

Palmyra Environmental Learning Center

Field Trip options

Trek through the wilderness of the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit (KMSF-SU) near Palmyra, Wisconsin. Explore nature at her best, deciduous forests, pine plantations, marshlands, prairie and pond life, climb moraines and look into kettles. You can see some of the finest examples of glacial topography on the planet!

Palmyra Environmental Learning Center field trips may be scheduled for 5 hours or less between 9:00 am and 2:30 pm for a maximum of 65 students. Teachers may choose to bring bag lunches or cook “pre-cooked” hotdogs and sausages over the fire. Please provide your own cooking utensils and aluminum foil. Cookouts can be held year-round. All programs can be selected any time of the year, except Pond Study and Insects. During winter months, tobogganing is available at the end of the hike, weather permitting.

Glacial Geology – Grades 3-12

A guided hike will show the effects of the most recent ice age. Imagine what a glacier standing a mile high could do to the land and see how the land changed in response! The hike traverses moraines, allowing students to learn what makes a kettle, and in some areas of the forest view glacial erratics. We will discover how the last continental glacier still affects our daily lives.

Trees & Birds – Grades K – 12

Students will discover the different methods used to identify trees (including leaves, buds, bark, branching patterns, and fruit) how to age trees and what diseases affect trees. Students will also learn how different trees attract and provide habitats for various species of birds and other wildlife. Participants will explore the different uses for wood and other products made from trees, as well as their importance world wide. Naturalist will also discuss how to attract birds and create feeding stations.



Native American Lore – Grades K - 12

This program presents and overview of Native American life. Topics include clothing, food gathering, medicine, and respect of Mother Earth. Programs can be tailored to focus on specific areas such as food preparation.

Natural Communities – Grades K – 12

Students will hike the trails of the Southern Unit to observe various communities that exist there, comparing urban communities with these communities. They will begin to notice the similarities and differences of these communities including the habitats of animals and humans. Comparison of water resources and uses, food accessibility and origins will be noted. Modes of transportation

and mobility, and methods of communications used by the inhabitants will also be discussed.

Animal Tracking & Animal Homes – Grades K – 12

Identifying and recognizing animal movement, often referred to as tracking, incorporates much more than looking for footprints. If conditions are not good for animals to make tracks (dry ground, frozen ground, or no snow), tracks will be hard to find to we will utilize other means of tracking animals through signs of habitation, food, and scat.



Edible & Non-Edible Plants – Grades 3 – 12

Much of this part of Wisconsin was once covered by several types of prairie. We will discuss plants from many plant communities including marsh, woodland and prairie. Various plants and their

uses will be discussed including the importance of this ecosystem in our everyday life. Learn how to categorize plants as edible, medicinal, non-edible, or poisonous, while emphasizing the importance of NOT eating plants that re unfamiliar. Fall and late spring are best to see plants.

Pond Study – Grades 3 – 12

Water is a vital natural resource and we emphasize the importance of respecting aquatic habitats. Up to 35 participants may enter an ephemeral kettle pond filled with many wonderful & exciting species. This habitat can be very easily damaged and is available only in spring, if there is sufficient water in the pond and only to a small number of groups. Program will be offered first come, first serve to the first 4 groups that sign up and is offered only in May and June. Come learn the old fashioned way – get wet and muddy! Insect repellent and sunscreen cannot be worn to protect this vital resource.



Instrument Study – Grades 5-12

How do naturalist, scientists and others working in the Kettle Moraine State Forest use scientific instruments and field measurements to better utilize forest resources and learn more about various ecosystems? During a hike in the Southern Unit, students will be introduced to methods of determining degree of slope, Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of trees, tree height, air temperatures, wind speed and cardinal directions. Basic math skills are a prerequisite.

Insects – Grades K – 12

During a guided hike, we will discuss the benefits of insects and visually identify as many species as we can, discussing each ones role in its habitat. We will NOT be collecting/killing insects as they are far more important to us alive. We will attempt to keep a running list of insects sighted and send the list back with the teacher.

I Want to Discover –

Grades K – 12

A gently guided, fun journey through the meadows and/or forests of the Southern Unit. Inspired by the interests of the child to promote & nurture a desire for a continuing love, care and further exploration of the natural world and the child’s place in it.

Winter in the Forest and Winter Survival - Grades K-12

Come see winter in its full beauty by enjoying a walk in the winter forest. Plants, animals and human techniques to survive will be discussed. Please dress in warm layers.



Reading the Landscape and Conservation - Grades 4-12

On a hike through the KMSF, students will observe the visual clues of past use of the land at KMSF. They will observe its use for farming and now its recreational use and effect on the land (the effects of pollution, erosion and soil compacting - ideas will be shared as to how these effects could be minimized or corrected). Observation of animal habitats and vegetation will indicate further land usage. Conservation, preservation and land ethics will be discussed, as well as the use of rain gardens and gray water. It is hoped that these observations and discussions will encourage students to ponder their use of resources.

Naturalist’s Choice - Grades K-12

Combining material from any of the above mentioned programs, this program highlights the beauty found in the KMSF by discussing anything that the students, teachers or naturalists find of interest along our hike. If advised before the program, our naturalists will relate the hike to current or upcoming curricula. This program is never the same!

Palmyra Environmental Learning Center

W687 Carlin Trail
Palmyra, WI 53156

Managed by the
Kettle Moraine State Forest – Southern Unit
(262)594-6200

Application for Field Trip

Contact Information	School		Phone #	
	Address		City	Zip code
	Teacher/Contact			Grade level
	Email address			
Activity Date & Times	<u>Activity Choice - please choose one</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Glacial Geology <input type="checkbox"/> Trees & Birds <input type="checkbox"/> Native American Lore <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Communities <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Tracking & Animal Homes <input type="checkbox"/> Edible & Non-edible plants <input type="checkbox"/> Pond Study <input type="checkbox"/> Instrument Study <input type="checkbox"/> Insects <input type="checkbox"/> I Want to Discover <input type="checkbox"/> Winter in the Forest <input type="checkbox"/> Reading the Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalist Choice			
	Do you have any exceptional education students? If yes, specify (SLD, EBD, CD, Autistic, etc) and number. _____ If no, write "none".			
	Number of Students		Number of teachers & additional adults	
	Please list top 3 desired dates			
	1. _____			
	2. _____			
3. _____				
Arrival Time		Departure time	Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Bag lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Cook out <input type="checkbox"/> No lunch	
Program time must be 5 hours or less between 9:00 am and 2:30 pm.				
Payment Information	A payment of \$195 is required prior to field trip date. This fee includes a maximum of 65 students, 2 teachers and 2 additional adults. Additional adults are \$3 each. While additional adults are encouraged, there is limited space in the building and for parking. No refunds.			
	Send application and payment to: Kettle Moraine Natural History Association Attn: PELC S91W39091 State Hwy 59 Eagle WI 53119		Date confirmed	
			Programmed confirmed	
			Payment received	