*

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center
12718 Tenth Street NE Telephone: 320-354-5894
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www.prairiewoodselc.org

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For Information and Reservations call 320-354-5894

WELCOME TO PRAIRIE WOODS !

What is Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center?

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center is a nonprofit organization, established in 1992. We are committed to providing outstanding environmental education and outdoor experiences to people of all ages. We are deeply rooted in our Kandiyohi County community, while reaching out to communities across Minnesota and the upper Midwest.

Our Mission? Simple:

We will promote an individual and shared commitment to the responsible use, management, and preservation of our natural resources.

What can we offer you?

You, your students, and your community will benefit from programs at Prairie Woods. At Prairie Woods, you'll find. . .

- ◆ Thought-provoking environmental education programs.
- ◆ Bracing Challenge Course activities.
- ◆ Vivid living history.
- ◆ Engaging staff.
- ◆ A brilliant landscape.

... a rich experience for all.



Contact Us:

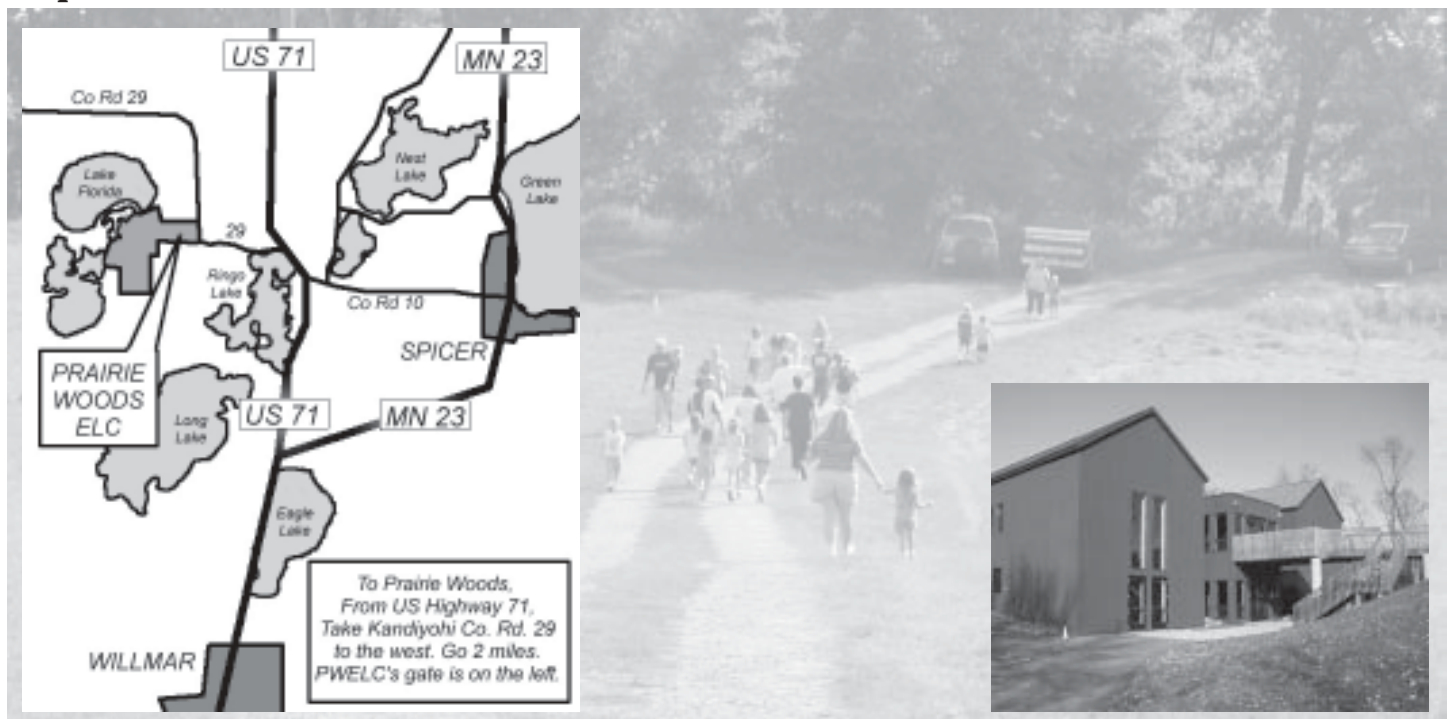
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Map and Directions:



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AT PRAIRIE WOODS



Environmental Education is . . .

