Animals in Winter (Preschool – Grade 3)

How do animals know winter is on its way? We'll use live animals and artifacts, plus participatory activities and some role-playing, to learn how animals have adaptations to help them survive. Migration, hibernation/brumation, and staying active are only some of the ways animals survive the coldest season.

NGSS Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS2-1

Birds of Prey (Grades 1 and up)

Observe several raptor species up close while learning about their adaptations, behavior, ecological importance, and natural history. Demonstrations, games, and museum specimens will help illuminate the fascinating lives of these amazing avians.

NGSS Standards: 1-LS1-1, 1-LS1-2, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS1-1, 3-LS4-4, 4-LS1-1

Biomes (Grades 3 and up)

Join us for a world tour of the different places animals and plants call home. We will circle the globe to explore huge geographic regions that share many similar plants and animals. Our journey will take us from desert to rain forest and from savanna to tundra. A multimedia presentation will create a backdrop for this interactive look at biomes complete with live animals, plants, and natural artifacts from all corners of the Earth!

NGSS Science Standards: 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 3-ESS2-2, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1

Endangered Species (Grades 3 and up)

Students will explore the amazing diversity in the animal and plant kingdoms and examine what's needed to survive. From there, we'll learn what the terms threatened, endangered, and extinct really mean for animals and plants, and what factors contribute to population decline. A discussion including real life success stories ties together the lessons of the day and shows students how they can play a positive role in helping endangered species.

NGSS Science Standards: 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

Insects & Arachnids (Grades 1—4)

Many people don't realize just how amazing insects can be! Did you know that insects can provide food? Did you know that insects are the largest grouping of animals we have? Students will learn what makes an insect an insect by identifying basic characteristics. We will also explore their relatives, the arachnids, to discover what's similar or different!

NGSS Science Standards: 1-LS2-1, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, K-2-ETS1-2, 3-LS-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

Meet the Animals (Preschool – Grade 5)

By meeting live animals, students learn how each is suited to live in its environment: what it eats, where it lives, and what covers its body. We'll learn about some common misconceptions as we study each species, emphasizing respect for all animals. The class can be tailored to complement your curriculum and include aquatic animals, nocturnal animals, reptiles, amphibians, and others.

NGSS Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1

For more information or questions on how to customize a program contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education at 203-966-9577 ex. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org
**Nocturnal Animals (Grades K – 4)**

When the sun goes down, a whole new world of wildlife emerges! Students will learn the difference between diurnal, nocturnal, and crepuscular animals and why they choose their "time" to be active. This program is accompanied by our animal ambassadors from the nature center.

**NGSS Standards:** K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

**Owls on the Prowl (Grades 3 and up) *An additional fee of $25 per class will be charged for owl pellet lab materials***

We are fascinated with Owls but rarely do we see them in the wild. With large eyes and silent flight, these quiet hunters are considered a valuable top predator in many ecosystems around us! This fun program explores the various types of owls in our region by meeting them up close and investigating what they eat via a pellet dissection!

**NGSS Standards:** 3-LS1-1, 3-LS4-4, 4-LS1-1

**Turtles, Frogs, Snakes and Toads (Grades 1 - 5)**

Turtles, Frogs, Snakes, and Toads! What’s the difference? Do snakes lay eggs? Where do toads live? How can I tell the difference between poisonous and venomous animals? These are questions that can be answered in this engaging, hands-on program. See live animals up close from our assortment of educational animal ambassadors and learn by comparing and contrasting these unique creatures.

**NGSS Standards:** 1-LS3-1, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1

**Vertebrate Classification (Grades 2 and up)**

By utilizing observation and deduction skills, students will discover how vertebrate animals are classified into five groups: mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and fish. They’ll then meet animals from several of these groups to help them in their study.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

**Wildlife Adaptations (Grades 2—5)**

We will discuss form and function as we observe the adaptations of several Nature Center animals. Students will role play the adaptations of regional mammals to facilitate discussions regarding how the design of each animal helps it survive in its habitat.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

**Wildlife Superheroes (Grades 2 – 5)**

Have you ever wondered why some of our most popular superheroes are often named after animals? This program will give participants an up close look at several creatures with an array of “super” qualities that makes each a “wildlife superhero” in its own right. Come discover the story behind an assortment of animal ambassadors such as an owl or hawk, chinchilla, tree frog, snake, lizard, or even hedgehog.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

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For more information or questions on how to customize a program contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education at 203-966-9577 ext. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org
Plant Life (Preschool – Grade 2)

This program introduces students to plant identification by discussing the most essential parts (roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruit) that help them to survive and grow in their environment. Using various plant specimens and hands-on displays, we will also discuss how these plant parts help them to obtain their basic needs (light, air, water, nutrients, and space).

