

A photograph of three children in a grassy field. A girl with blonde hair in a ponytail with a white bow, wearing a light blue shirt, is on the left, looking through black binoculars. In the center, a boy in a blue t-shirt is also looking through binoculars. On the right, a girl in a red and blue baseball cap and a red shirt is looking towards the right. The background is a lush green field with a dense line of trees in the distance. A wooden birdhouse on a metal stand is visible on the left side of the field.

**OUTDOOR
EDUCATION AT
PRAIRIE RIDGE
ECOSTATION**

2015–2016

**EDUCATOR'S
GUIDE**

to Museum Services

NORTH CAROLINA Museum of Natural Sciences
Downtown Raleigh • corner of Jones & Salisbury Streets • naturalsciences.org

OVERVIEW

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Prairie Ridge is the Museum's off-site field station in west Raleigh where teachers, students and the general public can learn about sustainable living and experience the natural world. The site features 45 acres of reconstructed prairie, lowland forest and wetlands with hiking trails throughout.

Spend the morning outdoors at Prairie Ridge with your class by scheduling a program. Curriculum correlated student programs for grade grade K–12 will help you integrate the natural world into your classroom.

Prairie Ridge's Nature PlaySpace might be your new favorite self-led outdoor fieldtrip destination. You do need to notify the Prairie Ridge staff ahead of time if you plan to bring groups of 10 or more to visit the Nature PlaySpace or other parts of Prairie Ridge. Contact Cathy Fergen at cathy.fergen@naturalsciences.org or 919.707.8878 for more information or to notify us of your visit.

Free parking is available.

MAIN ENTRANCE

1671 Gold Star Drive
Raleigh, NC 27607
919.707.8888
naturalsciences.org/prairie-ridge-ecostation

HOURS

Monday–Saturday, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Sunday, 12–4:30 p.m.
The main gate is locked at 5 p.m. daily.

GENERAL ADMISSION

Free / Donations Welcome

DIRECTIONS

naturalsciences.org/visitor-info/directions-parking#prairie

EVENTS

Admission is free. Dates and times of some events are subject to change. For event updates, contact Prairie Ridge at 919.707.8879 or visit naturalsciences.org/prairie-ridge-ecostation

TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE

Saturday, September 27, 2015

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

All ages welcome; children 15 or younger must be accompanied by an adult

Bring your family to Prairie Ridge to celebrate Take a Child Outside Week! Come at any time during the 3-hour event to explore the garden, the prairie and the pond. Learn about native plants, hunt for grasshoppers, sample aquatic invertebrates.

STATEWIDE STAR PARTY AT PRAIRIE RIDGE

April 2016

8 – 11 p.m.

Learn about the planets and stars with Prairie Ridge and the Raleigh Astronomy Club at this fun-filled NC Science Festival event for all ages.

GNOMES AND FAIRIES SPRING UP AT PRAIRIE RIDGE

Saturday, May 2016

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Come help us celebrate as the gnomes and fairies prepare for the arrival of summer.

MOTHS AT NIGHT

July 2016

8 p.m. – 12 a.m.

Celebrate National Moth Week with the Museum! Join us at our black lights and mercury vapor lights to learn how to identify some common local moths, take part in moth-themed citizen science, and participate in fun activities for all ages.

PRAIRIE RIDGE STUDENT PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Grades K–12

Ages	Grades K–12; College level programs available.
Dates	Oct. 5, 2015–May 7, 2016 (except where noted)
Times	Programs offered weekday mornings.
Program Fees	\$50 per 1–hour program except where noted. Program length 1 hour unless otherwise noted.
Class Size	Grades K–12 maximum 30 except where noted. Chaperone Requirements: Recommended five adults per program.
To Schedule	Contact Kim Smart, Education Coordinator, at 919.707.8880 or kimberly.smart@naturalsciences.org
Scheduling Starts	Tuesday, August 1, 2015 Note: You must register programs at least two weeks in advance of your group’s visit.
Lunch	Space is available for lunch. Please ask us during program registration.
Cancellation	A minimum two-week notice in writing is required for refund. Groups that do not cancel will be billed the full amount of the programs.
Weather Cancellation	If Prairie Ridge or the group needs to cancel due to weather, the program will be rescheduled at the teacher’s request and as the Museum’s calendar permits.
Special Populations	Some programs can be tailored to meet the needs of special populations. Please indicate the special needs of your group when scheduling a program.

