

FOR-MAR NATURE PRESERVE & ARBORETUM

FIELD TRIP & OUTREACH PROGRAM GUIDE

Effective September 2025



GENESEE COUNTY PARKS
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800.648.PARK

FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Program Details and Pricing

FIELD TRIPS TO FOR-MAR

For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum is the perfect place for your classroom, group, or learning pod to gain a brand new appreciation for the natural world. For-Mar field trips are led by experienced Environmental Educators who engage participants of all ages with hands-on investigation, outdoor learning time, and interactive demonstrations with For-Mar's animal ambassadors.

FIELD TRIP DETAILS & COSTS:

- For-Mar Basic Hikes and half day programs (1.5 to 2 hours) are \$5.00 per program participant with a minimum fee of \$65.
- Full day programs (4 hours in total length and include TWO 1.5 to 2 hours programs or hikes) are \$10.00 per program participant with a minimum fee of \$110.00.
- Half and full day programs include: visitor center exploration, animal show, nature hike, treehouse visit, and themed activity.
- Programs are aligned to the state of Michigan's educational standards and benchmarks in Science, English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Health.
- We ask that you limit the number of chaperones. Siblings and additional children are considered program participants, and will be charged a program participant fee.
- Due to limited covered space for severe weather, our For-Mar Field Trip limit is 3 classrooms/groups or 90 students per field trip.



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FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Hike Topics

FOR-MAR THEMED HIKES – FOR ALL GRADE LEVELS

Nature Hikes are a great introduction to For-Mar and our local flora and fauna. All of our hikes can be adapted to meet your group's age range and ability level.

Classic Nature Hike – Take an environmental educator led hike through For-Mar as we search the trails and learn about the local flora and fauna that call For-Mar home.

Nature's Superhero Hike – Become a Nature Superhero as we travel the For-Mar trails to learn how you can be a superhero for nature and help protect our natural habitat. Students will learn about invasive species, leave no trace principles, and make a special visit to our Superhero Treehouse headquarters!

Ecosystem Hike – Travel the trails as we visit three different ecosystems that are on the For-Mar property. Learn to identify their similarities and differences and explore what lives within each!

My Cub and Me Hike (6 months to 5 years) - Get outside, get active, and explore! This program is designed for parents with small children to help encourage a love of the outdoors at a young age.

Seasonal Hike – Come travel the trails as we enjoy the beauty of the season. These hikes focus on a specific season and the changes happening in the natural world.

Seasonal Hike Themes:

- **Spring Awakening:** March - June
- **Summer Explorer:** June - September
- **Fall Colors:** September - November
- **Winter Wonders:** November – March



FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Program Topics

FIELD TRIP PROGRAM FOR ALL GRADE LEVELS

Natures Classroom – A Day at For-Mar - Join the For-Mar Environmental Educator team as students learn what makes For-Mar special! We will tour the visitor center, meet For-Mar's live animal ambassadors, go on a nature hike through For-Mar's habitats, visit the treehouse, and participate in a seasonal activity.

FIELD TRIP PROGRAMS BY GRADE LEVEL

Pre-school & Kindergarten

Butterfly Life Cycle - From caterpillar to butterfly, learn all about the life cycle of our beautiful winged insect friend, the butterfly.

Animal Babies – Join us as we explore animal life cycles from babies to adults. Observe live animals and determine whether the young resemble their parents.

Worm Investigation - Learn about our wiggly worm friends and why they play such an important role in our habitats. Touch, feel, and investigate worms and the animals who might call them lunch.

Backyard Animals – What animals might call your school yard and backyard home? Come to For-Mar to learn all about Michigan animals and meet many of our backyard buddies up-close.

Green Grass Grows All Around - Learn about how plants and animals depend on each other to survive in the wild. Meet some of our animal friends who need plants to survive.

Brown Bear, Brown Bear – Students will investigate live animals, go on a “bear hunt” through different habitats, and become scientists in this story book inspired program.



FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Program Topics

Lower Elementary: Grades K-2

Life Cycle of a Log – It's time to get our hands dirty as we dissect logs and investigate the animals that help them start their lifecycle over again. Learn how plants grow from a tiny seed into a great oak tree and who might want to live in that oak!

