

# *Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary*

**Where children, nature, and  
learning come together in a safe  
and nurturing environment.**

**2009-2010**

## **School Programs Guide**

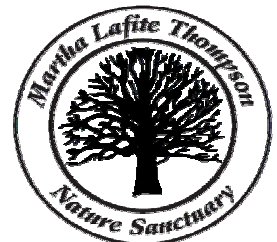
*for Teachers  
and Educators*



**Downloadable PDF available  
at  
[www.naturesanctuary.com](http://www.naturesanctuary.com)**

The mission of the Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary is to provide:

- engaging hands-on environmental and natural science education for all ages;
- biodiversity of native plants and animals through wise management of our natural resources;
- understanding that all Earth's inhabitants are part of complex, interdependent ecosystems; and
- opportunities for quiet reflection and reconnection with the natural world.



# *Helpful Information*

## **To Schedule a Program:**

**Call** 816-781-8598 between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and ask for a Naturalist. Please have the following information ready when you call:

- Program choice
- School name, address and phone number
- Grade level and number of children
- Preferred date and time with alternates (in case first choice is not available)
- Any children with special needs

**NOTE:** It is recommended, but not required, that you call at least 4-6 weeks in advance of your program date, particularly for fall and spring programs.

**Prior** to your visit, you will receive a confirmation letter, your billing, a health release and pre-visit information. Please share this with all teachers attending the field trip.

**Payment** of your fee should be received three weeks prior to your visit. If this is a problem due to school policies or procedures, please notify us.

**Weather Accommodations:** Many of our programs involve outdoor time. If severe weather threatens, the MLTNS staff will be prepared with alternative indoor activities for your program. Only in cases of extreme weather will MLTNS cancel a scheduled program. We will close if Liberty schools close due to weather.

**Rescheduling** of programs can be done pending availability. No fee will be charged in the case of a school emergency or dangerous weather. If you must reschedule for any other reason, there will be a \$25 administrative fee applied to your bill. As a general rule, we do not issue refunds.

## **Pre-visit Information:**

**Sanctuary Rules:** While our programs encourage hands-on learning, we ask that students not pick flowers or leaves, or collect other natural materials, unless otherwise directed by the Naturalist. Following these guidelines will protect the resources at the Sanctuary and make them available for others to enjoy in the future. Please review these rules with your class before your visit.

**Dressing** for the weather is very important. Because the majority of our programs are outdoors, students and adults should dress for the conditions. **Everyone is required to wear tennis shoes or boots which completely enclose the foot.**

**Name Tags** that can be easily read by the Naturalists are encouraged for students and teachers.

**Gift Shop:** Please include extra time to visit our gift shop as part of your field trip experience. We have nature-related items starting at 50¢. We ask that adult chaperones please stay with the children to monitor activity.

**Picnic Shelter** must be reserved prior to your visit in order to insure it is reserved for your group (no fee). Tables seat a total of 20 people along with 80 additional bench seats around the sides of the shelter. **Please bring a trash bag to carry out trash.**

**Exhibit Area** is open for your class to explore either prior to or following your program.

**Arriving on Time** is crucial for a successful program. Please set aside time for line-up and restroom breaks prior to the start of your program.

**Missouri Grade Level Expectations** are met or exceeded in each program.

## **Student Behavior and Discipline:**

All students are expected to behave as they would in the classroom. If we have a significant problem with one or more students, we reserve the right to have that (or those) child(ren) removed from the program. It is the responsibility of the teachers and adult chaperones to provide control of their group of youngsters during the entire program. We reserve the right to ask students to leave if they are destructive or disrespectful of staff or volunteers.

## **Program Flexibility:**

If you see a program you would like to attend but is not offered at your grade level, please call the Sanctuary and speak with a Naturalist. We are capable of adapting most programs to fit other grade levels.

