

McDuffie Environmental Education Center

School Outreach Programs



The McDuffie Environmental Education Center (MEEC) provides teachers a unique site to take students for a hands-on outdoor experience. Lessons address the dimensions of the Georgia Standards of Excellence in this diverse biologically rich area with activities available for PreK through seventh grade. The McDuffie Environmental Education Center provides students with stimulating, outdoor learning experiences about the ecology of our wildlife, water, soils, and forests and the stewardship of these important natural resources.

The McDuffie Environmental Education Center is open by reservation only. It is recommended that dates be booked well in advance in order to secure desired dates. Fees: \$5 per student

We offer accommodations and Adaptation of Performance Standards for Students with Disabilities based on information provided when reservations are made.

Third Grade – Beavers and Wetlands

WETLAND BEAVER TRAIL

PE3.3, PE3.5, S3E1c, S3L1, S3L2

Students will walk around the hatchery ponds to the Blackwater Swamp. During the first part of the hike students are challenged to observe the contrast between a sand-hill habitat and a wetland habitat as well as compare and contrast the public fishing ponds with the hatchery ponds. Animal sightings and student observations often spark additional discussion. Once on the board-walked trail, students experience the wetland environment, learn its important contribution to a healthy eco-system and look for evidence of beaver activity. Characteristics of beavers and their reputations as both master-builders and nuisances are discussed.

BUILD-A-DAM

S3L1B

Students observe and discuss the characteristics of both man-made and beaver made dams. Then, using natural components provided, students work together in small groups to design and construct a model of a beaver dam that will hold back a specific amount of water.



For questions and further information contact us at
706-449-7521 or Kimberly.Clements@dnr.ga.gov

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BEAVER TRACKS AND ADAPTATIONS

S3E2, S3L1b

The instructor will discuss fossil formation and fossil evidence as well as how we use more recent animal evidence to make observations about the life within an ecosystem. Students will make a plaster cast of a beaver track to take home. In addition, one student volunteer will be dressed as a beaver during an inquiry session about the many unique adaptations of the species.

SOILS, ROCKS AND MINERALS

S3E1a, S3E1b

Students learn the difference between rocks and minerals, that soil is a combination of rocks and minerals, and how soils are formed. Students will simulate weathering processes to form soil from sandstone and use sieves to separate a soil sample into sand, clay and loam.

DISCOVERY ROOM

S2L1, ELAGSE2RI1, ELAGSE2RI2

Students rotate through centers and displays which emphasize wildlife characteristics and habitat. Students begin with a scavenger hunt for facts using the expository texts located in the display cases. Additional stations may include making leaf rubbings, creating animal tracks, identifying animal furs, using magnifying instruments, and using scales.

BINOCULAR INVESTIGATION

S3L1a, PE3.2, PE3.3, PE3.5

Following instruction on the proper use of binoculars, students will walk to designated MEEC sites (the inner coastal plain habitat) to practice their sighting, focusing and animal identification skills. Students can identify both the animal decoys that have been placed as well as living animals they may come across.

CUSTOMIZED SESSIONS

Depending on fish production, a tour of the hatchery building may be available upon request. A Kids Fishing Event may also be arranged as part of the MEEC experience.

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WHEEL OF NATURE

(All levels. Questions are adapted to grade level.)

Students participate in a game-style two-team activity. When it is his or her turn, a team-member spins a wheel to determine how much a question is worth. To obtain the points for his side, the student answers the given question. Questions are based on the MEEC curriculum and include habitat features, wildlife adaptations, and identification of animal pictures, pelts, sounds, offspring and tracks. Models and other audio visuals are used to bring questions to life. Team work is encouraged as rules allow students to confer on difficult questions.

FISHING

ESS3.A, ESS3.C, LS4.C, PE3.4, PE3.5

Following an orientation on how fish depend on their surroundings, adaptations, reason for the hatchery, what humans need fish for, what the sport of fishing is and does for us and the safety and proper use of equipment the students will participate in the sport of angling. Students will be supervised by the instructor, staff, teachers and chaperones. Students will learn to bait a hook, cast, reel and hopefully catch a fish. If fish are caught measurements will be taken and depending on grade level