Essential,

Exciting,

Everywhere!



"We will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught."

~Baba Dioum

Outstanding Learning, Outdoors.

What could be more important than learning to live well with ourselves, others and the environment?

Relevant, hands-on learning is daily fare at Prairie Woods. Ponds, prairies, marshes, hills and hardwood forests are our classroom. Our programs enliven curiosity and wonder, helping people of all ages learn to respect and care for the environment that provides our daily needs.

Prairie Woods programs combine guided exploration, classroom activities, outdoor recreation, and community-building to provide the best possible learning experience. Programs are presented in the ways kids learn best: with engaging, interdisciplinary activities, in small groups.

Prairie Woods provides activities about:

- ◆ Birds
- ◆ Wetlands
- ◆ Insects
- ◆ Mammals
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Prairies
- ◆ Trees
- ◆ Canoeing
- ◆ Archery
- ◆ Orienteering
- ... and much more.

✓ Programs for groups of all ages;

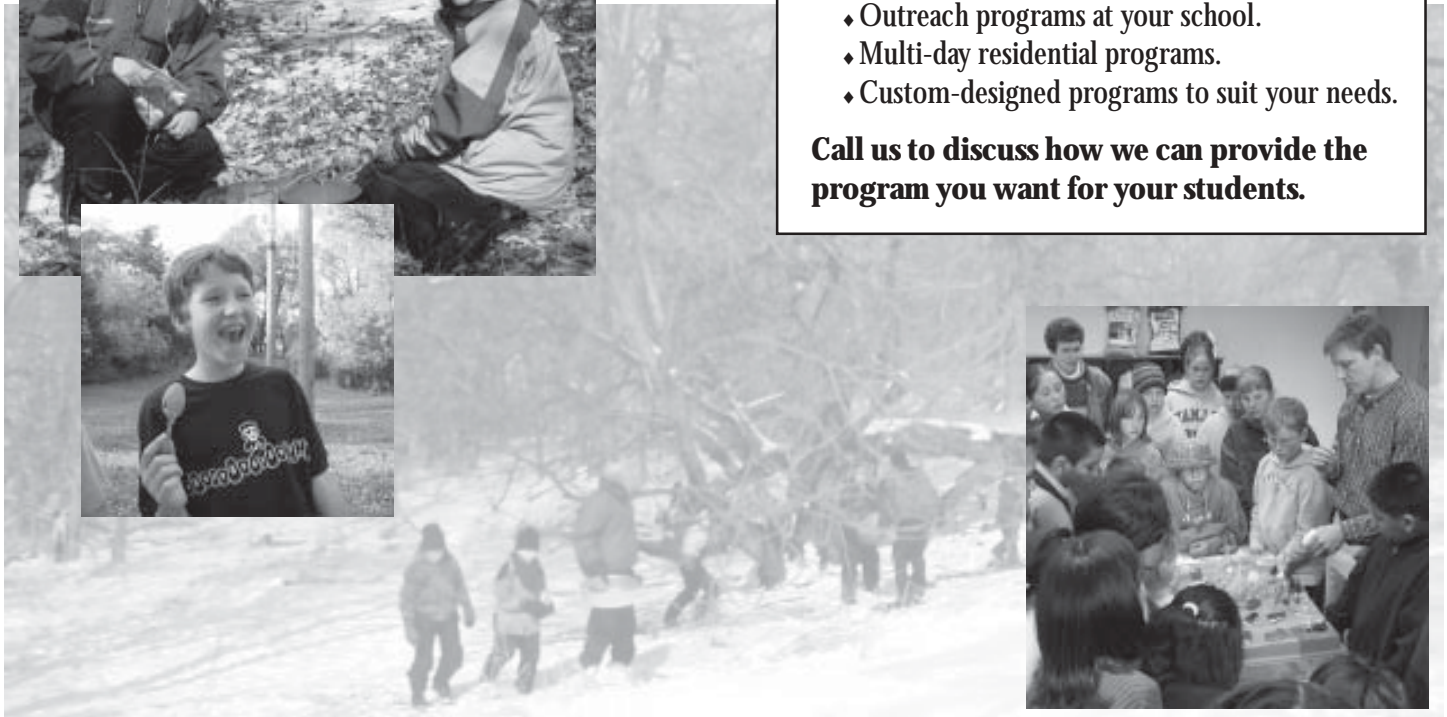
✓ Objectives & standards available.



