

Howell Nature Center Program Descriptions

^ = Indoors

\$ = Additional fee

O = offsite (we can bring this program to you)

Unless otherwise indicated, programs occur year round, are one hour in duration and take place outdoors, rain or shine.

Appropriate age range is indicated; however, most programs can be adapted for any age with advanced notice.

All program selections need to be received 8 weeks prior to your visit to ensure we have the staff available to meet your needs.

Programs are subject to availability and may be changed at our discretion.

Live Wildlife Programs

Little Critters (preschool)

Connect with your "little critter" through nature. Each month, meet a different wild animal from our Wild Wonders Wildlife Park. Enjoy crafts, songs and stories about your favorite Howell Nature Center residents.

Myth Crackers: Common Animal Myths (all ages) ^ O

Are owls really wise? Do turtles come out of their shells? You'll find the answers to these questions and more in this new live wildlife animal presentation. This program addresses common wildlife myths and together with the audience's help we'll find out if they are "correct" or "cracked."

Wild Super Powers (all ages) ^ O

What do Batman, Spiderman, and Cat Woman have in common? They base their powers on amazing wildlife abilities. In this mixed wildlife show we look at each animal's "super power" that help them survive in the wild.

Lords of the Sky (grade 2 and up) ^ O

See a variety of species of live birds of prey (or raptors) in this program as we explore the differences between the types of birds of prey their characteristics, habitat, diet and importance to the environment.

Raptor Friends (30-40 minutes) (ages 3-7) ^ O

This new interactive birds of prey program is customized for our younger audiences. Learn about the similarities and differences between three types of birds of prey: an owl, a hawk and a falcon.

Owls (grade 6 and up) ^ O

A specialized program looking at these infamous nocturnal birds of prey and the similarities and differences they share. See some of the owl species found here in Michigan up close.

Michigan Mammals (all ages) ^ O

Mammals come in all shapes and sizes. Learn about the characteristics mammals share and meet some of the marvelous mammals found in our Great Lakes State.

Creatures of the Night (all ages) ^ O

Meet the creatures that come out at night! See nocturnal owls, mammals and learn about their adaptations for living in the dark.

Fur, Feather and Scales (all ages) ^ O

See live birds and mammals from our Wild Wonders Wildlife Park up close. Learn about the habitat, behavior and characteristics of wildlife that live in Michigan, maybe even in your backyard.

Wild Wonders Tour (all ages)

Learn about some of the wild mammals and birds housed at the Nature Center in a guided tour. A short discussion of each wild animal will be held regarding their habits and why they are at the Center. Also, learn more about our role as a wildlife rehabilitation center and what you can do to help.

Wild Wonders Tour (2 hours) (grade 3-adult)

Learn about the many different wild mammals and birds housed at the Nature Center in a guided tour. A short discussion of each wild animal will be held regarding their habits and why they are at the Center. Also, learn more about our role as a wildlife rehabilitation center and what you can do to help.

Animal Architects (all ages) O

Nature is always under construction, thanks to our animal architects! Birds and mammals will share their building secrets and information about their adaptations for creating amazing structures for survival with this interactive program. Usually includes 4 animals with at least one bird and a mammal.

In Your Backyard (all ages) ^ O

An opportunity to appreciate and learn about the wildlife living in our backyards. Includes interactive demonstrations and examples of how to help your wild neighbors thrive! Usually 4 animals with at least one mammal, one bird and one turtle (when available).

Zoo Enrichment (2 hours) (all ages)

An opportunity to interact with our Wild Wonders residents who often are not available for traveling to programs. Creating games and toys for our residents, Wild Wonders technicians will provide enrichment to our wildlife residents while guests get to enjoy the delighted reactions of critters while on a tour of Livingston County's only zoo. Usually includes animals such as red foxes, gray foxes, bobcat, coyote, mink, and others based on availability.

Wild Rehab (all ages) O

As Michigan's largest wildlife rehabilitator, the Howell Nature Center treats thousands of wild animals every year-from common to endangered species, with the hope of returning these animals to their homes in the wild. But what does wildlife rehabilitation entail? Find out what we do and what you can do to help!

Endangered Species (all ages) O

As the pressure on our natural world increases, it is important to understand the role we play in helping conserve threatened species in our own neighborhoods. Audiences can learn how they can help while meeting native threatened and endangered species. Plus, see how successful conservation has saved some of Michigan's most majestic species.

Environmental Education Programs

Adaptations (grade 4-8) Λ

Learn how wildlife survive in challenging environments, then design and name your own wild “discovery.”

