



2026-27 School Program Guide

Join the ODC Network for a hands-on experience that encourages a sense of wonder of the natural world!

Advancing outdoor education
and conservation in West Michigan





Grade Levels

Pre-K
K
1
2
3
4
5
M
HS

4 Hours

Up Close & Wild

Explore our trails and exhibits and find out what makes different animal classes unique as we visit birds, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals. This is a great program for first-time elementary visitors!

Includes up-close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.

Onsite program includes a visit to the DeWitt Birds of Prey Center.



Seasonal Availability

Jan

Feb

March

April

May

June

July

Aug

Sept

Oct

Nov

Dec



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HS

2 Hours

Up Close & Wild Jr.

What do our ODC animals need to live? Food, water, shelter, and a lot of care! Young visitors will search our trails for good habitats and meet some of the wild creatures who call these spaces home.

Includes up-close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.



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Birds of Prey—LIVE!

"Hawks, owls, and falcons, oh my!" Meet the live raptors who call ODC home and learn about their roles in local ecosystems. Binoculars and touchable artifacts such as wings, talons, and skulls add new layers of fun as we learn about our feathered friends.

Includes up-close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.

Onsite program includes a visit to the DeWitt Birds of Prey Center.



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Maps & Landforms

Students navigate new skills as they learn to find their way using maps, compasses, and observations of the world around them! Enviroscope models and our own trail map system provide the tools to learn how to read maps, recognize different landforms, and understand where these skills are used in real life.



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2 Hours

Life in a Pond

Where do frogs, dragonflies, and crayfish live? Students visit a nearby wetland and meet the creatures who call this habitat home. Dip-nets and hands-on tools make this a day to remember!

Includes up-close interactions with ODC animal ambassadors.



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4 Hours

Wetland Investigation

Life cycles abound in the wetland! Visit aquatic ecosystems, and use sampling tools to explore who is living in our ponds, marshes, and more! Students will learn about food webs and life cycles, all while discovering how they can help protect our local wetlands.

Includes up-close interactions with ODC animal ambassadors.



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Location Spotlight: Spoelhof Family Visitor Center and Haworth & Klow Family Imagination Forest



The spaces that welcome visitors to ODC—the Spoelhof Family Visitor Center, DeVisser Family Discovery Pavilion, and the newly created Haworth & Klow Family Imagination Forest—have been thoughtfully reimagined to create opportunities for exploration, discovery, and play for all ages.

Elevated platforms, handcrafted rope features, and natural play elements inspire curiosity and connection. Inside the Visitor Center, view North American wildlife taxidermy, step inside a cave, and experience a full-scale birdhouse from a bird's perspective.



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2 Hours

Seasonal Surprises

Get outdoors all year round! Children will discover what plants and animals are doing during different times of the year, and how changes in the weather can change a whole habitat! Special focus is paid to animal adaptations during hands-on activities and a naturalist-led hike.

Includes up-close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.



Seasonal Availability

Winter Focus

Spring Focus

Summer Focus

Fall Focus

Jan

Feb

March

April

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June

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Nov

Dec



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4 Hours

Winter Ecology

Explore how winter impacts Michigan habitats, and how the animals living here have adapted to survive even the coldest days!

Includes up-close interactions with ODC animal ambassadors.

Onsite program includes a visit to the DeWitt Birds of Prey Center.

If there is at least 4 inches of snow, students grades 3 and up can snowshoe.



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2 Hours

Rocks and Minerals

Rocks rock! Dig into the properties of different rocks and minerals in this hands-on exploration. Junior geologists play rock formation games, test the properties of matter of our mineral collection, and visit our Geology Trail exhibit. Students even get to weather their own rocks to bring home!



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Wonderous World of Water

We're looking for water in every way! Learn about the water all around us on a journey through the water cycle and explore water's importance in our ODC wetlands. Students will use models and their own observations to study how water can change a landscape and how humans can impact our local watershed.



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Location Spotlight: Rabbit River Preserve



Foray into a riparian forest! ODC Network acquired the land for our Rabbit River Preserve in 2017, and with an onsite pavilion added last year, we are now prepared to offer a number of our classic Outdoor Discovery Center field trips in this beautiful landscape.

Located in Hamilton, this preserve offers trails through lush forests, past prairie grasses, and up to the eponymous Rabbit River. Our teaching pavilion allows for indoor bathroom access, picnic tables for lunches, and a safe location out of the weather perfect for smaller groups.




