



# Outdoor Education Program Descriptions

Informational Brochure





## OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

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[www.ganaraskaforestcentre.ca](http://www.ganaraskaforestcentre.ca)



Each program offered at the Ganaraska Forest Outdoor Education Centre provides an unparalleled opportunity to strengthen class dynamics while meeting Ontario curriculum requirements.

Visiting teachers may choose from a variety of science, social studies, leadership and outdoor pursuit activities to make their visit meaningful and enjoyable for all students. Our staff works with you when planning your programs to create a fun, interactive and hands-on learning experience for any age group.

### **SCIENCE and NATURE**

**1. Alternative Energy = Green Energy:** Join us in our commitment to find alternative forms of energy that help reduce our carbon footprint. Students harness renewable energy by building and testing wind turbines, a micro-hydro turbine, or a solar oven and learn how one form of energy can be transformed into another. The program ends with a tasty treat cooked by students in the solar oven.

*Half-day program, Gr. 5 - 8 \* May – Early October*

**2. Animal Adaptations:** Through the examination of natural artifacts, primary and junior students are introduced to behavioural and structural adaptations. Adaptation-themed games are incorporated into a hike through the beautiful forest. Through role-play and hands-on activities, students learn about the complexity of animals.

*Half-day program, Gr. 2 – 8 \* Year-round*

**3. Beaver Pond Study:** This hands-on program takes place at a natural pond located in the Ganaraska Forest. Students learn how to catch, observe and release invertebrates and amphibians found at the pond. Students explore pond life using provided equipment to discover various species. They learn to identify organisms, discover some of their unique adaptations and how they interact with one another.

*Half-day program, Gr. JK – 8 \* May - Early October*

**4. Biodiversity:** After learning the Biodiversity basics through an interactive PowerPoint presentation, students head outside for an exciting habitat game teaching about habitat loss. Then the students will have a brief introduction to invasive species before playing the “Garlic Mustard Invasion” game.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – 7 \* Year-round*

**5. Bug-Eyed:** Students learn parts of an insect by participating in role-playing activities. Students explore characteristics of different bugs as well as their place in the ecosystem, their life cycles and adaptations. Hands-on activities allow students to explore the forest and better understand life from a small creature’s unique perspective.

*Half-day program, Gr. JK – 3 \* May – October*

**6. Eco-Action: Changing Attitudes for a Changing Climate:** This exciting program examines some of the environmental challenges facing our planet and highlights the importance of learning about and being part of solutions. Following a climate change primer, students head outside where they embark on the “Amazing Race to Save the Planet” game.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – 8 \* Year-round*

**7. Eco-Games:** This program focuses on conservation and environmental education through active, role-playing games. Designed for primary students, topics include animal adaptations and the impact of humans on the natural environment.

*Half-day program, Gr. 1 - 3 \* Year-round*

**8. Green Giants:** Learn about the importance of plants and trees for any ecosystem, what plants need in order to survive, how plants and animals rely on each other and the parts of a tree. Students will be involved in several games, hands-on experiments and drama activities to relate to these topics.

*Half-day program, Gr. 2 – 4 \* Mid-April – Mid-October*

**9. Pond and Stream Study with Water Analysis Lab:** Students complete a written comparative analysis of a lentic (pond) vs. a lotic (stream) environment. A field study of each environment provides students with the opportunity to learn the techniques of specimen collection and tallying using a macro-invertebrate tally chart. Students also complete a hands-on water testing experiment to determine the levels of phosphate and nitrate found in the water as well as the pH levels.

*Full-day program, Gr. 9 - 12 \* Late May – Early October*

**10. Sensory Awareness:** This program is designed for primary students who are exploring their five senses. Students build awareness of the natural habitat through activities that utilize and emphasize the senses of smell, touch, taste, sight and hearing.

*Half-day program, Gr. JK – 3 \* Year-round*

**11. Soil...It's Not Just Dirt:** This program focuses on the creation of soil, different soil particles, and the creatures that live in the soil. Students should come prepared to get dirty as they explore the soil. Students will complete several fun and hands-on experiments: creating soil with hammers, digging a soil profile, creating a soil conductivity test and so much more.

*Half-day program, Gr. 3–5 \* Late April - October*

**12. Survival Game:** In this active role-playing game, each student takes on the character of a different wildlife species. It is a high-energy program that is exciting for students in both junior and intermediate grade levels. The transfer of energy, consumer levels, and human impacts on wildlife are explored in this program. Students gain a better understanding of the relationship between predator and prey in a forest ecosystem after participating in this exciting program.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 - 12 \* Year-round*

**13. Wolf Prowl Game:** This simulation game focuses on such topics as energy flow, consumer levels, and human impacts on forest ecosystems. Its aim is to teach students the relationship an organism has with other species and its environment. It is an active role-playing game, suitable for junior and intermediate students.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – 12 \* Year-round*

## **GROUP DYNAMICS AND LEADERSHIP**

**14. Cross-Country Skiing:** This full-day program is physically active and is a great introduction to cross-country skiing. In the morning, students learn gliding, turning and stopping, as well as how to climb and descend hills. The afternoon is spent in the Ganaraska Forest on groomed trails using quality ski equipment provided by the Ganaraska Forest Centre.

*Full-day program, Gr. 4 - 12 \* January – March*

**15. Group Dynamics Part I:** This program supports Character Education and Leadership by introducing the four concepts of teamwork: communication, support, inclusion and planning through group initiatives. This program supports these concepts through various challenges and group problem-solving tasks.

