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## Available Activities Spring 2011

We are continuing to develop and improve upon our curriculum.  
The following lists the activities we are offering for spring 2011.

### **Integrated Activities:**

**These activities have an indoor component that is tied to the outdoor trail walk.**

**They are designed to reinforce a theme throughout the whole field trip so that students have something to focus on during their outdoor time.**

#### **People and Plants**—30 minutes indoor, 1+ hour on trail

Students discuss how they use plants everyday and discover how people in South Puget Sound have used native plants for survival. Students create plant field guides using actual plant specimens and learn about traditional plant uses. They will use a ‘survival’ story on the trail to match the plant with its use (i.e. find the plant that will help soothe your sore throat). By the end of this activity students should have a basic understanding of plant uses and be able to recognize six native northwest plants—licorice fern, sword fern, nootka rose, nettle, red alder, and cattail.

#### **Habitat is Where It’s At**—30 minutes indoor, 1+ hour on trail

Students explore the different habitats found at the Refuge (River, Riparian Forest, Woodland Forest, Grassland, Freshwater Marsh) by becoming a specialized scientist and exploring interactive “habitat boxes.” Inside these boxes are hands on artifacts, animal pelts, skulls, nest, etc. Each scientist has a card with questions that can be answered through using observational skills and provided field guides. Groups synthesize their learning by creating a habitat poster to present to their classmates (time dependent extension). Outdoor trail walks focus on identifying differences in habitats locations and searching for animals and plants studied in the indoor activity.

#### **Animal Track and Sign**—30 minutes indoor, 1+ hour on trail

Students are introduced to types of animal and insect tracks and sign in a 20 minute indoor group activity followed by a 10 minute observational activity. In this activity picture of tracks, nests, and other animal sign that were found right here at Nisqually are paired with the correct animal who made them. The activity is aimed at allowing students to become “nature scientists” as they prepare to explore and observe carefully the Refuge on their trail walk. After having become familiar with some animal sign, students will be asked to find and record evidence of animals while out on the trail.

#### **Animal Adaptation Tables**—30 minutes indoor, 1+ hour on trail

Students are divided into groups to explore the “touch tables” which are full of pelts, skulls, feather, etc. Each table will have its own theme and question cards that the group needs to work together to answer. Questions will lead the group through thinking about various animal adaptations and how those adaptations allow that animal to thrive in a particular environment. While animal adaptations will be the focus of this activity, we will also touch on differences in habitats as a way to explain why animals adapt differently. There will be an observation and drawing component to this lesson, as well as a brief group presentation at the end (time permitting).

### **Stand Alone Activities:**

**These activities are 30 minutes long and are conducted entirely in the Education Center. Teachers may choose from among these listed for their indoor time. Outdoor trail time can easily pull from the topics introduced in shorter activities, or individual teachers may present their own focus for outdoor time.**

#### **Power of Observation/Calling All Birds—30 minutes, indoor only**

Students learn to use their senses by participating in a visual observation activity using bird mounts and bird mount info cards. Then, they use their sense of hearing to find their bird mate/fellow species member in ‘Calling all Birds’.

#### **The Web of Life—30 minutes, indoor only**

Become an element in the ecosystem and pass the string to create the Web of Life and learn about how each element is connected. Can be played with 5-20 students.

#### **Why do the Tides Ebb and Flow?—30 minutes, indoor only**

As a group, students act out a Tahtlan Indian story about what causes the tides. Can be accompanied by discussion of scientific reasons for the tides. Can be played with 4-20 students. Adult participation is helpful.

#### **Microscope Mania (incomplete)**

There are a number of activities we can do with microscopes. Students can look at insects, feathers, and plant specimens to learn more about their surroundings. We are in the process of developing a structured lesson for the microscopes. Please contact the Education Coordinator if you are interested in having your students use microscopes.

### **Other ideas...**

**The hope of our Environmental Education program here at Nisqually is to act as a resource for teachers educating their students about the natural world. We are happy to offer the use of our Ed Center and materials for teachers who wish to develop their own lesson or activity. The following is a list of some of the materials we have to offer. Please contact the Education Coordinator to schedule a time to see materials if desired.**

#### **Materials**

Mammal skins (15-20 ranging from small fur samples to full pelts)	Rubber imitation animal scat
Animal Skulls	Insect collection
Bird feathers (individual and whole wing spreads)	Field guide books (a wide variety of topics)
Bird mounts and mount info cards	Environmental Education books for a wide range of audiences
4 “Birds-on-a-stick,” or prepared taxidermied birds that can be held in the hand	Binoculars
Birds nests	Microscopes and prepared slides
Replica bird eggs	Fish/Amphibian tanks
Hard and soft plastic animal tracks	Educational posters