# Program Fees and Length

To ensure that each child has a meaningful hands-on experience and to assist in fulfilling Missouri Grade Level Expectations we will strictly adhere to the following “Group” sizes upon your arrival at the Sanctuary. Your classroom may be divided based on our “Group” requirements:

- **Pre-K and Kindergarten:** a “Group” is defined as up to 22 people (children and adults) with a maximum of 16 children.
- **1st through 6th Grades:** a “Group” is defined as up to 30 people (children and adults) with a maximum of 25 children.

Program	Length (hours)	Minimum Fee	Fee Per Individual	Grade	Time of Year
Pond or Creek Neighbors	1	\$80.00	\$5.00	Pre-K - Kindergarten	April 15 - Sept. 30
Cold-blooded Critters	1	\$80.00	\$5.00	Pre-K - Kindergarten	Year - round
Sensory Safari	1	\$80.00	\$5.00	Pre-K - Kindergarten	Year - round
Insect Intrigue	1	\$80.00	\$5.00	Pre-K - Kindergarten	May - October
Creek Neighbors	1.5	\$120.00	\$6.00	1st - 3rd grades	April 15 - Sept. 30
Feathered Friends *	1.5	\$140.00*	\$7.00*	1st - 3rd grades	Year - round
Habitat Homes	1.5	\$120.00	\$6.00	1st - 3rd grades	Year - round
Colossal Fossil *	1.5 / 2*	\$120.00 / \$160.00*	\$6.00 / \$8.00*	1st - 6th grades	April 15 - Sept. 30
Birds of a Feather *	2	\$140.00*	\$7.00*	4th - 6th grades	Year - round
Ecosystem Investigations	1.5	\$120.00	\$6.00	4th - 6th grades	Year - round
Wild About Wetlands	2	\$130.00	\$6.00	4th - 6th grades	April 15 - Sept. 30

\*Additional materials fee added to the cost of the program.

**Each school classroom may have teachers and classroom aides at no charge who will not be counted as part of a “Group.” Two (2) supervisory adults per “Group” are also free and will not be counted as part of a “Group.” All other adults will pay the individual fee and will be counted as part of a “Group.”**

## Important Note to Educators and Parents:

Young children have an innate sense of wonder about the natural world that we as adults have the responsibility to nurture. We ask that you set aside any personal anxieties and biases regarding snakes, bugs, spiders, etc. It is important to us that children make up their own minds about what is good or not about the natural world.

## Financial Assistance

Rising energy costs affecting your field trip? The Missouri Department of Conservation offers a field trip transportation grant to assist public, private, and home-school educators interested in taking students to field trips. Please visit [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov) for more information.

## Adult Chaperones:

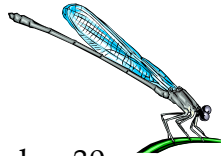
We ask that the attending adults directly assist with the program to enrich the children’s experiences. All attending adults must come prepared dressed properly for the activities and the weather. Tennis shoes or boots which completely enclose the foot are required footwear. We also ask that the adults answer questions only when called upon and remove themselves from the group if needing to converse with others. All cell phones and pagers must be turned off or silenced.

# Suggested Programs for Pre-School and Kindergarten

Look at our expanded selection of off-site programs under "Wild in the Classroom."

## Pond Neighbors or Creek Neighbors

Water is important to all of us, and no more so than to the critters that live in it. During this interactive program, your children will be introduced to the world of water using nets to "sample" for water insects, frogs, and other inhabitants of the pond or creek.



**Program Length:** 60 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$5

**Time of Year:** April 15 - September 30

**Note:** During the creek program, children will wade in the water. Children must wear tennis shoes or boots which completely enclose the foot.

*"We all had a wonderful time! Thank you for your professionalism!" - Special Beginnings*

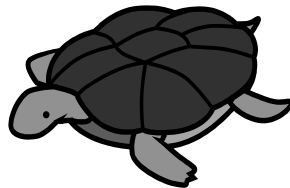
## Cold-blooded Critters

Have your students discover the differences and similarities between reptiles and amphibians, and observe the characteristics of each group through hands-on interactions with our educational animals. Students will also enjoy a nature hike to explore the movement and behavior of these animals in their habitats.

