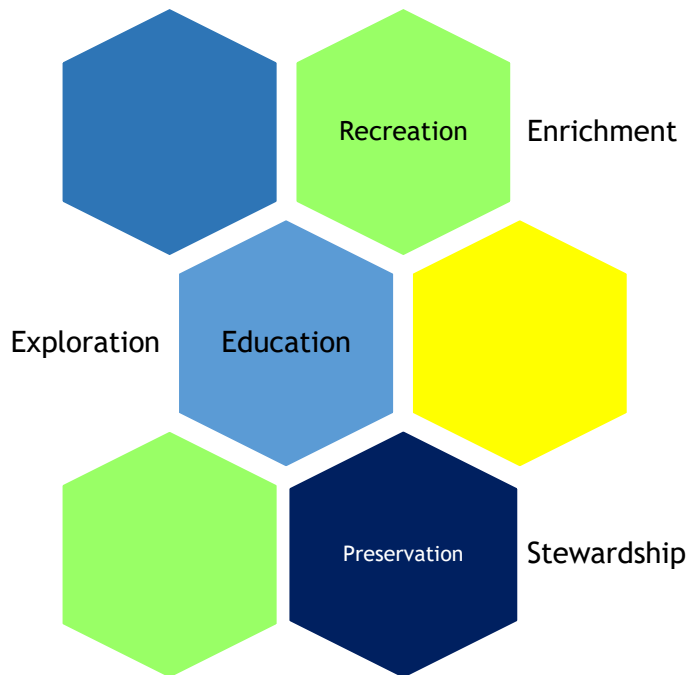
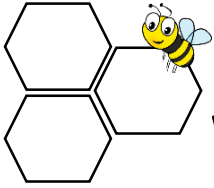




2023-2024 Field Trip Guide & Group Information



Willowhaven Park & Nature Center
1451 N 4000 E Rd, Kankakee IL 60901
BTPD.org (815) 933-9905 Ext. 4



Willowhaven Park & Nature Center

A facility of the Bourbonnais Township Park District

About Us:

The Willowhaven Park & Nature Center is a restored 1900's barn designed as a place for children and adults to discover and interact with the splendors of the outdoor world. The nature center features both historical and nature displays including taxidermy displays, live animals, hands-on touch tables with pelts, feathers, antlers, minerals and much more. Hands-on learning is encouraged as well as outdoor explorations in the park surrounding the Nature Center. Admission to the nature center is free.

The Willowhaven Park is 120 acres of ponds, prairies, wetlands with recreational features tucked in amongst natural areas. Willowhaven Park features miles of hiking trails, a picnic shelter, playground, disc (Frisbee) golf and fitness station. The ponds provide catch and release fishing opportunities year round. The pond overlooks and rock outcroppings provide easy access to the pond edge. Willowhaven Park is also home to a 3.5-acre membership based dog park.

Willowhaven Park has a large parking area with room for busses to turn around and park. Outdoor restroom access can be found on the North side of the nature center building. Additional restrooms are available inside the nature center. Parking and park admission is free.

Our Philosophy:

The Willowhaven Park & Nature Center is a play centered discovery museum with displays from around North America. We encourage hands-on exploration and self-led discovery. We want children to ask questions and get excited about nature! We strive to provide a safe and inviting environment, which allows children to explore and develop a level of comfort with the great outdoors.

Our Mission:

The Willowhaven Park & Nature Center is a facility of the Bourbonnais Township Park District and our mission is to enrich the quality of life through recreation, education and preservation. We encourage outdoor recreation, education of the natural world through exploration and discovery, and encourage stewardship and preservation of the natural environment.

Planning your Visit:



Step 1: Gather your group information.

We need to know:

- # of students. We require a minimum of 10 per group and 95 is our capacity. For larger groups we recommend breaking the students into smaller groups that take turns visiting inside so everyone can view the exhibits without feeling crowded. 50-60 is the recommended number inside the nature center at a time.
- What program(s) are desired. Programs are an additional fee and we limit program sizes to 30 students or less. We may be able to accommodate multiple programs at the same time during your visit. For instance, we can lead a guided hike outside at the same time a group is viewing a live animal presentation inside.
- Special accommodations needed?
- Contact information.
- Student age & grade level.
- Arrival and departure times.
- Lunch plans.
- Estimated adult chaperones. All teachers, adult chaperones and bus drivers are welcome at the center and can observe programs at no cost.

Step 2: Contact the Nature Center at (815) 933-9905 ext. 4 to speak to our rental & group coordinator. Office Hours are 9:00 am-1:00 pm, Wednesdays & Fridays. Groups can reserve any weekday date between the hours of 8:30 am- 4:30 pm. Some dates fill up quickly so we recommend booking as early as possible. We know educators are busy so we also take reservations via email. Please contact willowhaven@btpd.org to get started. When requesting reservations through email please include information listed in Step 1.

Step 3: Confirm the visit. You will receive a confirmation email or letter in the mail after registration. This confirmation will also include any programs for your group. Please verify the information is correct prior to your visit. No shows will be subject to a \$25 fee.

