



Family Fun Activities and Investigations

The following are sites where families can participate in programs or interact with exhibits to learn more about ecology and the environment. Please contact the sites specifically to learn about their current exhibits and calendar of events.

Anita C. Leight Estuary Center

(410-612-1688) <http://www.otterpointcreek.org>

Assateague Island National Seashore

(410-641-1443 ext.232) <http://www.nps.gov/asis/>

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

(410-228-2677) <http://blackwater.fws.gov>

Irvine Nature Center

(410-484-2413) <http://www.explorenature.org/>

Marshy Point Nature Center

(410-887-2817)

<http://www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/recreation/countyparks/marshypoint/index.html>

Northpoint State Park

(410-592-2897)

<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/northpoint.html>

Oregon Ridge Nature Center

(410-887-1815)

<http://www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/recreation/countyparks/oregonridgelodge/index.html>

Career Connections



Take a few minutes to discuss with your child these different career opportunities for people interested in ecology.

Biologist

A scientist that deals with the origin, history, characteristics, habits, etc. of plants and animals

Botanist

A scientist that deals with plants and plant life

Forester

A scientist that plants and takes care of forests

Marine Scientist

A scientist who studies plants and animals that live in the ocean

Museum Curator

A person in charge of a museum

Naturalist

A scientist who studies and observes plants and animals in their habitat

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A Parent's Informational Guide to:

ECO- TREKKERS



Grade 5



Eco-Trekkers

Eco-Trekkers is a unit of study designed to be taught in conjunction with a day-long field experience during which students investigate several types of Chesapeake Bay ecosystems. During this field study, students utilize a variety of scientific and mathematical skills to extend their understanding of ecology. Back in the classroom they use the knowledge they have gained to create an Eco-Chamber representing a thriving ecosystem. The Baltimore County Public Schools Essential curriculum which is built upon the indicators of the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum that are addressed in this unit are listed below.

Indicator: E. Ecology (BCPS)

1. recognize and explain that individuals and groups of organisms interact with each other and their environment.
 - A. identify and describe the interactions of organisms present in an environment (competition for space, food and water; predator/prey; food chain; producer, consumer, decomposer)
 - B. identify and describe the interactions of organisms with the non-living environment, such as water, soil, and temperature.

Indicator: D. Flow of Matter and Energy (VSC)

2. recognize and explain that some source of energy is needed for all organisms to grow, survive, and reproduce.
 - A. identify the sun as the primary source of energy for organisms.
 - B. recognize that the plants use the sun's energy to produce their own food.
 - C. recognize that a continuous supply of energy in the form of food is needed for organisms to stay alive and grow (used immediately; stored for future use)



Unit Vocabulary

Encourage your children to use the vocabulary listed below when telling you about what they are learning during this science unit.

competition—the struggle among different organisms for energy, water, and space

consumer—an organism that eats another plant or animal for food

decomposer—an organism that is able to break down dead plants and animals into simple substances called nutrients which are used by plants

ecosystem—the living and non-living factors of an area that interact with each other

food chain—the order in which organisms pass on energy from one organism to another

organism—a living thing

producer—an organism that makes its own food using sunlight



Books to Read

Take some time to read a few books about ecology with your child. Books about organisms and habitats can be found in the non-fiction section of the library (call letters 577-599). The children's section of your school and public library also has books on this topic. Possible books are listed below:

Ecology for Every Kid, Janice Van Cleave
How Nature Works, David Burnie

DK Eyewitness Series (Age 9-12 readability)
This series has a number of excellent books. The authors vary, but suggested book titles are listed below.

Amphibian; Bird; Butterfly and Moth; Eagles and Birds of Prey; Ecology; Fish; Insect; Mammal; Reptile; Plant; Pond and River; Seashore; Trees; Weather

Internet Sites



<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/bay/education/kids.html>

<http://www.enaturalist.org>

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/index_students.cfm

<http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/models/botenv/botenv/index.html>

<http://www.sitesalive.com/tg/wl/private/hs/wkshtwk09.pdf>

<http://www.education.noaa.gov/socean.html>