**Program Length:** 60 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$5

**Time of Year:** Year - round



*"First time taking my class there. (It) was very informational. Kids were engaged and the staff very knowledgeable."  
-My School Daycare*

## Sensory Safari

During this popular program your students will have the opportunity to explore the natural world using their senses.

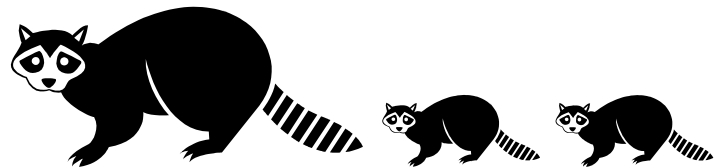
They will discover the sounds, smells, sights and textures found outdoors through hands-on exploration. We'll also meet a live animal up close and personal to learn how it uses its senses to help it survive.

**Program Length:** 60 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$5

**Time of Year:** Year - round

*"First time bringing preschoolers- Looking forward to doing this again! Wonderful 'safari'! Great instructor!" - Learning Lighthouse Preschool*



## Insect Intrigue

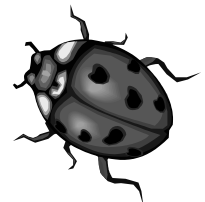
What young child isn't fascinated by those creeping, crawling little bugs?

From dragonflies and grasshoppers to butterflies and ants, insects truly do intrigue young children. During this special program, your youngsters will be introduced to the world of insects, from what makes an insect an insect to searching for them with nets in hand. We'll release all our buggy friends at the end of the program.

**Program Length:** 60 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$5

**Time of Year:** May - October



# Suggested Programs for 1st - 3rd Grades

Look at our expanded selection of off-site programs under "Wild in the Classroom."

## Feathered Friends

Students will soar to new heights as they learn about the world of birds. We'll start with an indoor introduction to birds and then head outdoors in search of robins, cardinals, hawks and more. This program will conclude with the children making their very own bird feeder to take home.



**Program Length:** 90 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$7\*

**Time of Year:** Year - round

\* The cost per student includes an additional \$1 fee for bird seed.

*"Thanks for another great visit. Our students have been coming to MLTNS for almost fourteen years!" - St. Therese*

## Colossal Fossil

Dig this! Here's an opportunity for your students to learn about fossils, from identification to how they were made. We'll head down to Rush Creek in search of the real thing among the shale and limestone deposits and the students will work together to find the best fossil to take back to class for further study.

**Please note this program involves getting in the water.**

**Program Length:** 90 minutes / 2 hours\*

**Cost Per Student:** \$6 / \$8\*

**Time of Year:** April 15 - September 30



\***Optional Activity:** Your students can make a "fossil" using plaster and seashells. The extended program requires two hours and a total fee of \$8.

*"Our students loved everything about our visit, from classifying rocks & fossils to searching for fossils in the creek. It was an exciting adventure." - Lillian Schumacher Elementary*

## Habitat Homes

Students will be introduced to the importance of habitats and learn what all plants and animals need to survive. We'll head to the trails and involve each student in the teaching process through the use of biofacts and natural items found within the prairie, forest, and wetland habitats. A live animal will also be introduced.



**Program Length:** 90 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$6

**Time of Year:** Year - round

**Note:** This program is designed to fit state curriculum for 2nd & 3rd grade students.

*"We LOVED the talking tour of each habitat involving every student. It was awesome!" - Blue Hills Elementary*

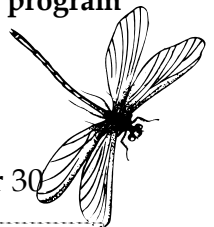
## Creek Neighbors

We're out to make a splash with this fun and educational program! Students are introduced to wetlands through a visit to either our man-made pond or Rush Creek. With nets in hand they will venture forth in search of tadpoles, fish and aquatic insects that call these important habitats home. We'll also explore the importance of water quality and learn how each one of us can help keep our water clean. **Please note this program involves getting in the water.**

**Program Length:** 90 minutes

**Cost Per Student:** \$6

**Time of Year:** April 15 - September 30



*"It was an excellent experience for our children to get out of the urban setting." - Pitcher Elementary*

**Note:** During the creek and fossil programs, children will wade in the water. Children must wear tennis shoes or boots which completely enclose the foot.