See our Curriculum Guide on page 8.

- ◆ Pre K—12 curriculum.
- ◆ On-site day programs.
- ◆ Outreach programs at your school.
- ◆ Multi-day residential programs.
- ◆ Custom-designed programs to suit your needs.

Call us to discuss how we can provide the program you want for your students.





CHALLENGE COURSE

*Experience
our
high adventure
learning laboratory!*



Your group will learn
—and teach each other—
Communication,
Cooperation,
Creative problem solving,
Courage.

Prairie Woods' Challenge Course is a high-quality, multi-faceted facility.

Course Features:

- ◆ Indoor climbing wall;
- ◆ 40-foot, three-sided climbing tower;
- ◆ Two-tiered high circuit course;
- ◆ Plus, high events including the flying squirrel, giant ladder, high beams, and more.
- ◆ The Challenge Trail teambuilding activities.

We can provide:

- ◆ Programs for group sizes of up to 200.
- ◆ Half-day or day-length programs.
- ◆ Custom-designed programs of other lengths.

Challenge Course Themes:

We offer five areas of emphasis, so you can be sure your experience will focus on what is most important for *your* group. Choose one or several.

- √ Team-building & Cooperation
- √ Personal Confidence & Leadership
- √ Problem-solving & Critical thinking
- √ Physical Fitness
- √ Understanding Diversity

Adventure Co-op

The Challenge Course at Prairie Woods has always been a community effort. Membership in the Adventure Co-op, founded in 1996, is open to schools, camps, human service agencies, and other organizations. Staff from member organizations are trained to co-facilitate on the challenge course.

Consider joining now, and explore collaborations with other Adventure Co-op members to create excellent adventure education opportunities in our region.

Membership is an investment in program quality.

We provide annual training and high safety standards.



Consider joining the Adventure Co-op to gain an array of benefits:

- ◆ Significant discounts on Challenge Course programs.
- ◆ On-going program design consultation and supervision.
- ◆ Broad flexibility in scheduling events at Prairie Woods ELC.
- ◆ Enriched skills and diversified work experience for your staff.
- ◆ Exciting program options!

TIME TRAVEL



Time Travel . . .

Turns back the clock,
Takes you back,
Reveals the past.



*Join our adventure
to years gone by!*

History comes to life, and you are there.

Students gain a new perspective on their place in the world when they participate in Prairie Woods' Time Travel programs.

Be a Neighbor at a Pioneer Cabin.

Imagine stepping back to 1888. At the Danielson's log cabin, Anders' family and neighbors are preparing for a new arrival from Sweden. . . Mr. Danielson's bride! Join the neighbors for an exciting day—fishing, washing, preparing lunch, and learning a welcome song for Mrs. Danielson—all as it would have been done in 1888.

Experience the Native Village.

