

Visiting the Refuge and Using the Oak Savanna Learning Center – FAQs

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge

My school/scout/youth group would like to visit the refuge. What can we do there?

- Groups of all ages are welcome to visit the refuge! The 7-mile Wildlife Drive and the Blue Hill, Mahnomen and Oak Savanna Learning Center Trails are available for exploring year-round, free of charge, during daylight hours.
 - The Wildlife Drive is perfect for a driving tour with the option to stop to observe or photograph wildlife or to explore one of the 3 short trails along the Drive.
 - The trails are ideal for wildlife observation, habitat exploration, photography, and discovery hikes.
 - Opportunities for volunteer or service learning projects may be available.
- Note that, since the refuge has limited capacity to plan and support this type of visit, the responsibility for planning and leading the visit will fall on event organizers, their teachers, volunteers, and chaperones.

Sounds good, how do I plan a visit?

- Check with the refuge before planning any visit to ensure that the desired date doesn't conflict with other visits or with habitat restoration or other projects underway in the area to be visited.
- If only one bus or vehicle is coming, a volunteer interpreter may be available to point out wildlife and provide commentary along a tour of the Wildlife Drive. Check with refuge staff about volunteer availability.

Would it be possible to use the Oak Savanna Learning Center classroom when we visit?

Yes, this may be possible, under the following conditions.

- Group leaders will be responsible for planning their visit and leading their groups at the refuge.
- Group leaders who wish to use the Learning Center must complete an orientation visit led by refuge staff or designated education volunteers. Session to include expectations about classroom use, a review of the *Compass to Nature* with field time using it, and an orientation hike around the Overlook and Beaver Lodge Trails.
- Visiting groups will be expected to leave the classroom space in the same condition in which they found it, or better. Orientation session will include information about facility clean-up, using the projector, etc.
- Maximum group size is 2 classes or 65 participants, including all adults and students.
- Groups are generally discouraged from including lunch time with their visit, but this option may be considered on request, as appropriate.
- Group leaders will be responsible for providing all materials, supplies, and support needed for their visit unless they have arranged ahead of time to use binoculars, field guides, etc.
- Classroom Hours: 8:30 am - 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday.