



SEASONAL ECOLOGY PROGRAMS

**CATHOLIC
ECOLOGY
CENTER**



Welcome to Wonder



At the Catholic Ecology Center, the beauty of God's creation comes alive with hands-on, year-round ecology programs for all ages. Our diverse programming utilizes the amazing 60 acre property of the CEC which includes prairies, forest, wetlands, an organic farm, pond, creek and river. Our amazing indoor facilities allow for countless opportunities for programming. You can even combine our ecology programs with retreats, team building or service projects to make the most use of your time at the CEC.

We look forward to having you join us for an amazing, faith-filled experience your students will never forget!


Joe Meyer
Executive Director

*But now ask the animals to teach you,
the birds of the air to tell you;
Or speak to the earth to instruct you,
and the fish of the sea to inform you.*

Job 12:7

SEASONAL ECOLOGY PROGRAMS

SPRING (MARCH - MAY)

Tree Science
Living Sustainably
Water Quality Testing and Water Ecology
Maple Syruping (through late March)
Wildlife Monitoring
Tracks and Traces
Orienteering
Animal Ecology
Creatures of the Night
Growing Gardens
Invasive Species
Science Inquiry
Fungus Among Us (May)
Predator and Prey - Energy in Ecosystems
Birding
Live Animal Program

SUMMER (JUNE - AUGUST)

Tree Science
Living Sustainably
Water Quality Testing and Water Ecology
Wilderness Survival
Amazing Insects
Monarch Butterfly Monitoring (all summer)
and Tagging (mid August - early September)
Honey Bees and Pollinators
Wildlife Monitoring
Orienteering
Animal Ecology
Creatures of the Night
Birding
Growing Gardens
Moth Mania
Invasive Species
Science Inquiry
Fungus Among Us
Predator and Prey - Energy in Ecosystems
Live Animal Program

FALL (SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER)

Tree Science
Honey Bees and Pollinators
Living Sustainably
Amazing Insects (through mid October)
Monarch Butterfly Tagging (early September)
Water Quality Testing and Water Ecology
Wildlife Monitoring
Tracks and Traces
Orienteering
Moth Mania (through late September)
Animal Ecology
Creatures of the Night
Invasive Species
Science Inquiry
Fungus Among Us (through October)
Predator and Prey - Energy in Ecosystems
Birding
Live Animal Program

WINTER (DECEMBER - FEBRUARY)

Living Sustainably
Winter Animal Tracking
Maple Syruping (mid February - late March)
Snowshoeing
Cross Country Skiing
Animal Ecology
Creatures of the Night
Endangered; Tragedy and Success
Predator and Prey-Energy in Ecosystems
Live Animal Program

*Ecology programs may be combined with
retreats, team building or service projects.*



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Spring Ecology Programs (March - May)

TREE SCIENCE (2 - 2.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the anatomy and physiology of a tree and how different aspects work together to sustain life.
- Measure the ages of trees using tree rings, tree whorls and core samples.
- Utilize tree ring measurements to indicate the history of the surrounding environment throughout time and correlate growth with abiotic factors.
- Analyze tree growth, height and soil types as part of an ecological study.
- Identify several different trees on the CEC property using key features like bark, needles and leaves.

LIVING SUSTAINABLY (45 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the importance of composting and how to do it at home.
- Study the life cycles of common household items and their effects on the environment.
- Understand various sustainable food practices and how to make food choices that are good for human health and the environment.
- Learn to apply environmentally friendly practices in their own lives and how our faith calls us to be stewards of creation.

WATER QUALITY TESTING AND WATER ECOLOGY (3 - 3.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Understand the distribution of Earth's water and importance of clean water.
- Collect and evaluate water samples for pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature and turbidity while discovering how these physical tests interrelate and serve to evaluate water quality.
- Catch, identify and categorize aquatic macroinvertebrates and evaluate their role as biological indicators.

MAPLE SYRUPING (1 - 1.5 HOURS) ONLY FROM MID FEBRUARY - LATE MARCH

In this class, students will:

- Identify various tree species and learn the anatomy and physiology of trees as it relates to sap flow.
- Tap various types of trees and collect sap for maple syrup.
- Discover the history and process of syrup making.

