



Lamoille County Conservation District

Conserving Our Natural Resources Since 1945

Lamoille County Nature Center

2024-2025 Junior Naturalist Series Themes

September: *The Colors of Fall:* Trees get a lot of attention this time of year as they show off their autumn colors. We will investigate the all-important job of leaves, take a closer look at why their colors change and learn to identify some of the trees whose leaves we so admire.

October: *Fall Fungi:* Neither a plant nor an animal, fungi like mushrooms, yeasts and molds are their own thing entirely! Fungi are around all year long, but fall is a great time to observe them as mushrooms pop up for us to see. And while mushrooms look a little like plants, they act more like animals. Join us to learn about the life cycle of a mushroom and create your own mushroom masterpiece!

November: *Wonderful Wiggly Worms:* The Nature Center's troupe of red wiggler worms will be the guests of honor for this program. We will learn about the anatomy of the earthworm, the important role they play in the ecosystem, watch them turn dead stuff into plant food and investigate some of their preferences with a simple experiment.

December: *Deer in Winter:* As winter sets in, Vermont's white-tailed deer are congregating and heading to deer yards in their seasonal travels through changing habitats. Learn how deer deal with the deep snow, cold temperatures, hungry predators and shrinking menu that come with a northern winter and then join in a round of Deer Flag Tag.

January: *Insects in Winter:* Ever wonder how all those insects that bugged you all summer spend the winter? Turns out that insects use a variety of strategies to survive the cold. We will look into the cold-weather strategies of some of our favorite insects like ladybugs and butterflies and learn the secret of those few unique insects that can actually be found cruising around on the snow!

February: *Maple Sugaring:* We'll investigate how to identify sugar maple trees, listen to an Anishinabe Indian story of how sugaring came to be, experience life in a tree to see where the sap flows from, and make a fun maple craft.

March: *Trickster Animal Mimics:* Is that a stick or a stick bug? A caterpillar or a pile of bird poop? In this program we will try *not* to be tricked by critters that imitate the traits of another organism to outsmart predators or prey. See how good you are at telling the difference between the real deal and its mimic. Then try *your* hand at the animal imitation game.

April: *Mud Mysteries:* Why do we have mud season in Vermont? Is it still here or has it passed us by? Why would we have a good or bad mud season? What is good about mud? How do animals use mud?

May: *Inventions by nature:* Join us as we explore an array of inventions that nature made first and engineers, scientist and inventors copied. We investigate strategies that nature used to accomplish its many tasks. What will you invent that nature made first?

June: *Living it up in the Riparian:* What is the riparian zone? What animals live there and depend on it for their way of life? How is the riparian being threatened and what can we do to help protect it?

Activities can include inside and outside investigations, stories, games, and crafts. Programs are one hour for 4 year olds and older, 30 min sessions available for younger audiences. The program fee is \$105 + mileage (\$72 for 30 min sessions). For more information or to schedule a program contact Emily Porter-Goff at 888-9218 ext. 117 or emilylccdedu@gmail.com

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