Step 4: Talk with your group and get them excited about their visit! Ask them what they think they will learn? What are their questions or fears? How do they feel when they talk about nature?

Step 5: Arrive for the visit. Please bring confirmation letter and any outstanding payment due. Program fees are based on a per participant fee due upon arrival. We accept payments of cash, check and credit at the nature center. Checks can be made out to B.T.P.D. Check in is at the front desk. If you would like an orientation done on the bus, please let us know at the time of booking.

Registering for a Program:

Choose one or multiple programs for your visit. If you have a large group, we can split students into smaller groups and have multiple programs taking place at the same time. Recommended program size is 25-30 students per group.

Guided Nature Hike- Recommended for all ages.

A park naturalist will take the students on the trails at Willowhaven to observe animal tracks, scat & and other signs of wildlife. Students will observe native prairie and wetland species as the walk around our pond trail. Wildlife at the park include several species of frogs, snakes & turtles, deer, coyote, muskrat, heron, hawk, killdeer and many others. During the hike, students will discuss the role of ecologists, biologists and restoration specialists in protecting, preserving and managing natural areas.

Fee: \$2 per student

Length: 30-45 minutes



Insects & Spiders Workshop- Recommended for K – 5th Grade.

Students will learn about anatomy of insects & spiders.

Objective 1: Insect Anatomy - Students will learn to identify body parts of insects and Grades 2nd-5th will learn about specialized insect mouthparts.

Objective 2: Spider Anatomy - Students will learn to identify body parts of a spider.

Objective 3: Learn how Orb Weaver spiders makes its web.

Objective 4: Observe preserved insects and spiders.

Hands-on craft activity: Students will create a spider and spider web and have an insect project to take home.

Fee: \$4 per student

Length: 45 minutes



Owl Pellet Dissection- Recommended for 2nd grade-adult

Owl pellets consist of undigested hair and bones that owls spit up following a meal. As such, they contain valuable clues to what the owl was eating and the habitat in which the owl was hunting. Students will classify and record the types of bones of the owl's prey using bone identifying charts while learning the ecology of food, energy, and the web of life. Students will also learn the role of the apex predator in keeping the healthy balance of an ecosystem, and discuss the value of conservation science in today's society.

Fee: \$5 per student (1 pellet per student)

Length: 45 minutes



Story & a Craft- Recommended for Pre-K -Kindergarten

A park naturalist share a story and lead students in a simple craft activity relating to the story. Story Topics include: Caterpillars & Butterflies, Frogs & Tadpoles, Woodland Animals, What's in a Pond or Dinosaurs.

Fee: \$2 per student

Length: 30 minutes



Summer Bug Hunt (available June – September) - Recommended for Pre-K –Kindergarten

Students will use nets and other equipment to collect and then observe bugs collected from the gardens around the Willowhaven Nature Center. Students will record their findings by drawing a bug collected. After the hunt, students can observe preserved bugs and compare them to the ones collected before they are released back to the wild.

Fee: \$4 per student

Length: 30 minutes

Custom, Scout & Offsite Programs

Custom, Scout & offsite programs must be requested at least 14 days prior to the group visit date to insure adequate materials. Custom, Scout & offsite programs are between \$4 - \$8 per student/scout and a minimum of 10 participants are required. Weekend and evening dates are based on availability.

Scout programs options:

Animal Camouflage

Animal Homes and Habitat

Animal Tracking

Wild Reptiles

Guided Nature Hikes

Poisonous Plants

Wetland Habitat

Owl Pellet Dissection

Tree & Leaf Identification

Fire Making/Campfire

Animal Puppets

Metamorphosis

Scout programs are designed to help fulfill natural science badges. Once programs are complete, leaders can apply our programs toward official scout badges. Please contact the nature center for more details!

Lunch break:

The nature center does not have food services onsite at the park so please bring a sack lunch. Please check for multipurpose room or outdoor shelter availability when you reserve your group. Pavilion and nature center have garbage receptacles available.

Tips for a Successful Field Trip:

- Dress appropriately for the weather. Most programs will run rain or shine and outdoor shelters will be used as program locations as needed.
- Wear close-toed shoes and long pants. With outdoor explorations, kids will likely get muddy or dirty.
- Apply sunscreen or bug repellent prior to arriving.
- Have lunch bags labeled and stored in large boxes or bins while at the nature center.
- Groups are always welcome to explore the park & do self-guided hikes at no charge. Groups are also welcome to utilize the playground, disc golf and fitness station.
- If your group arrives late we will do our best to accommodate your field trip time. If you foresee a late arrival, please contact the nature center at (815) 933-9905 ext 473.

Questions: For questions about a group reservation or program, contact us over the phone at (815) 933-9905 extension 4 or by email to Willowhaven@btpd.org

Willowhaven Park & Nature Center



Amenities

- 1 Dog Park
- 2 Shelter
- 3 Nature Center
- 4 Playground
- 5 Amphitheatre
- 6 Disk Golf
- 7 Fitness station
- 8 Pavilion
- P Parking
- O Overlook