Spring Ecology Programs (March - May)

WILDLIFE MONITORING (2 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Utilize wildlife monitoring techniques including snake boards, nest boxes, small mammal live traps and minnow funnel traps to monitor wildlife at the CEC.
- Calculate species diversity, abundance and distribution.
- Learn how species are used as biological indicators of ecosystem health.

TRACKS AND TRACES (1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Identifying categories of animal tracks and patterns used for animal identification.
- Apply classification of animal tracking in the field.
- Identify other evidence of animal activity including galls, scat, burrows and nests.

ORIENTEERING (30 - 45 MINUTES)

In this class, students will:

- Learn how to use a compass for directional and degree bearings.
- Apply compass skills in the field.
- Demonstrate understanding of using a compass through a scavenger hunt activity.

ANIMAL ECOLOGY (1 - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn about structural differences between herbivores and carnivores.
- Observing animal skull variations to make hypotheses.
- Using dental codes and skull measurements to identify skulls.
- Discover how animal fur adaptations allow for increased survival in various biome types.

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT (1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- Learn about nocturnal animals both in Wisconsin and worldwide.
- Explore the physical characteristics unique to nocturnal animals and how it allows for their survival.
- Discover how ultrasonic microphone equipment is used to monitor bats and how this data allows scientists to see population trends.
- Discuss white-nose syndrome in Wisconsin and what is being done about it.



Spring Ecology Programs (March - May)

GROWING GARDENS: (45 MINUTES - 1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- Tour Clare Gardens Organic Farm and Greenhouse at the CEC and learn how they grow thousands of pounds of organic produce.
- Learn about requirements of various vegetable plants and plant their own vegetable seeds to take home.
- Tour the Holy Hen House to learn about raising sustainable chickens.
- Visit the Holy Honey Beehives and learn about bee ecology and making honey.
- Learn the importance of composting and how to do it at home.

INVASIVE SPECIES (30 - 45 MINUTES)

In this class, students will:

- Define native and non-native invasive species and discover their adverse effects and strategies for success.
- Overview of invasive species in Wisconsin and their history of introduction as well as control efforts.
- Participate in a simulation to demonstrate the effects of invasive species on an ecosystem.
- Invasive species identification and removal in the field.

SCIENCE INQUIRY (1 - 2 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the steps of the scientific method.
- Demonstrate understanding of isolating variables when creating experiments in the field.
- Measure and calculate animals and plant populations using quadrat and extrapolation.
- Applying the scientific method to bird and habitat transect observations.

FUNGUS AMONG US (45 MIN - 1.5 HOURS) MAY

In this class, students will:

- Learn the anatomy, structure and function of Fungi and their role in ecosystems.
- Learn basic mushroom identification and safety for foraging in the field while taking part in guided mushroom foraging.

Spring Ecology Programs (March - May)

PREDATOR AND PREY-ENERGY IN ECOSYSTEMS (1 - 3 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- The energy pyramid in ecosystems.
- Observations of animal adaptations determined by energy source.
- Take part in a predator/prey simulation to measure population changes and demonstrate the effect of limiting factors (both density-dependent and density-independent).

BIRDING (30 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

Overview of bird anatomy and the varied ecological niche of birds.

- Identify common birds of Wisconsin, including endangered species.
- Discuss threats to birds throughout migration by participating in a simulation.
- Explore the diverse adaptations birds utilize to survive through an interactive simulation.
- Participate in citizen science research through bird identification and data collection in the field.

LIVE ANIMAL PROGRAM (1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- See the live animals that make up Wisconsin ecosystems including mammals and birds of prey like hawks and owls.
- Discover the amazing adaptations that make Wisconsin birds and mammals suited for their ecological niches.
- Learn about wildlife rehabilitation and how to care for creation in your everyday life.

*Let the earth bless the Lord;
let it sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.*

Daniel 3:74



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Summer Ecology Programs (June - August)

TREE SCIENCE (2 - 2.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the anatomy and physiology of a tree and how different aspects work together to sustain life.
- Measure the ages of trees using tree rings, tree whorls and core samples.
- Utilize tree ring measurements to indicate the history of the surrounding environment throughout time and correlate growth with abiotic factors.
- Analyze tree growth, height and soil types as part of an ecological study.
- Identify several different trees on the CEC property using key features like bark, needles and leaves.