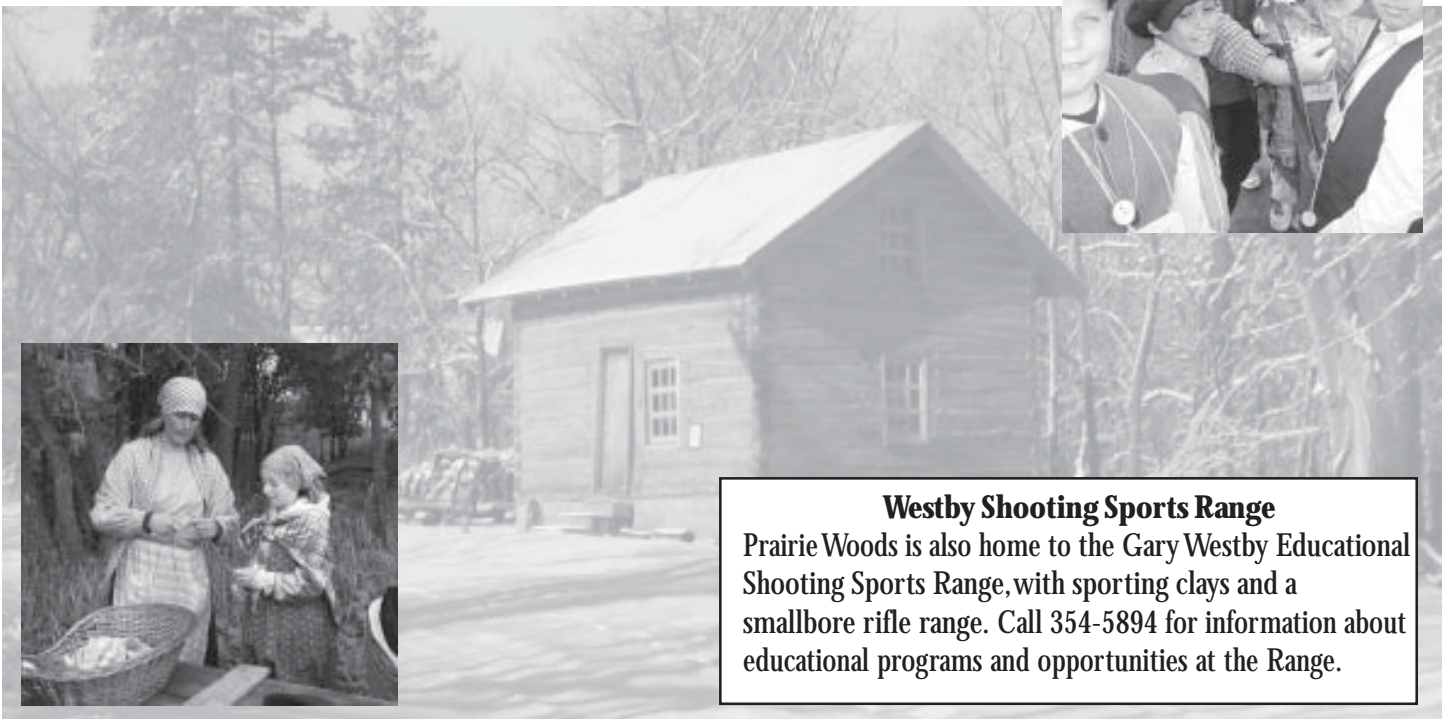
Learn about atlatl spear-throwers and see how far you can send the dart. Try your hand at starting a fire with flint and steel. Play Native American games, and make a toy to take home.

These programs take place among recreated dwellings, representing how people in our area may have lived 500, 3000, and even 8000 years ago.

Time Travel :

- ◆ Bring your students for a 4-hour day visit to experience immersion in 1888, complete with period costumes & pioneer lunch;
- ◆ Or include the highlights of Pioneer Cabin (1.5 hrs) or Native Cultures activities along with other Prairie Woods activities.

See Curriculum Guide, page 8, for details.



Westby Shooting Sports Range

Prairie Woods is also home to the Gary Westby Educational Shooting Sports Range, with sporting clays and a smallbore rifle range. Call 354-5894 for information about educational programs and opportunities at the Range.



SCHEDULE A PRAIRIE WOODS PROGRAM

1. Call us at 320-354-5894. Together, we'll discuss the goals of your visit.
2. Establish a program date and time. Current costs are listed on a separate "Rates and Fees."
3. You'll receive a confirmation letter from us, confirming dates, times, activities, and fees.
4. Send information to participants, parents and adults associated with the group. The back cover of this Planner can be copied and sent to parents, if you wish. In addition, each participant will need to complete a liability form.
5. At least one week prior to your visit, please call us to confirm numbers. We will prepare staff and equipment for this number of participants, as well as billing. At this time you may also receive a schedule of your visit. Please look it over and let us know if you have concerns. (Sample schedules are included on the following page.)
6. Divide the students into the appropriate number of groups (according to the schedule), and make sure students know their groups before arrival.
7. Any questions? Give us a call! We'll be happy to hear from you.

