

Cowan Museum Program Descriptions with NC Standards
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Camouflage Potato Animals

Participants learn how animals use camouflage to survive in the wild by creating their own camouflaged animal models using potatoes and natural or craft materials. This hands-on activity encourages observation skills and connects to the museum's focus on local wildlife and survival adaptations.

NC Standards:

- 3.L.2.2 — Explain how animals meet their needs by using behaviors in response to information from the environment.
 - 5.L.2.3 — Infer the effects that may result from the interconnected relationship of plants and animals to their ecosystem.
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Marbled Paper & Scratch Art

Explore color and texture through two creative activities inspired by patterns in nature. Marbled Paper uses shaving cream and liquid colors to make swirling designs, while Scratch Art reveals bright colors beneath a dark surface. Both activities blend art and science, encouraging discussion of how patterns appear in plants, animals, rocks, and more.

NC Standards:

- 3.V.1.3 — Understand the relationships between the elements of art and the principles of design.
 - 4.L.1.2 — Explain how differences among animal and plant structures help them survive.
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Nature Journaling & Insect Observation

Participants create nature journals to record observations through drawing and writing, paired with close-up viewing of resin-preserved insect specimens. This activity promotes curiosity, reflection, and understanding of how scientists record data about the natural world.

NC Standards:

- 3.L.2.1 — Remember the function of the structures of plants and animals that help them survive.
- 5.L.2.1 — Compare the characteristics of several common ecosystems.

Sun Prints (Cyanotype)

Participants use light-sensitive paper to create cyanotype prints of natural objects like leaves and flowers. This activity combines art and science while teaching about sunlight, UV light, and the process of making photographic prints without a camera.

NC Standards:

- 4.P.3.2 — Recognize that light travels in a straight line until it strikes an object.
 - 5.P.3.1 — Explain how light behaves when it strikes different surfaces.
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Flower Pounding & Parts of a Flower

Participants arrange fresh flowers on fabric or paper and gently hammer them to transfer their natural pigments, creating colorful imprints. The activity includes identifying and learning about the parts of a flower, connecting art with plant biology.

NC Standards:

- 3.L.2.1 — Remember the function of the structures of plants and animals that help them survive.
- 5.L.2.2 — Classify the organisms within an ecosystem according to the function they serve.