Animal Tracks (grade K-6)

Finding and identifying wildlife tracks may sound easy, but it takes patience and knowledge. Learn the tips and tricks to identifying tracks with a fun activity.

Food Chain (grade 2-6)

Explore basic concepts in ecology, including food chains and food webs, with fun games and activities.

Pond Study (grade K-12) (Spring only)

Experience the wondrous world of the pond ecosystem. With a dip net and a partner, find pond creatures and learn about their strange habits.

Predator/Prey (grade 2-8)

Play fun and active games while learning important concepts in predator/prey relationships along the way.

Skins & Skulls (grade 4-7) Λ

See real animal skins and skulls up close! Learn about the adaptations of herbivores, carnivores and omnivores, as well as the winter habits of Michigan mammals.

Edible Plants (grade 4-adult)

Get a real taste of nature. Take a hike along a beautiful stretch of trail and learn to identify some edible plants and some to avoid.

Nature Activity Hike (preschool-adult)

Experience nature using all your senses. Take a guided hike and meet a tree, or maybe see, feel and smell something new.

Nature in Winter (grade 4-8)

Find out how wildlife handle the cold winter months through activities and a guided hike.

Nature Scavenger Hunt (preschool-adult)

Experience nature by working with a group to find as many items as possible. Someone may even get a Nature Scavenger Hunt Bingo.

Social Studies

Native American with Games (grade 3-8)

Learn about everyday life for Michigan Native Americans of the past through artifacts and demonstrations. Learn the role of games in Native American culture and play games played by Native American children long ago. A great hands-on addition to a Michigan history curriculum.

Native American with Drumming (grade 3-8)

Learn about everyday life for Michigan Native Americans of the past through artifacts and demonstrations. Learn the uses of drums in Native American culture and play authentic drums in games and activities. A fun hands-on addition to a Michigan history curriculum.

Drumming (preschool – grade 5)

Learn about drumming in past and present day settings. Play educational and fun drumming games and activities.

Exploring Maps (grade 3-6)

Discover and explore the joy of reading maps. Learn about a variety of maps and their uses, then use map skills in a fun outdoor activity.

Global Tour (2 hours) (grade 4-adult) \$

Tour the Heifer Global Village at the Howell Nature Center. Learn what life is like for children and families around the world.

Cultural Connections (4 hours) (grade 5-adult) \$

Tour the Heifer Global Village at the Howell Nature Center. Learn what life is like for children and families around the world, including the challenges people face, like poverty and hunger. Then prepare a traditional meal over campfires and stoves. Experience a unique culture while developing a better understanding of how culture and community influences daily life.

Global Gateway (8 hours or overnight) (grade 6-adult) \$

Learn about world populations, consumption of goods, poverty and hunger in this overnight experience. Experience a unique culture while developing a better understanding of how culture and community influence daily life. Emerge with an understanding of the effects nutrition has on our daily lives and a deeper empathy for the world.

Outdoor Education

Orienteering I (grade 3-adult)

Learn to use a compass. Follow the directions to find the next clue in a fun beginner orienteering course. A great addition to a math curriculum.

Orienteering II (2 hours) (grade 4-adult)

Put on your walking shoes! Use compass skills and read a map to find all the clues in this fun and challenging course, which ranges over much of the Howell Nature Center property.

Survival with Shelter Building (grade 3-8)

Learn outdoor survival strategies using hands-on activities. Then work with a small group to build your own debris hut.

Survival with Fire Building (grade 3-8)

Learn outdoor survival strategies using hands-on activities. Learn about fire safety and building techniques, then work with a small group to build one of your own.

Survival with Fire and Shelters (2 hours) (grade 3-8)

Learn outdoor survival strategies using hands-on activities. Work with a small group to build a debris hut and a fire.

Archery (grade 2-adult)

Learn basic archery techniques under the guidance of our trained instructors. Learn safety rules, then attempt to hit a bull's eye with a simple recurve bow and target arrows.

Canoeing (grade 2-adult)

Learn canoeing safety and techniques, then secure your life jacket and develop your skills canoeing on beautiful Pleasant Lake.

Fishing (grade 2-8)

Learn safety techniques and fishing fundamentals, then enjoy your time fishing on Pleasant Lake.

Other Camp Activities

Capture the Flag (grade 4-adult)

Play this fun game under the guidance of our staff during the day or evening.

Arts & Crafts (preschool-grade 8) ^

Age appropriate crafts with nature themes are available for your group. Contact us for a current list.

Skits (grade 4-9) ^

Prepare for a night of fun and hilarity by working with a small group to act out a skit. Learn the tricks and tips to make your skit a success. This program is the first part of the Skit Night evening program and occurs during the day.