Good Behavior Policy

- ◆ Respect each other, yourself, teachers, parents, staff, facilities, and the earth.
- ◆ Stay on trails unless invited off trail by PWELC staff.
- ◆ Leave natural things like nests and flowers intact for the next group to see and enjoy.
- ◆ Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. If you pack it in, pack it out.
- ◆ Groups are expected to provide adequate supervision based on the needs of the group. Our recommended guideline is one school staff or chaperone for every 10 students.

Please Remind Students. . .

- ◆ Dress for outdoor experiences. Wear and bring adequate clothing for all possible conditions, including rain gear and extra socks. In winter, please dress in layers. Hats, mittens, and boots are ESSENTIAL from October through March.
- ◆ Please bring a lunch or snack if you wish. At present, we have no food service.
- ◆ Please consider reducing waste when packing lunches. Bring food in reusable and recyclable containers. Recycling bins are available on site.
- ◆ Students should wear name tags.



Sample Schedules: Day Visits



These sample schedules will give you an idea of how a program at Prairie Woods proceeds. Each Prairie Woods program is customized-designed for a group of students, so actual schedules vary significantly by group.

Welcome to Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center!				
Lincoln Elementary		3rd Grade. (~60 Students.)		
September 26, 2005		9:30 Arrival, 1:30 Departure		
Session	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
9:45 – 10:45	Predator/Prey	Insects	Mammals	Insects
10:45 – 11:45	Mammals	Pred/Prey	Insects	Mammals
11:45 – 12:15	Lunch*	Lunch*	Lunch*	Lunch*
12:15 – 1:15	Insects	Mammals	Pred/Prey	Pred/Prey



Welcome to Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center!				
Kennedy Elementary		5 th Grade. (~44 students)		
October 5, 2005		9:00 am Arrival, 2:30 pm Departure		
Session	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
9:00 – 10:15	Initiative Games	Flying Squirrel	Predator-Prey	Canoeing
10:15 – 11:30	Flying Squirrel	Initiative Games	Canoeing	Predator-Prey
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch*	Lunch*	Lunch*	Lunch*
12:00 – 1:15	Predator-Prey	Canoeing	Initiative Games	Flying Squirrel
1:15 – 2:30	Canoeing	Predator-Prey	Flying Squirrel	Initiative Games

* Student bring their own bag lunch, and are welcome to eat on site at picnic areas or in the classroom building or barn. Time Travel (4-hour day visit) program provides lunch for participants.

Sample Schedule: Residential Visits

Overnight programs are an unrivaled opportunity for students to be immersed in hands-on learning in the outdoor world. Students return home with a new understanding of the natural environment, their role in it, and their own ability to make a difference. Meanwhile, they enjoy every minute! Visits can be 2-day or 3-day experiences.

Prairie Woods is able to provide your group with an outstanding residential environmental education experience with the partnership of Green Lake Lutheran Ministries and Decision Hills Camp, whose facilities provide lodging and meals .

Welcome to Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center!					
Residential Visit (3-day visit) Sample Schedule					
Day 1		Day 2		Day 3	
9:30	Arrival & Welcome	8:00	Breakfast	8:00	Breakfast
9:45 – 10:45	Initiative Games	8:30 – 10:00	Climbing Wall	8:30 – 9:30	Initiative Games
10:45 – 12:00	Flying Squirrel	10:00 – 11:30	Insects	9:30 – 11:00	Birds
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch	11:30– 12:30	Lunch & Free time	11:00 – 12:30	Native Cultures
12:30 – 2:00	Prairies	12:30 – 2:00	Pond Study	12:30 – 1:00	Lunch and Closing
2:00 – 3:30	Orienteering	2:00 – 3:30	Canoeing		
3:30 – 5:00	Tree ID	3:30 – 5:00	Predator-Prey		
5:00 – 7:00	Dinner & Free time	5:00 – 7:00	Dinner & Free time		
7:00 – 8:30	Astronomy	7:00 – 8:30	Night Hike		



Agriculture: Food & Fiber Year-round—3rd - 6th gr.
Everyone likes to eat! But how does food get to our plates? Learn how agriculture both uses and produces resources. Explore how plants work, where foods comes from, and how the food cycle works through fun games and activities.