*Half-day program Gr. 4 – 12 \* Year-round*

**16. Group Dynamics Part II:** This program builds upon Group Dynamics Part I and takes place on a low ropes course located in the Ganaraska Forest. Several different elements including the Ice Wall, Nitro, Whale Watch and many more, help students to focus on trust and teamwork. Ideal for intermediate students who may be changing classes or school environments.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – 12 \* Year-round*

**17. Ice-Breakers and Co-operative Games:** This interactive program is designed to build teamwork, develop cooperation skills and enhance communication through a variety of activities and games. This program helps to build comfortable and trusting relationships among classes and helps build group cohesion.

*Half-day program, Gr. 3 - 8 \* Year-round*

**18. Outdoor Survival Skills:** Students learn the skills necessary to survive in the great outdoors. Hands-on initiatives include fire-building and shelter-building. Different survival scenarios are explored and discussed in this favourite, action-packed program. Ganaraska staff can assist in providing details around planning what to bring for an optional cookout lunch.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – Gr. 12 \* Year-round*

**19. Snowshoeing:** Students spend a half-day learning how to snowshoe using modern, provided equipment. This program demonstrates a unique method of winter travel, is physically active, and is best combined with another half-day program.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – 12 \* January – Early April*

**20. Treetop Trekking Ganaraska:** Students venture through a series of aerial games and activities high up in the Ganaraska Forest canopy. Following a safety orientation, students head out the course to traverse bridges, monkey cables, Tarzan ropes and zip lines. This closely monitored program gives students the opportunity to learn new communications skills, effectively understand their inner strengths and to participate in a high adventure physical activity. **(Special Adventure Rate Applies)** Supervising teachers climb for free!

*3-hour program, Gr. 4 – 12 \* Mid-March to Mid-November (some restrictions may apply)*

## **SOCIAL STUDIES/GEOGRAPHY**

**21. Maple Moon:** Students are introduced to the process of making maple syrup. Guides dressed in traditional clothing present aboriginal and pioneer methods of making maple syrup. Students take part in hands-on demonstrations and voyageur games and wrap up the day tasting a sweet treat around a cozy, outdoor campfire.

*Half-day program, Gr. JK – 6 \* Mid-March – Early April*

**22. Oak Ridges Moraine Program:** Students learn about unique land features in Ontario, with a primary focus on the moraine. Students participate in an interpretive hike that includes dialogue on topics such as glacial erratic, watersheds, headwaters and water source protection.

*Half-day program, Gr. 10 – 12 \*Late April – October*

**23. Mapping for Little Ones:** This program is specifically designed for primary students. They learn basic cardinal directions, how to design maps and legends and are introduced to the parts of a compass. Students test their knowledge by completing two orienteering courses.

*Half-day program, Gr. 1 – 3 \* Year-round*

**24. Map Reading and Orienteering:** This popular program gives students a hands-on opportunity to learn and apply compass and map-reading skills. Students learn to test their skills by completing an orienteering field and forest course.

*Half-day program, Gr. 4 – 12 \* Late April – November*

**25. Photo Orienteering:** Students learn how to use a birds-eye view map, create and use a map legend and how to follow basic directions. They then participate in an outdoor scavenger hunt around the buildings and surroundings of the Ganaraska Forest Centre.

*Half-day program, Gr. JK/SK – 1 \* Year-round*

**26. Trappers and Traders:** This engaging program puts student teams against one another in an orienteering challenge that requires teams to creatively barter their European goods for animal pelts. Through the game and the fur trade relics, students will learn about the history and challenges of the fur trade, as well as the differing perspectives of value in the eyes of Ontario's First Nations and earliest Europeans.

*Half-day program, Gr. 5 – 12 \* Year-round*

**27. GPS: Numbers, Numbers Everywhere:** This is an in-depth look at the technology of the Global Positioning System, sources of error, and the meaning of the GPS coordinates. A variety of fun, interactive games are played to test the students' skills and to ensure that they are competent users of the GPS unit.

*Half-day program, Gr. 5 – 12 \* Year-round*

**28. GPS: Geocache Adventures:** Just the games! After a brief orientation to the Global Positioning System unit, students use the technology to navigate through a

number of geocache courses. If time permits, intermediate and senior students may also compete in the GPS Hunger Games!

*Half-day program, Gr. 3 – 12 \* Year-round*

## **EVENING PROGRAMS**

**Night Hike:** Together with our instructors, explore the Ganaraska Forest under the cover of darkness while engaging all the senses in a unique appreciation for the nocturnal world. This two hour hike has several fun and educational games, stories and animal interpretive discussions and calls that will be a lasting positive memory for all participants.

*(Fall & Winter only)*

**Campfire Program:** Spend an evening around the campfire singing songs, participating in a hilarious skit, tell a traditional aboriginal tale or a spooky ghost story, put on a fashion show, etc, etc. There is just so much fun stuff to do! The education staff will help to plan and develop the campfire program with your group. This is an easy program for a visiting teacher to organize and implement.

**Sports Night:** An evening of 3 sports: floor hockey, soccer, and Ultimate Frisbee. Your group will be split into 6 teams and rotate through the 3 sporting events and the team with the highest score wins the coveted “Ultimate Sport Champion” award. The visiting teacher/adults will be responsible for running one of the 3 stations.

**Survival Game:** An exciting adaptation of our day-time program of the same name, in this active role-playing game, each student takes on the character of a different wildlife species to gain a better understanding of the relationship between predator and prey in a forest ecosystem. *(Spring, early fall)*

**Ganaraska Jeopardy and Stones Night:** During this 2-hour program students will rotate through an hour of each activity. We have adapted the original Jeopardy game into an interactive and active game teaching students about ecology, the history of the centre and some fun group challenges. Then play the game of Stones which is a rendition of the classic game of Capture the Flag with stones (bean bags) that each team is trying to steal from the other.