LIVING SUSTAINABLY (45 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the importance of composting and how to do it at home.
- Study the life cycles of common household items and their effects on the environment.
- Understand various sustainable food practices and how to make food choices that are good for human health and the environment.
- Learn to apply environmentally friendly practices in their own lives and how our faith calls us to be stewards of creation.

WATER QUALITY TESTING AND WATER ECOLOGY (3 - 3.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Understand the distribution of Earth's water and importance of clean water.
- Collect and evaluate water samples for pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature and turbidity while discovering how these physical tests interrelate and serve to evaluate water quality.
- Catch, identify and categorize aquatic macroinvertebrates and evaluate their role as biological indicators.

WILDERNESS SURVIVAL (1 - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Make shelters out of raw materials, find and filter water, identify wild edibles, make rope cordage from plants and build a fire from flint and steel. Learn basic wilderness first aid.
- Learn how to use a compass for directional and degree bearings.

Summer Ecology Programs (June - August)

AMAZING INSECTS (30 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Overview of insect structure and the varied ecological niche of insects.
- Explore the diverse adaptations insects utilize to survive.
- Discuss threats to insects and the effects on ecosystem services.
- Catch, identify and categorize insects.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY MONITORING (1 HOUR) *ALL SUMMER*

In this class, students will:

- Learn the life cycle, host plants, food sources and migration patterns of monarch butterflies.
- Discuss threats to the monarch population.
- Learn to find monarch eggs, caterpillars and adults and raise them at home.

ADDITIONAL TAGGING COMPONENT (1 HOUR) *MID AUGUST - EARLY SEPTEMBER*

In this class, students will:

- Catch and tag monarch butterflies on their way to Mexico to assist scientists in tracking their migration and population.

HONEY BEES AND POLLINATORS (30 MINUTES - 1 HOUR)

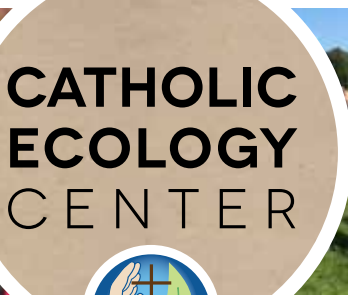
In this class, students will:

- Overview of honey bee structure and their importance as pollinators.
- Learn the work structure and yearly cycle within a beehive.
- Discuss threats to the honey bee and greater pollinator populations.
- Participate in a simulation to demonstrate the effects of pesticides, habitat loss and pests.

WILDLIFE MONITORING (2 HOURS):

In this class, students will:

- Utilize wildlife monitoring techniques including snake boards, nest boxes, small mammal live traps and minnow funnel traps to monitor wildlife at the CEC.
- Calculate species diversity, abundance and distribution.
- Learn how species are used as biological indicators of ecosystem health.



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Summer Ecology Programs (June - August)

ORIENTEERING (30 - 45 MINUTES)

In this class, students will:

- Learn how to use a compass for directional and degree bearings.
- Apply compass skills in the field.
- Demonstrate understanding of using a compass through a scavenger hunt activity.

ANIMAL ECOLOGY (1 - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn about structural differences between herbivores and carnivores.
- Observing animal skull variations to make hypotheses.
- Using dental codes and skull measurements to identify skulls.
- Discover how animal fur adaptations allow for increased survival in various biome types.

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT (1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- Learn about nocturnal animals both in Wisconsin and worldwide.
- Explore the physical characteristics unique to nocturnal animals and how it allows for their survival.
- Discover how ultrasonic microphone equipment is used to monitor bats and how this data allows scientists to see population trends.
- Discuss white-nose syndrome in Wisconsin and what is being done about it.

BIRDING (30 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Overview of bird anatomy and the varied ecological niche of birds.
- Identify common birds of Wisconsin, including endangered species.
- Discuss threats to birds throughout migration by participating in a simulation.
- Explore the diverse adaptations birds utilize to survive through an interactive simulation.
- Participate in citizen science research through bird identification and data collection in the field.

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- Learn the importance of composting and how to do it at home.

MOTH MANIA (1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the identifying characteristics of moths.
- Discuss their nocturnal, diurnal and crepuscular habits.
- Utilize a live trap to observe moths found on the CEC property.
- Participate in a simulation to demonstrate moth/bat interactions.