STUDENT PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Grades K–12

Programs can usually accommodate one or two classes which can be done simultaneously. As intrepid explorers, please be prepared with adequate provisions and apparel for any weather.

WILD EXPLORATION

Kindergarten

Class Size: maximum 25

K.L.1

Take a hike with a naturalist. Focus on using observation and the senses to discover animal signs and other wonders of nature.

WHAT LIVES HERE

Grade 1

1.L.1

Explore the prairie and its woodland edge looking for signs of life. Take an up-close look at the smaller creatures from the pond. We'll see how each environment meets the needs of the animals that live there.

CYCLES OF LIFE AT PRAIRIE RIDGE

Grade 2

2.L.1

Seasonal changes produce life cycle changes. Search out baby birds, tadpoles, flowers or insects and learn how they develop.

SOILS, SEEDS & PLANTS

Grade 3

3.L.2

Explore properties of soils including water retention, texture and color. Test the dispersal properties of various seeds. Learn the parts of plants and their functions.

ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS

Grade 4

4.L.1

Study the animals in the pond, forest floor or prairie and see how different behaviors and structures help them to survive in these specific habitats.

HELP MAKE SCIENCE HAPPEN

Grades 4–12

Curriculum correlations vary with season and topic

Class Size: 30 maximum

In the field of citizen science, scientists design the protocols then citizens (your students, in this case) collect and report the data. Learn about the natural world while collecting scientific data on the Prairie Ridge grounds. We then share the results with researchers at the Museum and beyond. Available topics include birds, weather, phenology, camera trapping and dragonflies.

PRAIRIE RIDGE ECOSYSTEMS 1

Grade 5

5.L.2

Explore the prairie and/or the pond searching for the producers, consumers and decomposers. How do all of these plants and animals depend on each other?

PRAIRIE RIDGE ECOSYSTEMS 2

Grade 6

6.L.2

Explore the forest floor and/or the pond searching for the producers, consumers and decomposers. How does energy move through this ecosystem?

STUDENT PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Grades K-12

EXPLORING AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

Grades 7, 8
8.L.3

Sample abiotic factors of a stream OR calculate the water quality of a pond based on the macroinvertebrate fauna. How are the populations affected by these factors? These are two different programs which may be done simultaneously to accommodate two classes.

HUMAN IMPACTS ON AQUATIC SYSTEMS: POND STUDY

Grades 9-12
Class Size: 15 maximum*
Fee: \$50 for one hour
Bio.2.2, EEn.2.4

Study how urbanization and other human impacts influence aquatic systems by sampling for aquatic insects in our pond. When these two programs are done together, students will gain an overall picture of how scientists study water quality and how people impact water quality in North Carolina and beyond.

*To accommodate a class of 30, two programs must be scheduled.

HUMAN IMPACTS ON AQUATIC SYSTEMS: STREAM STUDY

Grades 9-12
Class Size: 15 maximum*
Fee: \$50 for one hour
Bio.2.2, EEn.2.4

Study how urbanization and other human impacts influence aquatic systems by sampling water quality in our stream. Students will gain an overall picture of how scientists study water quality and how people impact water quality in North Carolina and beyond.

*To accommodate a class of 30, two programs must be scheduled.

PARKING / MAP / DIRECTIONS



Directions from I-40

From I-40 (east or west) take the Wade Avenue exit.
Take Edwards Mill Road exit and turn left (north) at the bottom of the ramp.
After 0.7 mile, turn right on Reedy Creek Road.
After 0.2 mile, turn right on Gold Star Dr.
Turn into the first driveway on the right.

Directions from US1/I-440

From US1/I-440 take the exit for Wade Ave west
Take the Edwards Mill Road exit and turn right (north) at the bottom of the ramp.
Once on Edwards Mill Road follow directions above.

Link to Google maps:*

<http://bit.ly/prairieridge>

*Note: Not all online map services include the Prairie Ridge Ecostation address.