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4 Hours

Ecosystem Exploration

Exploring the plant, animal, and non-living factors of different ecosystems allows us to understand what makes a space unique! Young ecologists will observe animals from around Michigan, inspect the ODC's varied habitats, and play interactive games to build knowledge about how these communities and natural systems impact each other.

Includes up close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.



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4 Hours

Insects Are Incredible!

Get to know our smallest animal friends as we learn about everything insect! Search for beetles and butterflies in the meadow, crawl through our life-cycle obstacle course, and build food webs as we explore the role of insects in our world.

Includes up close interaction with ODC ambassadors.



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1 1/2 Hours

Sensory Adventure

Become a sensory adventurer as we use our eyes, ears, nose, and more to explore! We'll use our senses on a special nature hike and learn how animals use their senses to survive.

Includes up-close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.



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Plants on the Move

Young botanists will explore the parts of plants and the many different ways seeds travel through demonstrations and hands-on activities. Learn how animals interact with seeds and search our trails to find how plants are on the move all around us.



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2 Hours

Wildflower Walk

Come enjoy the beautiful wildflowers that bloom in Spring! Students will learn about flower parts, plant life cycles, wildflower identification, and the natural history surrounding an amazing variety of plants. Bring your hiking shoes, and we'll search the trails for fresh spring flowers!



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4 Hours

Michigan's Anishinaabe History

As the first culture rooted in Michigan, historical and modern Anishinaabe traditions are an important part of our state heritage. Using artifacts, language, traditional houses, games, hunting tools, and life skills, students will get a taste of Woodland Period Anishinaabe history and culture.

Held at ODC's Cultural History Center.



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4 Hours

Trading Times: Anishinaabe and the French Voyageurs

Head back in time to 1700s Michigan, and explore the changes brought as Anishinaabe nations and French Voyageurs opened trade. Learn about the importance of the Great Lakes fur trade by using historic indigenous and European-style tools, exploring pelts and trade goods, and visiting replica homes from different cultures.

Held at ODC's Cultural History Center.



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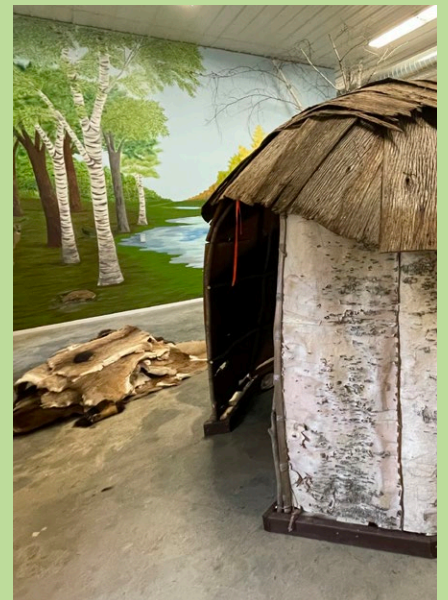
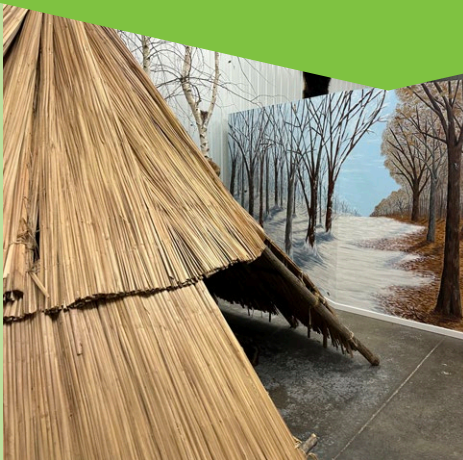
Sept

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Dec

Location Spotlight: Cultural History Center



The Bradford Cultural History Classroom showcases replica homes made with traditional materials, floor-to-ceiling murals, and artwork and artifact displays for an immersive learning experience.



Funding from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council and the National Endowment of the Arts provide operational support of ODC's cultural history programming at the Cultural History Center and in the community.



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2 Hours

Homestead Holiday

Happy Holidays! Experience some of the ways that settlers prepared for their winter holidays as we visit the log cabin, freshly decorated for the season. Students will learn about Christmas trees in Michigan, hand-dip candles, and make a practical craft to take home!

Held at DeGraaf Nature Center.



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2 Hours

Settler Living

Learn how 1800s American settlers fed, clothed, and sheltered themselves in this trip through time. Old-fashioned tools, food, and fun come together during a visit to our log cabin and as students try out historical chores and toys.

Activities may vary depending on age group.