Insects vs. Insect Eaters - How many legs does an insect have? Learn the characteristics of insects and the many different animals who call them lunch!

Nature Detective – Animal clues are all around us! Come explore For-Mar in search of the many clues that our animal friends leave behind. Students will explore the one thing that all animals leave behind... Scat! Make your own scat to take home.

Animal Home Builders – Animals are some of the best engineers around! Join a For-Mar Environmental Educator as we investigate different types of animals and their homes. Students will practice being an animal homebuilder first hand.

Jump into Life Cycles - Make a splash as you jump right in and explore the life cycles of animals! Students will get to investigate how young plants and animals are different or similar to their parents.

Tree Treasure Hunt - It's time to talk to the trees! We will learn all about tree parts and the animals who love them. Then we'll hit the trails on a tree treasure hunt to learn about the different treasures our Michigan trees give us.

Habitat Hiker - Let spend time investigating the different habitats that For-Mar has to offer! Students will have the opportunity to flip over logs in the forest and dip in the pond in search of the diversity of life in different habitats.



FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Program Topics

Upper Elementary: Grades 3-5

Wetlands: Who Eats Whom? – Learn about food chains and the transfer of energy from the sun to animals food, through interaction with live animals from the top predators to the greenest producers! Learn how to use scientific keys and tools in a pond study while exploring the diverse micro ecosystem within a pond.

Wildlife Neighbors: Suited for Survival – Animals are our neighbors in the community of life and they have important jobs to do. Meet several of For-Mar's wild neighbors; learn about the work they do that benefits our community, and about their adaptations for survival.

Become a Naturalist - Being a Naturalist is more than just loving the earth and animals. Learn the basics of how to become a future naturalist through interaction with live animals and fun hands on activities and demonstrations.

I Heart Michigan – Learn what makes Michigan the best state ever! From our lakes to our trees—and our amazing animals, Michigan's natural resources makes it special in so many ways.

Become a Nature Superhero - Calling all Superheroes! The earth needs your help. During this action packed program, student superheroes will learn about issues facing our local habitats and how they can help reduce, reuse, and recycle that problem.

Erosion Investigators— WATER, WIND, VEGETATION! Let's investigate the different forces that cause erosion, explore how we can help reduce erosion, and become a erosion investigator on our hike through For-Mar!

Become a Geologist** – Once covered by glaciers, Michigan has some of the most amazing geological history. Become a Junior Geologist as you learn to identify different rocks, how rocks are formed, and the different fossils you may discover while exploring in Michigan.

***Additional \$2 per student cost for Rock Collections.*



FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Program Topics

Middle School & High School

Invasive Investigator - Join us at For-Mar as we investigate the many invasive species that are taking over our Michigan habitats! Get your hands dirty when you identify and remove some of these invasive plants first-hand.

Wilderness Survival 101 - Air, shelter, water, and food; learn the basics of surviving in the wild woods of For-Mar. Dress to get dirty because you will be going off trail to make wilderness survival shelters. ***Will take place at Dewaters Education Center off of Potter Road.*

Wilderness Survival 102 - A step up from the basics! Students will learn how to build fires and create fires starters, forage for edible plants, and test their water purification skills. ***Wilderness Survival 101 & 102 can be combined together as a full day field trip.*

Geocaching 101 – North, South, East, and West—from cardinal directions to compass work, students will learn the basics of orienteering and go on a real life scavenger hunt using GPS units to find and place geocaches.

Become a Citizen Scientist - Explore the wide variety of Citizen Science projects that youth scientists can become involved in at For-Mar. Each seasonal theme includes two citizen science programs that students will participate in.

Winter

- Identify and remove invasive plant species.
- Participate in a winter bird count.

Spring

- Participate in bluebird box surveys and aid in identifying bird nests, eggs, and bird species.
- Aid our Environmental Educators in Project Budburst, where they will investigate the phenology of For-Mar's plant species.

Summer

- Participate in a frog and toad population survey.
- Observe and identify pollinating species.

Fall

- Identify and remove invasive plant species
- Aid our Environmental Educators in Project Budburst, where they will investigate the phenology of For-Mar's plant species.



FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Program Topics

Seasonal Programs

Snowshoeing 101 - Join us on a winter adventure! Learn the history of snowshoeing, how to use them, and hit the trails to try snowshoeing first hand. Dress for the weather and wear snow boots.

When: December—March, snow permitting.

Grade: Kindergarten and up

Maple Sugaring: Sap to Syrup - Join us at the DeWaters Education Center off of our Potter Road entrance for a firsthand look at how one of Michigan's most historically delicious natural resources, maple syrup, is made. From tapping the **trees and identifying them—to boiling sap to syrup in our Sugar Shack**; see the entire process during For-Mar's Maple Sugaring Season!

When: Month of March

Grade: All

Fishing Basics - We have the poles and the bait... you bring

the kids! Come join us at the lake as we learn the fishing basics. Students will learn how to cast fishing poles and identify common fish species found in our waters.

When: April – October Where: Buell Lake County Park

Grade: First grade and up

Beekeeping 101 - Join an Environmental Educator and explore our resident bee hives. Students will learn about the intricate designs, functions, and hierarchies within a beehive.

When: XXX

Grade: XXX



For questions about field trips or to make reservations, please contact:

Nicole Ferguson — Chief Park Naturalist

nferguson@gcparks.org

810-789-8567



FOR-MAR FIELD TRIPS

Read Before You Visit!

Commonly Asked Field Trip Questions & Information:

- All programs will take place rain or shine and it will be up to the group leader to make any cancelations due to inclement weather. In cases of inclement weather programming will be brought indoors.
- Payment for programs can be made in cash, credit, or check. Checks are to be made out to: Genesee County Parks.
- Groups should plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before their scheduled start time.
- Bus Parking is along the main drive in front of the stop signs.
 - Students should be dropped off in the parking lot drop off area, not in front of the building.
- All program check-ins will take place at the Front Desk in the For-Mar Visitor Center, unless an educator meets you outside.
- For-Mar's picnic area and pavilion may be used for lunch or snack with prior notice, when available. Please request during booking.



Things to remind your students and parents:

- Dress to be outside rain or shine, including properly fitting closed toed shoes.
- Bring sunscreen, bug spray, and a refillable water bottle.
- Avoid bringing clothing that needs to stay “clean”, toys from home, weapons, drugs, vapes, and/or alcohol

For-Mar Nature Preserve & Arboretum

Genesee Road Entrance:

2142 North Genesee Rd
Burton, MI 48509

Potter Road Entrance:

5360 Potter Rd
Burton, MI 48509



IN-SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Free Programs for Genesee County Students

FREE GENESEE COUNTY SCHOOL DAY PROGRAMS

For-Mar On The Road is continuing to offer **FREE** programming to Genesee County K-12 grade classrooms. Our interactive programs engage children with hands-on activities, games, and demonstrations.

- All programs reinforce concepts across the curriculum and are aligned to the state of Michigan's educational standards and benchmarks in Science, English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Health.
- Programs were developed using certified environmental education curriculums and individual program standards are available upon request.
- Programs vary between 35-60 minutes in length.



PROGRAMS BY GRADE LEVEL

Kindergarten

Habitats are Homes – Habitats are homes: What do a

plant, a turtle, and a human have in common? They all need food, water, space, and air to survive! Let's explore how habitats provide everything organisms need to survive.

Patterns in Weather - How can the patterns in weather help plan our day? We will explore seasons and play a *cool* game to find the answer!

First Grade

Reading with Reptiles – How do scientists know what makes an animal a reptile?

We will read a book, explore classification, and meet some of For-Mar's animal ambassadors. Students will then create their own story to read to our reptile friends!

Lifecycles- Hop into this interactive program as you explore the life cycles of some Michigan's native animals and get the opportunity to meet For-Mar's animal ambassadors!



IN-SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Free Programs for Genesee County Students

Second Grade

Plants in Action- Wind, Water, and Animals, what does it take for a plant to spread its seeds? Investigate the diverse world of plants by dissecting seeds and exploring seed dispersal with games. We will create a window greenhouse!

Water Journey – Where on earth is all the water? Transform into a raindrop as you travel through the water cycle to discover where water is stored on earth and the forms it takes.