# Suggested Programs for 4th - 6th Grades

Look at our expanded selection of off-site programs under "Wild in the Classroom."

## Birds of a Feather

Birds have long fascinated us, from their flight capabilities to their beauty and lyrical songs. During this program your students will come to know the characteristics and adaptations of birds, as well as learn how to identify common birds of this area through artifacts, mounts and a slide program. We'll then head outdoors for a walk with binoculars in hand in search of our feathered friends. This program will conclude with the children making their very own bird feeder to take home.

**Program Length:** 2 hours  
**Cost Per Student:** \$7  
**Time of Year:** Year - round



\* The cost per student includes an additional \$1

*"The students were allowed to share their knowledge of birds and learn more. They loved it-thanks!"  
-Lucy Franklin Elementary School*

## Ecosystem Investigations

Here is an opportunity for students to take an in-depth look at samples of different ecosystems found in Missouri. Students will explore and study forest, grassland and wetland habitats found at the Sanctuary. They will record plants and animals found in each ecosystem. The program will end with an understanding of the components of each ecosystem and their functions.

**Program Length:** 90 minutes  
**Cost Per Student:** \$6  
**Time of Year:** Year - round



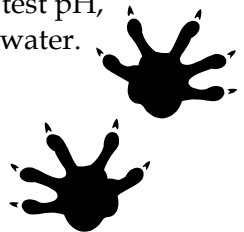
*"Thank you for providing a program that was well-prepared, interesting, & practical. We enjoyed it immensely & learned a lot too!" - Cathedral School*

## Wild About Wetlands

This program will literally immerse your students in the world of wetlands. They will learn through firsthand observation and investigation what organisms are found in our creek and pond environments. From water beetles and dragonfly larvae to tadpoles and fish, students will begin to understand both the importance of healthy wetlands and the organisms found in each system. **Please note this program involves getting in the water.**

Students will use 500 micron mesh kick nets, magnifiers for macroinvertebrates, and equipment to test pH, temperature, and dissolved oxygen of the water.

**Program Length:** 2 hours  
**Cost Per Student:** \$6  
**Time of Year:** April 15 - September 30



*"Great history presentation and activities. The whole morning was well planned and ran very smoothly."  
- Hazel Grove Elementary School*

## Colossal Fossil

Dig this! Here's an opportunity for your students to learn about fossils, from identification to how they were made. We'll head down to Rush Creek in search of the real thing among the shale and limestone deposits. The students will work together to find the best fossil to take back to class for further study. **Please note this program involves getting in the water.**

**Program Length:** 90 minutes / 2 hours\*  
**Cost Per Student:** \$6 / \$8\*  
**Time of Year:** April 15 - September 30

\***Optional Activity:** Your students can make a "fossil" using plaster and seashells. The extended program requires two hours and a total fee of \$8.

**Note:** During the wetland and fossil programs, children will wade in the water. Children must wear tennis shoes or boots which completely enclose the foot.

# Wild in the Classroom

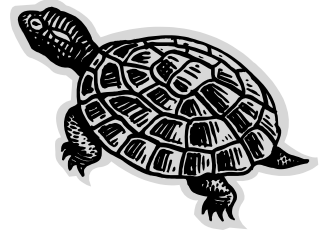
Off-site programs are offered year round based on availability.

Off-site program fee: \$165 per hour, \$90 each additional hour

Class sizes are limited to the following:



Age of Students	Maximum Number of Students
Preschool	60
K - 1st grade	80
2nd grade - 6th grade	100



## Wild Missouri

What animals live in Missouri? Where do they live? How do they find food? Find out the answers to these questions and others, as this program explores animal adaptations and habitat needs. Using a variety of natural artifacts and live animals, this program becomes an experience that everyone will remember.