INVASIVE SPECIES (30 - 45 MINUTES)

In this class, students will:

- Define native and non-native invasive species and discover their adverse effects and strategies for success.
- Overview of invasive species in Wisconsin and their history of introduction as well as control efforts.
- Participate in a simulation to demonstrate the effects of invasive species on an ecosystem.
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SCIENCE INQUIRY (1 - 2 HOURS)

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Summer Ecology Programs (June - August)

FUNGUS AMONG US (45 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the anatomy, structure and function of fungi and their important role in Wisconsin ecosystems.
- Learn basic mushroom identification and safety for foraging in the field while taking part in guided Mushroom foraging.

PREDATOR AND PREY - ENERGY IN ECOSYSTEMS (1 - 3 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- The energy pyramid in ecosystems.
- Observations of animal adaptations determined by energy source.
- Take part in a predator/prey simulation to measure population changes and demonstrate the effect of limiting factors (both density-dependent and density-independent).

LIVE ANIMAL PROGRAM (1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- See the live animals that make up Wisconsin ecosystems including mammals and birds of prey like hawks and owls.
- Discover the amazing adaptations that make Wisconsin birds and mammals suited for their ecological niches.
- Learn about wildlife rehabilitation and how to care for creation in your everyday life.

*O Lord, our Lord, how awesome is your name
through all the earth!*

Psalm 8:1



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AMAZING INSECTS (30 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS) THROUGH MID OCTOBER

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Fall Ecology Programs (September - November)

MONARCH BUTTERFLY TAGGING (1 HOUR) *EARLY SEPTEMBER*

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Fall Ecology Programs (September - November)

MOTH MANIA (1 HOUR) *THROUGH LATE SEPTEMBER*

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LIVE ANIMAL PROGRAM (1 HOUR)

In this class, students will:

- See the live animals that make up WI ecosystems including mammals, hawks and owls.
- Discover the amazing adaptations that make WI birds and mammals suited for their ecological niches.
- Learn about wildlife rehabilitation and how to care for creation in your everyday life.



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Winter Ecology Programs (December - February)

LIVING SUSTAINABLY (45 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn the importance of composting and how to do it at home.
- Study the life cycles of common household items and their effects on the environment.
- Understand various sustainable food practices and how to make food choices that are good for human health and the environment.
- Learn to apply environmentally friendly practices in their own lives and how our faith calls us to be stewards of creation.

WINTER ANIMAL TRACKING (45 MINUTES - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Identifying categories of animal tracks and patterns used for animal identification.
- Apply classification of animal tracking in the field.
- Identify other evidence of animal activity including galls, scat, burrows and nests.

MAPLE SYRUPING (1 - 1.5 HOURS) ONLY FROM MID FEBRUARY - LATE MARCH

In this class, students will:

- Identify various tree species and learn the anatomy and physiology of trees as it relates to sap flow.
- Tap various types of trees and collect sap for maple syrup.
- Discover the history and process of syrup making.

SNOWSHOEING (1 - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn how to use snowshoeing equipment.
- Go on a guided snowshoe hike to explore the ecology and beauty of the CEC winter landscape.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING (1 - 1.5 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- Learn how to use cross country ski equipment.
- Go on a guided cross country adventure to explore the ecology and beauty of the CEC winter landscape.



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Winter Ecology Programs (December - February)

ANIMAL ECOLOGY (1 - 1.5 HOURS)

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- Discuss white-nose syndrome in Wisconsin and what is being done about it.

ENDANGERED; TRAGEDY AND SUCCESS (30 - 45 MINUTES):

In this class, students will:

- Learn about endangered species in Wisconsin and their history of preservation and reintroduction efforts.
- Learn the common threats to endangered species.
- Discover best practices for aiding endangered species at home.

PREDATOR AND PREY - ENERGY IN ECOSYSTEMS (1 - 3 HOURS)

In this class, students will:

- The energy pyramid in ecosystems.
- Observations of animal adaptations determined by energy source.
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- Discover the amazing adaptations that make WI birds and mammals suited for their ecological niches.
- Learn about wildlife rehabilitation and how to care for creation in your everyday life.

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

Genesis 1:31

Ready to book a great program?

Want to combine an ecology program with elements of a retreat, team building or service project?

Have questions about schedule or pricing?

Contact our Program Coordinator
Theresa Liebert
262-419-8558
info@catholicecologycenter.org



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