Animal Signs Year-round—Pre-K to 6th gr.
Join our adventure in the woods, wetlands, and prairies, where we'll search for signs left behind by our animal neighbors. Along the way, we'll learn how animals move, what they eat, where they live, and much more.

Archery Spring, Summer, Fall—4th gr & up.
Anchor, aim. . . release! Learn the basics of Olympic-style target archery and experience the challenge of trying just one more time to hit the bull's eye. All-weather activity.

Birds on the Wing Year-round—all ages.
Birds provide a colorful, engaging look into nature. We'll explore first-hand the concepts of diversity, adaptation, and habitat, while seeking a view of the colorful birds of Prairie Woods using binoculars and field guides.

Canoeing Spring, Summer, Fall—5th gr & up.
You'll have fun experiencing this historic form of transportation. After a lesson in canoeing skills and safety, students will set off over the water to witness the wildlife of wetlands at Prairie Woods.

Climbing Wall: Indoor Year-round—all ages.
No matter what the weather, stretch your arms, legs, and courage on our indoor climbing wall. Nine different climbs suit a wide range of skill levels.

Climbing Wall: Outdoor Spring, Summer, Fall—all ages.
Our 40 foot, three-sided tower offers six climbs for people of all skill-levels and ages. Participants learn courage, determination, self worth, and mutual encouragement through climbing activities.

Cross-country skiing Winter—4th gr & up.
Explore the wonders of winter while gliding across the snow. Students will enjoy the opportunity to have a new experience and learn the history of cross country skiing.

Flying Squirrel Spring, Summer, Fall—all ages.
"To the top. . . fast!" This is your chance to ride a human-powered elevator, exactly as far and as fast you are comfortable going. Teamwork and trust skills are emphasized in this group activity.

Giant Ladder Spring, Summer, Fall—5th gr & up.
Working in pairs, climbers set their sights on a goal and work toward it. Communication, teamwork, and trust are practiced throughout this exhilarating activity.

High Circuit Course Spring, Summer, Fall—6th gr & up.
Experience the thrill of testing your limits on Prairie Woods' dual-level circuit course. Circuit course participants are self-belayed. Participation in other Challenge activities is a recommended prerequisite.

Initiative Games Year-round—all ages.
Initiative Games teach communication, creative problem solving, cooperation and critical thinking skills. Activities illustrate the complexity and interrelatedness of natural systems and provide a fun way to prepare for meeting the challenges of daily life.

Insect Safari Spring, Summer, Fall—Pre-K to 6th gr.
Creepy, crawly, and crucial: insects are among the most abundant. . . and necessary. . . critters on earth. Investigate the importance of insects, learn about their roles in ecosystems, and search for insects here at Prairie Woods.

Minnesota Mammals Year-round—1st gr & up.
Through studying pelts and skulls, students learn about adaptations among our native mammals. Then, join us outdoors for detective search, where we'll use observation skills to track mammals and learn about their behavior.

Native Cultures Spring, Summer, Fall—4th gr & up.
Imagine standing here 3,000 years ago. . . what would life have been like? Take this opportunity to visit Prairie Woods' Native Village, and learn about native cultures by trying to start a fire, playing games, and making a toy to take home.

Orienteering Year-round—4th gr & up.
Let's stay found! Students will learn the basics of how to find and shoot bearings using a compass, as well as how to navigate in a straight line. Got it? Test your skills in outdoor activities, games, and an orienteering course.

Pioneer Cabin Spring, Summer, Fall—1st gr & up.
Visit the log cabin homestead of Swedish immigrant Anders Danielson. Learn, through demonstrations and participation in household tasks, how life in Kandiyohi County was different 120 years ago.

Planet Curious Year-round—1st - 6th gr.
You're serving on the Elite Squad of Planet Curious' Scientific Expedition to Planet Earth. Once you've met the challenges of space travel, your team will investigate Earth's life forms and report back to your home planet.

Pond Study Spring, Summer, Fall—all ages.
Mysterious and fascinating creatures live in our wetlands. Search the pond's edge to collect and observe living things in many shapes and sizes. Learn about wetland formation, the importance of wetlands, and what that means for us.