NGSS Standards: K-LS1-1, 1-LS1-1, 2-LS2-1

Seed to Plant (Grades 2 – 5)

Every plant starts with a seed, but not all seeds & plants are the same! Following an examination of a typical plant’s life cycle, students will learn the many unique ways that seeds are dispersed and transported depending on their habitat. See, touch, and grow plants in this plantastic program!

NGSS Science Standards: 2-LS-2-1, 2-LS2-2, 2-LS4-1, 3-LS1, 4-LS1-1

Plant & Animal Defenses (Grades 2 – 4)

Have you ever wondered why some plants have thorns and some don’t? What makes an animal poisonous? Smelly? In this program, participants will meet several plants & animals up close and personal, as they examine these questions and more to learn how these organisms carve out a place for themselves in their natural habitats.

NGSS Science Standards: 2-LS4-1, 3-LS3-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

For more information or questions on how to customize a program contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education at 203-966-9577 ex. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org
**Rocks and Minerals** *(Grades 2—4)*

Rocks and minerals are the foundation of where we live! Students will learn how rocks are formed and how to identify various rock types (sedimentary, metamorphic, and igneous) through close-up observation. We’ll become geologists for the day as we test specimens for hardness, density, and other characteristics.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-ESS1-1, 3-LS4-1, 4-ESS1-1

**Soil Science** *(Grades 2 and up)*

Investigate the world beneath your feet! Students will explore the living and non-living components of the soil community through the use of hands-on sampling and activities. Questions, such as, “What is soil made of?” and “Who lives in the soil?” will be answered.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-ESS2-1, 5-LS2-1

**The Incredible Journey of Water** *(Grades 2 — 5)*

The Earth is over 70% water but how much can we actually use? Is the earth making new water or recycling it? This fun program helps students learn about the journey a single drop of water can take, from its start in the clouds to its travels in a stream and back again.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-ESS2-2, 2-ESS2-3, 3-LS4-4, 4-ESS2-1, 4-ESS3-1, 5-ESS2-2

**Watershed Study** *(Grades 4 and up)*

What does “watershed study” mean? It means that we are all connected to each other by what we do to our water! This program focuses on our local watershed and how watersheds are connected! Students will also learn about the importance of clean water and ways they can keep it clean and healthy.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 3-LS4-4, 4-ESS2-1, 4-ESS3-1, 5-ESS2-2

For more information or questions on how to customize a program contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education at 203-966-9577 ex. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org
In-Depth Habitat Study *(5th Grade and up)* *Nature Center only*

Dive deep into the amazing world of nature and explore the awesome connections of our natural environment. By participating in this program (either one program or a series of programs), you and your students will have access to our 40-acre nature sanctuary and our qualified naturalists. This program includes hands on field experiments, data collection, natural history of the region, physical science, ecology, and the ability to use the outdoors as your classroom!

**Student Activities Include:**

- Use of measuring tools for tree heights and diameter
- Water testing for Ph, dissolved oxygen, and other elements
- Use plot/grid research
- Vertebrate and Invertebrate collections and studies
- Weather monitoring and simple forecasting
- Soil studies

**Ecosystems we have:**

- Forest
- Pond
- Meadow
- Wetlands
- Native Plants

For more information or questions on how to customize a program contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education at 203-966-9577 ex. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org
Discovery Hike *(All Ages) *Nature Center Only

Take a walk with us! Enjoy a hike on our trails to experience nature closely. Naturalist-led activities along the trail can make any season full of exploration and wonder. This is a great program to pair with other programs to make your day at the nature center complete!

NGSS Standards: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, 1-LS3-1, 1-ESS1-2, 2-LS4-1, 2-ESS1-1, 3-LS1, 3-LS2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1

Mapping *(Grades 1–3) *Nature Center Only

Through the use of fun activities, students will learn about different types of maps and how to read them in order to successfully navigate the wonders of our world. Students will learn basic map reading by using a map key, identifying certain symbols, and even learning how to hold a map correctly! Once they have mastered the skills, students will be able to complete a series of fun map-related challenges and tasks.

CT Social Studies Standards: GEO 1.2, GEO 1.3, GEO 2.1, GEO 2.3, GEO 3.2, GEO 3.3 / NY Social Studies Standards: 1.5, 2.5, 3.1

Native American Studies *(Grades 1 – 5) *

Students will take a trip back in time using the Nature Center's Native American artifacts, games, and stories. We'll discover how Native Americans sharpened their hunting skills and passed down their culture and stories. We'll experience artifacts relating to everyday Native American life and play a Native American game.

CT Social Studies Standards: HIST 1.1, HIST 1.3, GEO 1.4, HIST 2.2, HIST 2.4, GEO 2.4, GEO 2.6, HIST 3.2, GEO 3.8, GEO 4.7, GEO 5.3

NY Social Studies Standards: 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.8, 3.3, 3.9, 4.2, 5.1

Outdoor Living Skills *(Grades 4 and up) *Nature Center Only

Do your students have what it takes to survive in the wild? Through the use of fun “survival” scenarios, students will take a hands-on approach to learning a variety of practical skills such as campsites planning, shelter construction, fire building, and conserving limited resources.