Students will explore 2-4 themed animal groups, depending upon the number of children. Themes to choose from include: mammals, birds, reptiles/amphibians, and insects. Animal artifacts may include pelts, skins, feathers, shells, and other parts of animals.

## Critters in the Classroom

What exactly is a pollywog? How does a snake swallow food larger than its head? Discover differences and similarities between amphibians and reptiles through hands-on interaction and by comparing and contrasting the physical characteristics of each.

Teachers can choose any combination of five of our education animals: gray treefrog, American toad, tiger salamander, western painted turtle, ornate box turtle, black rat snake, speckled kingsnake, or bullsnake.

## Feathered Frenzy

Choose three of the options below to create a program that fits your curriculum/teaching schedule :

**Option 1:** Students explore the diversity and adaptations of the avian world by hands-on examinations of different types of feathers, bones, and feet.

**Option 3:** As time and the surrounding area of the school allow, our Naturalist will go outdoors with students to search for evidence of birds while learning bird calls and songs with the help of a Birdsong Identifier™.



**Option 2:** Enjoy a slide show for visual reinforcement of birds discussed while learning bird calls and songs with the help of our Birdsong Identifier™.

**Option 4:** Each student makes a tennis-ball container bird feeder filled with bird seed to take home.

\*Note: This option requires a \$3 additional materials fee per student.

## Program Evaluations:

Forms are provided to each teacher with a program. These evaluations allow us to continually review our program quality. Please be sure to complete the form and return it. For your convenience, the evaluations have been pre-addressed and stamped. *Thank you!*

## Middle Schools and High Schools

Field trips for middle schools and high schools are tailored to the needs of the specific class. Modifications of the programs in this guide can be arranged for older ages, and we welcome requests for other topics. Teachers should call the Nature Center and speak to a Naturalist to discuss their options.

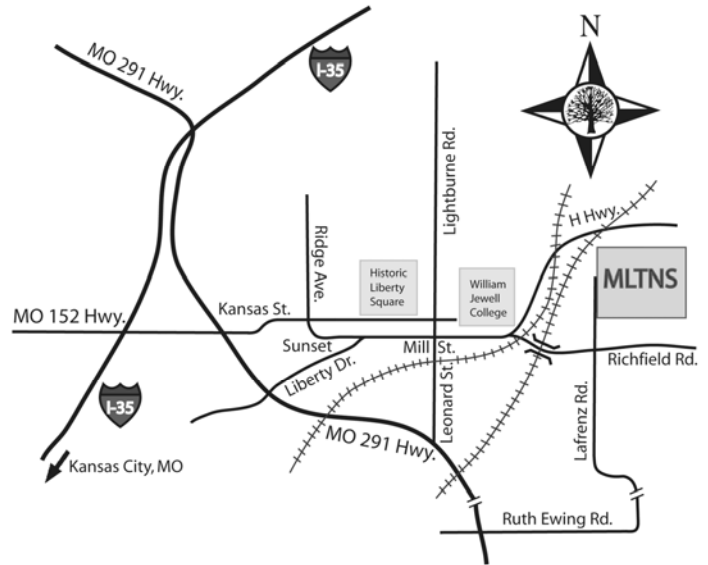
# Your guide to environmental education information is inside!

## About the Sanctuary

Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary is a private, non-profit organization begun by its namesake as a place where native plants and animals could thrive and the public could learn about and appreciate the natural world. Each year, the Sanctuary hosts thousands of school children as well as the general public who attend a variety of programs.

Four miles of hiking trails provide access to the nearly 100 acres of land that includes the Missouri Department of Conservation's Rush Creek Conservation Area.

We accept donations and offer memberships to the general public.



407 N. Lafrenz Road  
Liberty, MO 64068

Phone: 816-781-8598  
Fax: 816-781-7210

Website: [www.naturesanctuary.com](http://www.naturesanctuary.com)  
Email: [info@naturesanctuary.com](mailto:info@naturesanctuary.com)

Printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink.



Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary  
407 N. Lafrenz Road  
Liberty, MO 64068

Non Profit  
Organization.  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #50  
LIBERTY MO