Held at DeGraaf Nature Center.



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Van Raalte Farm

Grade Levels:

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2 Hours

Maple Sugarbush Season

It's maple syrup time at Van Raalte Farms! Students will find the very first signs of spring in Michigan and learn how maple trees give us a sweet treat during this special season. Follow from the sap bucket to the sugarhouse evaporator, and then taste the final product!

Held at Van Raalte Farm Park.



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Van Raalte Farm

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- Pre-K
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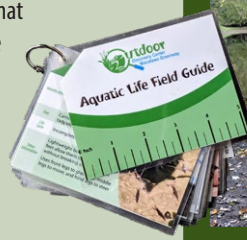
2 Hours

A River Runs Through It

Explore the Macatawa River and the many amphibians, fish, and invertebrates that call the water home! Students will learn about what makes a healthy watershed and use scientific tools to determine the health of our own Van Raalte wetland.

Includes up-close interaction with ODC animal ambassadors.

Held at Van Raalte Farm Park.



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Saugatuck Dunes

Grade Levels:

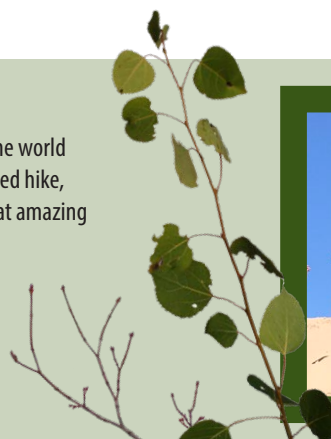
- Pre-K
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- M
- HS

2 Hours

Exploring Our Dunes

Visit one of the largest groups of fresh-water dunes in the world right along Lake Michigan's eastern shoreline! On a guided hike, students will learn how the dunes were formed and what amazing natural forces are still changing them today.

Held at Shore Acres Township Park or other natural area.



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Field Trip Pricing Info

\$8 per participant per day (minimum fee \$100)

Chaperones free at ratio of 1:5 with students for 1st grade and up

Chaperones free at ratio of 1:3 with students K and lower

Additional chaperones \$8 each

No fee for teachers, ParaPros, bus drivers, etc.

Price includes up to 4 hours of field trip content!

Can include multiple shorter programs on the same visit at our site.



ODC at Your School!

Bring the excitement of an ODC field trip to your classroom or schoolyard! Using our many touchable tools and natural artifacts, an ODC naturalist will guide your students through an offsite, one hour version of one of our classic lessons. Call for further information on age ranges.

Choose from one of the following topics:

Anishinaabe Culture

Michigan Animals*

Birds of Prey*

Trees*

French Voyageur History

Wetlands*



**Noted lessons include interactions with our animal ambassadors.*

Schedule With Us

Registration begins the first Monday of August.
Program registrations are taken on a first-come, first-serve basis.
Call early for the best availability.

To schedule a program contact our office:

616-317-5256

programs@outdoordiscovery.org

Please have the following information available:

1. School / Organization Name
2. Teacher / Contact Name
3. Contact Information
4. Estimated number of participants
5. Title of program(s) you are interested in
6. Preferred season, week, date for a program

ODC at Your Assembly!

Share ODC's animal ambassadors with up to 200 people in these exciting live animal shows!

Birds of Prey

Michigan Animals



ODC at Your School! Pricing

\$9 per participant per day (minimum fee \$180)

Up to 2 classes per presentation,
includes hands-on experience

No fee for chaperones, teachers, ParaPros, etc.

ODC at Your Assembly! Pricing

\$350 for first assembly, \$100 per additional assembly on the same date.

