

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

PIONEERS PARK NATURE CENTER

A leader in nature exploration and education, the Nature Center offers outdoor experiences as well as live animal programs for the classroom.

General Program Information

Scheduling:

- To reserve a time and hike theme for any of our programs, call 441-7895.
- All programs must be booked at least two weeks in advance. The Nature Center's calendar for spring and fall fills up quickly, so to avoid disappointment, many schools make their reservations several months in advance.
- Hike topics not listed may be request when you reserve your time. Indoor animal time is available only if requested prior to the visit.
- If any members of a group have special needs, please let us know when you schedule your program.

Confirmation:

- A confirmation email will be sent to you seven to 10 days prior to your visit. Please read this carefully and notify us of any discrepancies and/or changes in your plans.

Cancellations:

- In case of inclement weather, indoor curricula will be planned to cover requested concepts. However, we will be outside whenever possible.
- The Nature Center cancels outdoor programs only under extreme weather conditions.



Preparing for your Visit

The majority of time will be spent outside. Please ask students to dress for active participation and the weather. Sturdy walking shoes, long pants, and adequate outerwear are suggested. Planning a period of sharing after returning to the classroom is recommended.

Transportation:

LPS has a bus designated for the Nature Center. It is the teacher's responsibility to call the transportation office, 402-436-1073, to schedule the bus.

Group size:

Classes are divided into groups of 10 to 15 students. Please remember that discipline is the responsibility of teachers and other accompanying adults. **Please provide an adult for each group.**



Program	Program Fees	
	Lincoln Schools	Out of Town Schools
1½ hour hikes	\$4/student	\$5/student
All day hikes	\$6/student	\$7/student
Traveling Naturalist	\$45 plus milage	Not Available

School hike fees are funded by the Lower Platte South NRD and the Friends of Pioneer Park Nature Center if the school is within the NRD District.

Hike Themes

Nebraska Science Standards and LPS Curriculum Objectives met by each program can be sent upon request.

Discovery Hike (Kg-1st)

Native animals and plants of our own region are the focus of this hike through various habitats. Students will improve their skills of observation through the use of our senses to look for clues and signs to solve a mystery.

Green is Everywhere (Kg)

Students will explore a variety of plants, discovering their importance to our world, learning their basic parts and what they need to grow, and noticing their diversity of size, shape, flowers, and seeds.

Nature's Changing Seasons (Kg)

This hike focuses on seasonal weather changes and the changes in animals and plants. Topics include migration, hibernation, reproduction, and adaptation.

Five Senses Hike (Kg)

Fragrances in the herb garden, the texture of a snake skin or bison fur, and the sounds of birds and wind are just a few of the experiences that may be encountered on this hike. Students use their five senses as tools for exploring nature and learn that taste and touch must be used with care in the out-of-doors.

Animals and Their Habitats (1st)

Pioneers Park Nature Center is a home for many animals. While exploring the trails, teacher/naturalists encourage students to make connections between the animals, their adaptations, the plants on which they depend, and the landscape.

Life Cycles (2nd)

Students will review the basic parts of both insects and plants and explore their diversity, adaptations and life cycles through discovery and activities.

Communities Hike (3rd & 4th)

Students explore different habitat regions and discuss the relationships between plant and animal populations.

Energy Hike (3rd & 4th)

Solar power initiates the energy cycling in living communities as we introduce specific concepts of how plants and animals procure the energy they need to survive and reproduce in nature.

Prairie (4th)

Experience the scope and diversity of a prairie first-hand. Explore the characteristics of this ecosystem and the adaptations that have allowed its plants and animals to thrive. Discover some of the prairie resources used by Native Americans and early settlers. Sturdy shoes and long pants are advised.

Prairie Immersion (LPS 4th graders)

This all-day prairie experience is grant-funded and arranged through LPS.

Wetlands (5th)

Students will visit pond, stream and wetland ecosystems. Using dipnets, hand lenses and magicscopes they will explore the tiny creatures of the underwater world. Aquatic animal adaptations, food chain relationships and the function of wetlands will be emphasized. Be prepared to get wet and muddy.

In-depth Prairie or Wetlands

All day programs allow students to explore prairies or wetlands more fully. Activities include a half day of field study and a half day rotating between stations. Teachers can be included in planning and will lead some stations so individual class goals can be achieved. Students need to bring lunches and drinks and should be encouraged to dress appropriately.

Other Hike Topics

Other hike topics, less tightly tied to specific curriculum objectives, may be requested, including Discovery, Trees are Terrific, and Birds. These programs are designed for third and fourth grades but can be adapted to other grade levels. Special topics may be requested. Consider a winter visit to the Nature Center; the season can be a special time to view wildlife and landscapes.

Traveling Naturalist

Programs last 45 minutes to one hour. These programs are designed for third and fourth grades but can be adapted to other grade levels. Because of the hands-on nature of the programs, group size may not exceed a single classroom (approximately 25 students). Programs include:

Insectigations

Here is a chance to carefully observe live insects. Your class will untangle clues and draw their own conclusions about the movements, parts, and life cycles of these critters.

Reptiles to Go

Are you studying snakes or turtles? We will slither our way to your school with hands-on experiences and live animals for your students to explore.

Beaks, Bones, and Birds

Did you ever wonder why many birds have three toes facing front and one behind? Let your students discover answers to this question and many more while examining a live bird and hands-on materials for this exploration of bird adaptations.



Call today to schedule your visit, 402-441-7895.