Prairies Summer, Fall—2nd gr & up.
Just 1% of Minnesota’s original tall-grass prairie remains today. Explore the significance of this remarkable ecosystem through hands-on activities in our native and restored prairies.

Predator & Prey Year-round—1st to 6th gr.
The complex relationships between predators and prey are made fun and interesting through simulation games. Students have their own roles to play as we learn about population dynamics and survival strategies.

Snowshoe Tracking Winter—4th gr & up.
Put on your big feet and discover the joy of traveling across deep snow. Along the way, we’ll look for evidence of how animals adapt to winter, and search out tracks to identify.

Time Travel: 4-hour Day Visit program

Travel back to 1888 for a day! This experience is like no other. When you arrange for a Prairie Woods Time Travel program, you and your students will receive a letter requesting your help preparing a log cabin for a special arrival from Sweden. Then, come to Prairie Woods to meet your guide, who will lead you back, back, back. . . back in time to the Danielson homestead. There is much to be done, and you’ll learn about it all: churning butter, washing clothes, fishing, making toys, singing a welcome song, and much more. When the special guest comes, we’ll all sit down to lunch together. (Lunch is included.)

Tree-Tectives Year-round—K to 6th gr.
Trees surround us, but how well do we know them? Act out the parts of a tree, then get personally acquainted with a tree here at Prairie Woods. Upper elementary students will use a map to find their way on our Tree-Trail, and practice using a dichotomous key to identify them.

Winter Survival Winter—4th gr & up.
Prepare to survive outdoors, in winter? Consider the possibility. What seven essentials you would need? Teamwork is key as your group builds a shelter, starts a fire, and melts snow using survival basics.

Spring, Summer, Fall—1st gr. & up.

PRAIRIE WOODS ACTIVITIES PLANNING KEY

Activity	Season	Minimum time	Grade level
Agriculture: Food & Fiber	Sp,Su,F,W	—	3rd—6th
Animal Signs	Sp,Su,F,W	—	pre K—6th
Archery	Sp, Su, F	—	4th & up
Birds on the Wing	Sp,Su,F,W	—	All ages
Canoeing	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	5th & up
Climbing Wall: Indoor	Sp,Su,F,W	1.5 hr	All ages
Climbing Wall: Outdoor	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	All ages
Cross-country skiing	W	1.5 hr	4th & up
Flying Squirrel	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	All ages
Giant Ladder	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	5th & up
High Ropes Circuit Course	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	6th & up
Initiative Games	Sp,Su,F,W	—	All ages
Insect Safari	Sp,Su,F	—	pre K—6th
Minnesota Mammals	Sp,Su,F,W	—	1st & up
Native Cultures	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	4th & up
Orienteering	Sp,Su,F,W	1.5 hr	4th & up
Pioneer Cabin	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	1st & up
Planet Curious	Sp,Su,F,W	—	1st—6th
Pond Study	Sp,Su,F	1.5 hr	All ages
Prairies	Su, F	—	2nd & up
Predator & Prey	Sp,Su,F,W	—	1st—6th
Snowshoe Tracking	W	1.5 hr	4th & up
Tree-Tectives	Sp,Su,F,W	—	K—6th
Winter Survival	W	1.5 hr	4th & up
Time Travel: 4-hr Day Visit	Sp,Su,F	4 hr	1st & up

Sp=Spring
Su=Summer
F=Fall
W=Winter

- ◆ Are you looking for an activity on a particular topic?
- ◆ Do you have a specific goal in mind for your group?
- ◆ Would you like activities adapted for another age group?

We’ll be happy to work with you to meet your needs. Please call 320-354-5894.

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PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER **INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

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Prairie Woods is a nonprofit organization committed to providing outstanding environmental education and outdoor experiences to people of all ages.

The Mission of Prairie Woods is to promote an individual and shared commitment to the responsible use, management, and preservation of our natural resources.

What programs and services do we provide?

- ◆ Environmental Education classes;
- ◆ Challenge Course activities ;
- ◆ Living history programs;
- ◆ Building rental for special events;
- ◆ Public programs including canoeing, climbing, cross country skiing, and shooting sports;
- ◆ Membership and volunteer opportunities.

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