Up to 200 person audience, no hands-on experience

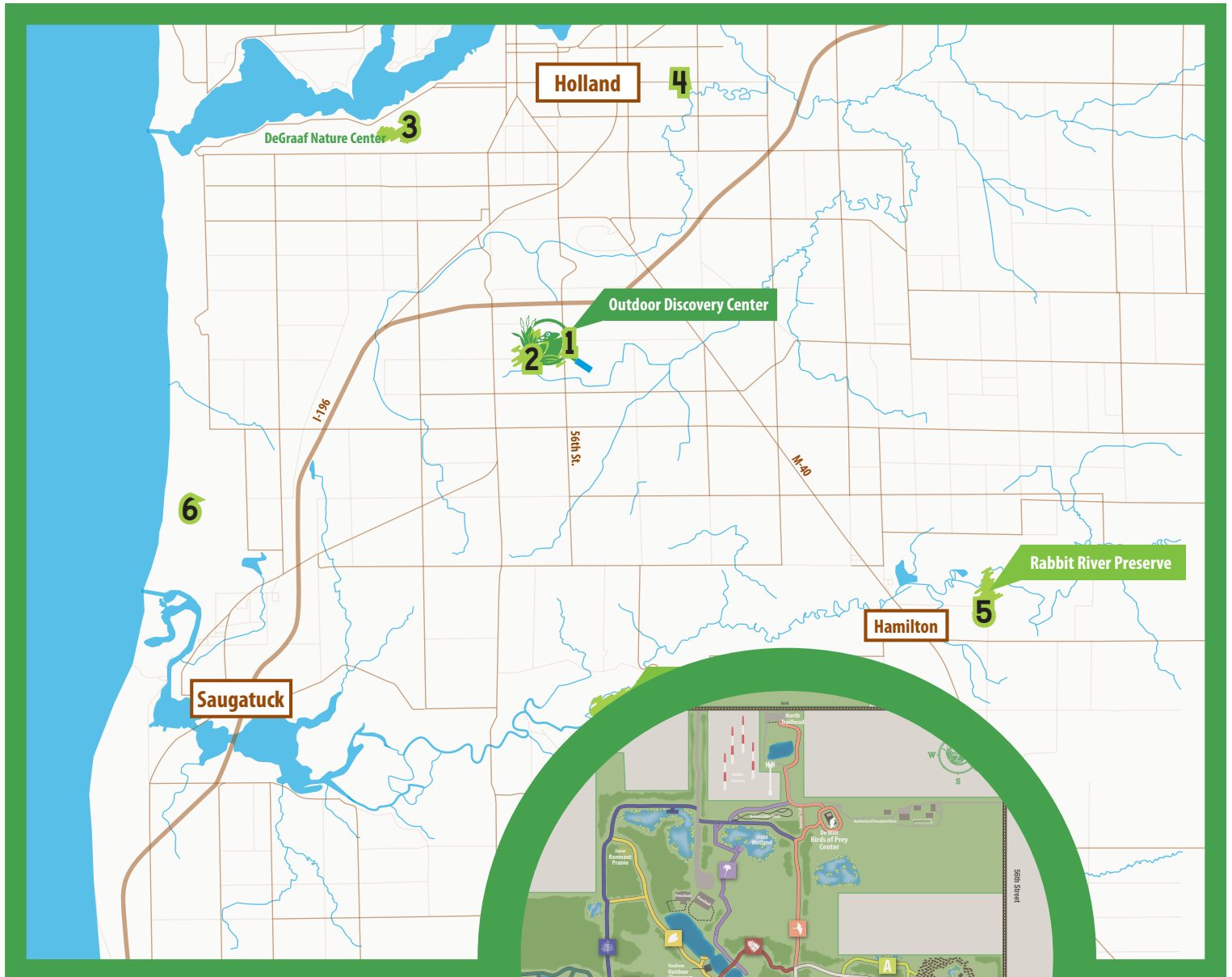
Travel Fees

None	Ottawa, Allegan, Kent Counties
\$100	Muskegon, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Barry, Ionia Counties
\$150	Oceana, Newaygo, Montcalm, Eaton, Calhoun, Joseph, Cass, Berrien Counties
\$200	Branch, Jackson, Ingham, Clinton, Gratiot, Isabella, Mecosta, Osceola, Lake, Mason Counties
\$250	Hillsdale, Lenawee, Washtenaw, Livingston, Shiawassee, Saginaw, Midland, Clare, Missaukee, Wexford, Manistee Counties
\$300	Monroe, Wayne, Oakland, Genesee, Lapeer, Tuscola, Bay, Arenac, Gladwin, Ogemaw, Crawford, Kalkaska, Grand Traverse, Benzie, Leelanau Counties

Other county pricing as requested

Program Locations

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. ODC Main Entrance
4214 56th Street, Holland, MI | 3. DeGraaf Nature Center
600 Graafschap Rd, Holland, MI | 5. Rabbit River Preserve
4401 135th Ave, Hamilton, MI |
| 2. ODC Cultural History Center
5675 142nd Ave, Holland, MI | 4. Van Raalte Farm Park
1076 E 16th St, Holland, MI | 6. Shore Acres Twp Park
6602 138th Ave, Holland, MI |





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Outdoor Discovery Center and DeGraaf Nature Center are divisions of the ODC Network, a 501(c)(3) non-profit with the mission to advance outdoor education and conservation in West Michigan.