Third Grade

Made in Michigan – Learn about Michigan's natural resources and discover how important our natural resources have always been to the state's economy. Explore the lumber, mining, and fur trading industries and how humans have changed the landscape to harvest these amazing resources using interactive games and activities.

Birds of a Feather – A bird is not JUST a bird! Migrate through hands-on activity to explore bird beaks, investigate feathers, build nests, and even solve a mystery as you learn about the very diverse world of birds!

Fourth Grade

Nature Superheroes!- Step into the world of comic books and learn what it takes to create a comic! Each student will receive a copy of the For-Mar Preservers comic book and participate in a superhero drawing challenge! **Hard copies of comic available while supplies last.*

Superior Senses – Animals have senses that are far superior to any human. Study animal skulls, meet For-Mar's animal ambassadors, and put your own senses to the test as you learn about animal's sensational senses!



IN-SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Free Programs for Genesee County Students

Fourth and Fifth Grades

Travel the Trail to Den-Drol-O-GY- We will become tree

scientists and find the benefits to protecting our urban forests. Let's find out how to be a super hero for nature and follow along with the Preservers comic book adventure. **Hard copies of comic book available while supplies last.*



Fifth Grade

Where Is All the Water in the World? – Freshwater is one of the

most important resources on Earth. Using the Michigan Environmental Education Curriculum Support (MEECS), a For-Mar Environmental Educator and students will investigate where freshwater is found on earth with hands on activities and a special amphibian guest!

Web of Life – The biodiversity on Earth is amazing! Join For-Mar's Environmental Educators in an interactive exploration of how everything in nature is connected—from the sun all the way down to the smallest insect. Students will investigate the roll humans play in the web of life!

Middle & High School

The Watershed Game – We are all part of a watershed. Using teamwork and real-life tools, students will find balance for their local watershed and their community without breaking the bank. This program exercises critical thinking, budgeting, civics, and conservation. **This program is best for upper middle or high school.*

The Birds and The Beans – Shake your tail feather! Take a journey into the natural world with a For-Mar Environmental Educator as you explore the structures and behaviors plants and animals have developed to find a mate. Meet some For-Mar animal ambassadors along the way!

Places We Live – Does sense of place sway decision making? Use this scenario based game to observe how stakeholders use the same resource differently.



OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Fee-Based Programs

FEE—BASED GENESEE COUNTY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Genesee County Parks brings nature to you! Each one hour program engages learners of all ages with hands-on investigations, games, and activities. Perfect for after school programs or community organizations.

Cost: First program \$100. Each additional program of the same topic at the same location is \$50.

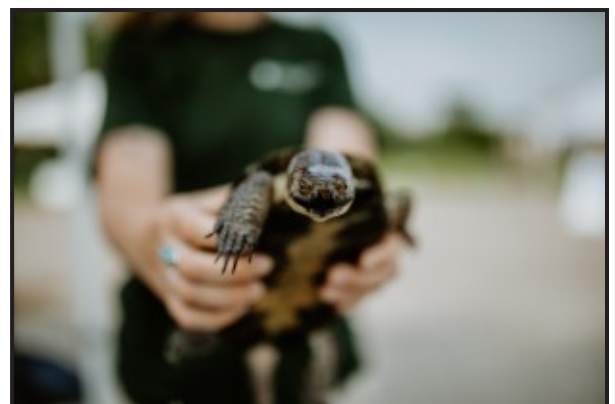
- All programs are interactive, 45 minutes long, and aligned to the state of Michigan's educational standards and benchmarks in Science, English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Health.
- Programs are limited to in-school classroom sizes of 30 participants and out-of-school, after-school, and preschool group sizes of no more than 25 participants.

FEE—BASED OUTREACH PROGRAMS BY GRADE LEVEL

Pre-K/Kindergarten

Fantastic Flowers - What things do all living things need to survive? Are flowers plants? Let's use our scientific thinking to answer these questions and more! We will explore the parts of plants as we create our own rainbow bookmarks. Inspired by Lois Ehlert's "Planting a Rainbow".

Creature Feature - Meet our For-Mar animal ambassadors and learn about what our animals need to survive! From habitat to diet, students will investigate what makes animals extraordinary!



OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Fee-Based Programs

Lower Elementary Grades K-2

Nature Detectives - Tracks, fur, or scat are the clues to help us identify animals living in a certain habitat. Which animal lives in what habitat? Can more than one kind of animal live in the forest? How can humans be better neighbors? Let's explore these questions together.

Creature Feature - How can we learn from animals? Students will meet our For-Mar animal ambassadors and get inspired to create their own invention using our animals awesome characteristics!

Upper Elementary Grades 3-5

Worms on Wheels- Ever wonder the difference between the three R's? Did you know that worms play a part in recycling, too? Create your own worm bin and discover how vermicomposting works!

Kit includes: Tub, newspaper, sand, worms and supplemental material for each classroom to create a compost bin. Teacher will keep bin/materials.

Portable Pond - Did you know that you can tell how polluted water is from bugs that live within it? Yes, BUGS! Students will get to identify, sort, and count how many cool critters live in For-Mar's ponds and learn why they are so important for water quality!

Nature Club Series – Any Grade Level

For-Mar Environmental Educators will come to your school one hour a week for five weeks to engage your students with live animals, nature games, stories, and hands-on investigations. This program is designed for a classroom size group of all ages and abilities.

Cost - \$450.00 for the 5 week session.



VIRTUAL NATURE KITS

Fee-Based Programs

VIRTUAL NATURE KITS

Supplement your Virtual For-Mar experience with a program Kit. Each Kit contains materials for each student to follow along with an Outreach Educator during the presentation. Fees include material cost, virtual presentation and delivery to your school.

- Kits are available for both in-person and distance learning classrooms.
- Suggested for 2nd grade and higher, for up to 30 participants.

Worms...Nature's Recyclers - \$100

Ever wonder the difference between the three R's? Did you know that worms play a part in recycling, too? Create your own worm bin and discover how vermicomposting works!

- *Kit includes:* Tub, newspaper, sand, worms and supplemental material for each classroom to create a compost bin. Teacher will keep bin/materials. Presentation will be virtual.
- *Duration:* 45 minutes - 1 hour

Owl Pellet Dissection- \$100

Learn about the eating habits of the owls living that live in Michigan. Owls usually swallow their prey whole, and they regurgitate what they cannot digest, producing an owl pellet. Learn about the owls of Michigan and analyze the bones to see if we can figure out what the prey was.

- *Kits include:* Owl Pellet, Dissection tool, tray, and printable owl pellet dissection key. Presentation will be virtual/video.
- *Duration:* 45 minutes - 1 hour



VIRTUAL NATURE PROGRAMS

Free Virtual Programs

FREE VIRTUAL PROGRAMS FOR GENESEE COUNTY STUDENTS

Genesee County Parks is continuing to offer a menu of **FREE** School Day Virtual programming to Genesee County K-12 grade classrooms. Our interactive programs engage children with hands-on activities, games and demonstrations.

- Programs were developed using certified environmental education curriculums and individual program standards are available upon request.
- Programs vary between 35-60 minutes in length.
- Call for more information.

Virtual Program Topics

Any Grade Level

- Ask a Naturalist
- Creature Feature
- For-Mar Visitor Center Tour

Third – Fifth Grade

- Nature Superheroes

Middle and High School

- Outdoor Careers



To make a reservation or ask questions about outreach or virtual programs, please contact:

Courtney Prout — Park Naturalist

cprout@gcparks.org

810-249-2380



CUSTOM NATURE PROGRAMS

Ask Us!

Volunteering at For-Mar

Service Learning Projects

For-Mar hosts a variety of volunteering opportunities from trail maintenance and invasive species removal to gardening, program preparation, and more! Call For-Mar to find out about a project that your students can take part in to give back to their local community. ***Great for students with minimum volunteer service hours to meet*

Career Fairs

At your site or ours, Environmental Educators are very excited to share their passion with your students aspiring minds! Discuss careers in natural sciences and how your students can create a future in environmental education or related fields. Ideal for career fairs or college preparatory programs. ***Free for middle and high school classes.*



Custom Nature Programs

Don't see a program that has what you're looking for? For-Mar staff can also create a unique field trip, outreach, or virtual program that meets your group's specific needs.

Cost: The fee varies depending on the program.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Programming at For-Mar

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Outreach & Virtual Programming

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