Juggling (grade 3-adult) ^

Enjoy a juggling show and learn the tricks and tips for juggling on your own.

Games Galore (preschool-adult)

Learn new group games, expend some extra energy and have loads of recreational fun. This program can be chosen as a daytime activity or an evening program.

Camp Store & Games (preschool-adult)

Visit our camp store to find that special memento. Play fun games or visit the Nature Zone when shopping is done.

Snowshoeing (grade 5-adult)

Learn the history and technique of snowshoeing as you shoe our beautiful trails. Rent our snowshoes or bring your own. Rental fee applies if not being taught by our instructors.

Cross Country Skiing (grade 5-adult)

Let our trained instructors take you on a journey along our beautiful trails. Rent our equipment or bring your own. Rental fee applies if not being taught by our instructors.

Sledding (preschool-adult)

Bring your own or use ours during free time.

Teambuilding and Adventure Education

Ground & Low Elements

Adventure Play (preschool-grade 2)

Play fun, interactive games to encourage cooperation and communication skills. Learn to work with others to achieve a common goal.

Obstacle (grade 2-5)

Learn to cooperate, communicate and support each other while encountering challenging obstacles. Learn what it takes to challenge yourself and support other team members.

Team Challenge (2 hours) (grade 4-adult)

Work with your team to get over, under, around or through the challenges set by our trained facilitators. Challenge yourself and support your team.

Team Adventure (2-4 hours) (grade 6-adult) \$

Learn what it takes to be a high performance team. Make decisions, solve problems and support team members as a group. This program is intended for groups in the process of improving group performance and is customized to the needs and goals of your group.

High Elements & Rock Climbing

Pond Zip Line (kindergarten-adult) \$

Experience the thrill of a ride through the trees on our 500 foot freestanding zip line. Trained instructors and safety equipment provided.

High Ropes (3 hour minimum) (grade 5-adult or grade 7-adult) \$

Experience one of two high ropes courses under the direction of our trained facilitators. Traverse obstacles suspended between trees 25-30 feet above the ground. Choose your own path with the help of a partner on the ground. Exit the course via a ladder or a 250 foot zip line.

Climbing Tower (2 hour minimum) (grade 2-adult) \$

Test your rock climbing skills on our rock climbing tower, one of the tallest outdoor towers in Michigan. Trained belayers and safety equipment provided.

Giant Swing (under 2 hours) (grade 7-adult)

Experience being in a harness and getting pulled up to 40 feet into the sky! Participants will have the control to release the swing and experience g-forces. Trained instructions and safety equipment provided.

Leap of Faith (under 1 hour) (grade 7-adult)

Participants will experience a team building adventure that stands 30 feet in the trees. This experience includes climbing a tree, standing on a platform then jumping out to hit a boat buoy while your team lowers you to the ground. Trained instructors and safety equipment provided.

Evening Programs

Dance (2 hours) (grade 4-8) Λ

Put on your dancing shoes! Learn classic dance moves and modern group dances in this fun evening program.

Skit Night (2 hours) (grade 4-9) Λ

Enjoy a night of fun and hilarity seeing skits performed by your group. This is the second part of the Skit Night program. The first part is the preparation of skits during the day.

Songfest (2 hours) (grade 5-12) Λ

Work with your team to think of songs from a given topic and perform them to earn points in this exciting activity. Points are given for creativity, group effort and fun factor.

Adventure Scrabble (2 hours) (grade 5-8)

Race against time and other teams to get scrabble pieces for your team's "thinkers." Then use your creativity, imagination and word skills to turn the scrabble pieces into words for points.

Action Auction (2 hours) (grade 4-8) Λ

Exercise your creativity and imagination by using common things to create items and gain points for your team in this fast paced activity.

Campfire (preschool-adult)

Sit back and relax under the stars while enjoying the warmth of the fire. Let us get the fire started for you. We can lead songs and stories or we can leave it up to you.

Night Hike (grade 2-adult)

Experience the sights and sounds of the evening on a nature walk in the dark. Activities vary with number of participants, season and length of evening hours.

Capture the Flag (grade 3-adult)

Play this fun game under the guidance of our staff as an evening activity.

World Wide Games (grade 2-adult) Λ

Play board games from around the world. Try your hand at a game of skittles or challenge a partner to a sockeye duel.

Wolf (grade 2-adult)

Practice your wolf howl to get ready to play this adventurous game of hide and seek. Range over most of the Howell Nature Center property to find where the other team is hidden.