

Birthday Party Themes

Anytime Options

Nature Hike – Explore woods, fields, and the Mill Creek floodplain on an age-appropriate hike.

Animal Tracking – Explore stream, pond, and woodland habitats in search of animal signs including tracks, scat, and browse.

GPS Treasure Hunt – (ages 9 and up) Includes a brief introduction to the sport and an age- and ability-appropriate course. GPS units are available to borrow. ***Extra fees apply***

Nature Scavenger Hunt – Children receive a seasonally relevant and age-appropriate list of items to discover in the woods and fields near the Environmental Center. The Park Naturalist will either lead the group or assist smaller adult-chaperoned groups in successfully observing and/or retrieving natural items.

Incredible Insects – Recommended for summer and early fall, this is the theme for the budding entomologist! Search for, catch, observe, and release insects in woodland and field habitats.

Bugs á La Crunch (waiver required) –The Naturalist will demonstrate cooking of insects for the gastronomic delight of partygoers. Actual insects cooked and consumed are subject to availability. ***Extra fees apply***

Outdoor Survival –Fun and active possibilities include shelter and fire building, compass skills, and wild edible identification. ***Extra fees apply for survival kit option***

Feathered Friends – Birds are with us year-round, so this is the perfect option for any time of year. The Park Naturalist will review bird characteristics with mounted specimens and actual bird parts. Children will then use binoculars to view birds in the Environmental Center vicinity.

Owls, Owls, Owls –After reviewing owl features and adaptations with owl mounts and parts, children can dissect *owl pellets. If held at dusk, the program will conclude outdoors with an attempt to call in owls. ****Extra fees apply***

Crafty Critters – There is no limit to what imaginations produce with this program! Children choose materials from a broad selection of natural materials and assemble critters of their creation. ***Extra fees apply***

Rocks Rock –With indoor craft options ranging from sand art to pet rocks and more studious alternatives including rock and mineral identification and geology hikes, Rocks Rock may be tailored to meet the ages and interests of the participants. ***Extra fees apply for craft options***

Native American Games – Native American children honed skills for adulthood. Under the guidance of the Park Naturalist, children will try their luck with a selection of fun and active authentic games.

Marvelous Mammals –Using skulls, skins, and mounted specimens, discover features and adaptations of mammals as a group and of individual local mammals. This program may include a hike to find and observe mammal signs.

Stream Study –Experience the Mill Creek firsthand by observing and collecting stream macroinvertebrates, crayfish, and other inhabitants and discover what the critters reveal about their watery home.

Campfire & Night Hike – Roasting marshmallows around a campfire and taking a night hike to further experience the dark are ingredients for a most memorable evening under the stars! ***Marshmallows not provided***

Nature Games – Predator-prey, habitat, and camouflage games are just a few of the child-tested and child-approved options for vigorous nature play.

Co-operation Games/Team Building (ages 10 and up; waiver required) –Cooperation and team-building games are perfect for tweens and teens. Once participants demonstrate the ability to work cohesively, they are presented with successively more demanding challenges. ***Extra fees apply***

Seasonal Options

Paddling in the Park (ages 12 and up; waiver required and subject to safe water conditions) – Picnic and a paddle – what a fun way to celebrate a birthday! Children 12 and up will paddle canoes along a stretch of the Conestoga River in Lancaster County Central Park. Pavilions are conveniently situated nearby for a birthday picnic before or after the paddling adventure. ***Extra fees apply***

Maple Sugar Adventure – Available only during the sugaring season, the late-February to mid-March birthday child is in for a real treat! Children learn the history of sugaring in North America, identify sugar maple trees, and try tree tapping. Children collect available sap, witness the boil off process to produce maple syrup, and serve as all-important taste-testers of freshly made maple sugar candy.

Cider-making – (waivers required) Park Naturalists and party attendees alike will work our press to produce fresh apple cider. Ideal for fall parties, an optional Johnny Appleseed impersonator may be requested. ***Extra fees apply***

Extra Fees Guidelines

- Upgrade to the EC Auditorium - + \$50
- Upgrade to pavilion (1, 2, 3, 31, 32, 33) - + \$25
- Upgrade to pavilion (11) - + \$40
- Upgrade to pavilion (21) - + \$45

- Bugs A La Crunch - + \$16
- Crafty Critters - + \$7
- Survival Kit - + \$4 per kit
- GPS Treasure Hunt - + \$17
- Rocks Rock Craft options – fees vary based on craft
- Cooperation/Teambuilding - + \$13
- Cider making/Johnny Appleseed - + \$16
- Paddling - + \$67 (includes a 2nd Naturalist)