

Top 10 Questions about Field Trips

- Q: When is the best time to visit the Refuge?*
A: Every time is a good time to visit, as the Refuge displays an ever-changing panorama of wildlife and habitats throughout the year! Fall and winter field trips experience an abundance of waterfowl and raptors, whereas spring visitors encounter migratory songbirds and young blooms.
- Q: How long do rotations and lessons take?*
A: In the 'Introduction' to our curriculum there is a page on 'Walking Trails'. This section indicates how long it takes a steady walker to travel between study sites. Each lesson from our curriculum indicates an approximate duration. Add these timeframes together to establish a rotation, and be sure to add extra minutes to account for nature observations and slower walkers.
- Q: If I am uncomfortable splitting up my class, can we stay together on the trail?*
A: The Refuge does not allow large groups to travel on the trails together because they have a negative impact on animal behavior and they are more difficult to control. Please split up into smaller groups if you have more than 15 students.
- Q: Can we have lunch or snack time during the field trip?*
A: Sure, we just ask that you store and eat all food in our Environmental Education Shelter. Please bring trash bags to collect garbage and transport the bags back to school on your bus.
- Q: Can my class visit the exhibit hall if we run out of things to do outside?*
A: We do not allow school groups to enter the exhibit hall under any circumstance. If you would like for your students to see the exhibit hall, encourage them to come back with their families. You could provide extra credit to these students!
- Q: Can my class use the classroom if the weather is poor?*
A: You may only use the classroom if it is noted in your group's itinerary. Refuge field trips carry on, rain or shine. Pay attention to weather forecasts and encourage your students to dress appropriately. The Refuge can supply a limited number of ponchos and mittens if your students need more clothing. If the weather is truly poor, groups may seek cover in our Environmental Education Shelter, but not the classroom.
- Q: Can my whole class fit into the Environmental Education shelter?*
A: Yes. We maintain a 70 student field trip maximum, so that we can accommodate everyone.
- Q: Is there a restroom along the trail?*
A: No. The only restroom is located in the Environmental Education Shelter. Please encourage your students to use the restrooms at school and at the start of your visit.
- Q: Will each of my groups have a Volunteer Naturalist as a guide?*
A: We pair naturalists with school groups to the greatest extent possible, but we cannot guarantee that there will be naturalists to accompany each group. Please remember it is the teachers' and chaperones' duty to teach lessons and supervise children, not the volunteer naturalists'.
- Q: Can my class just go for a nature walk, instead of using the Refuge curriculum?*
A: Sure. After attending a Refuge workshop, you can plan a field trip however you'd like. Just make sure to turn your application in two weeks before the field trip so we have time to review your activities and coordinate volunteers.