Orienteering *(Grades 4 and up) *Nature Center Only

There is nothing more fun than wandering in the woods, if you know where you are! Students will learn how to use a compass to locate points around our nature center for an outdoor orienteering adventure!

CT Social Studies Standards: GEO 4.2, 5.1, 6-7.2 / NY Social Studies Standards: 4.1, 5.4

Team Building Games & Challenges *(Grades 2 and up) *Nature Center Only

Challenges come in all shapes & sizes. Students will utilize skills of communication, cooperation, trust, and problem solving to work together while facing a variety of team building challenges. Such skills are the building blocks for success!
**Apple Cider Making** *(All Ages)* *Program available from September to October. Nature Center Only*

Students will learn first-hand all about the traditional making of cider, as they help us pick apples from our orchard and use our old-fashioned cider press to squeeze the final product. This time honored tradition also includes activities related to pollination and the tree life cycle. Students will even have the opportunity to taste pasteurized apple cider.

**NGSS Standards:** K-LS1, K-ESS3-1  
**CT Social Studies Standards:** HIST K.1, HIST 1.1, HIST 2.2, HIST 3.2 / **NY Social Studies Standards:** 1.7, 2.8, 3.3, 4.3, 5.3

**Bees & Pollination** *(Preschool – Grade 2)* *Program available Spring and Summer only*

Learn all about the life cycle of our local bees by visiting our active hives at the nature center! Through our interactive displays of real hives and the use of pollination activities, students can learn why our "local" bees are so important to just about every flower and fruit that is grown.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-LS-2-1, 2-LS2-2, 2-LS4-1

**Life In A Pond** *(All Ages)* *Program available Spring and Summer only*

This interactive program allows students to learn how life interacts in a pond by seeing it up close. Through the use of sampling nets, students can come face to face with tadpoles, fish, and other pond creatures! After collection, learn how each creature plays a role in the pond habitat.

**NGSS Science Standards:** 2-LS4-1, 3-LS-1, 3-LS3-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1

**Maple Syrup Making** *(All Ages)* *Program available from February to March. Nature Center Only*

As we hike the trail from Maple Avenue to our Sugar Shack, your class will discover how trees make their own food, how we extract this food (in the form of sap), and what we do to the sap to turn it into maple syrup. Traditional Native American stories and activities, such as hot rock boiling, are also a great part of this program. We'll even sample the finished product!

**NGSS Standards:** K-LS1, K-ESS3-1, 1-ESS1-2  
**CT Social Studies Standards:** HIST K.1, HIST 1.1, HIST 2.2, HIST 3.2, HIST 5.2 / **NY Social Studies Standards:** 1.7, 2.8, 3.3, 4.3, 5.3

For more information or questions on how to customize a program contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education at 203-966-9577 ex. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org
Animals, Authors and Art

This program will allow participants to become personally acquainted with one live animal each week, but the fun doesn’t stop there. By incorporating a wide variety of animal artifacts, like furs, feet, skulls and skeletons, participants receive a multifaceted view of each featured animal alongside reading selections that combine strong human feelings and desires with information about animals and their lives. Come and get creative with us as we discover the many ways animals and humans alike express themselves.

Animal Odyssey

We will start out with invertebrates and insects and work our way through the wonders of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Programs will take participants on a hands-on journey through the animal kingdom. Each week will feature up close visits from one (1) or two (2) live animal ambassadors, plus investigations using real animal artifacts to discover more about a variety of amazing creatures – big & small.

Biomes

Students can circle the globe to explore huge geographic regions that share many similar plants and animals. Our journey will take us from desert to rain forest to savanna and even the cold and icy tundra. Various activities will create a backdrop for this interactive look at biomes complete with live animals, plants, and natural artifacts from all corners of the Earth!

Nature Detectives

Each week participants will delve deep into discovering various mysteries of nature. We can use interactive, hands-on experiments plus a combination of live animals, plant and animal artifacts, specimens and samples to help students uncover clues from the wild and become true Nature Detectives. This series program highlights some of our favorite large group programs by taking a closer look at specific wonders of nature each week.

Wildlife Superheroes

Have you ever wondered why some of our most popular superheroes are often named after animals? Spiderman, Batman, and Aquaman all share traits with their particular animal namesake whether it be great strength, great stealth, or the ability to live underwater. Come discover the story behind each as we discover their amazing abilities via live-animal visits, animal artifacts, and interactive activities.

Don’t see a theme that suits your students? Contact Michelle Hips, Director of Environmental Education, at 203-966-9577 ex. 1042, or email at mhips@newcanaannature.org, to customize your afterschool series today.