

Homeschool Course Descriptions

CLASSES AVAILABLE FOR “CLASS + TOUR” EVENTS: (10 am – 3 pm)

Specific Animals:

Cheetah!

This amazing cat is designed for maximum speed! That comes with great advantages, as well as some disadvantages. They can sure move fast, but toward what future is this species speeding? Come learn about, watch and fall in love with our amazing cats!

Rhino Reality

Come and witness these true giants of the animal kingdom! We have a small herd of both black and white rhino...watch them, learn about them, find out why a white rhino is poached in South Africa about every 7 hours, and decide what role you will play as they are either pulled back from the brink of extinction... or pushed over!

Wolves: Friend or Foe?

The relationship between man and wolf has been a rocky one. We have made pendulum swings from trying our best to wipe them off the face of the earth... to trying to save them at all costs. Discover the habits and history of this exceptional animal, and see some of our resident wolves. For ages 7 and up.

Understanding Biodiversity...

Fossil Fun!

This place used to be under a whole lot of water! A lot of living things left a lot of evidences – recorded in rocks - that they used to live here! Find and identify fossils, understand them and how they got here, even take a few home!

Birding: Beak to the Basics!

Join us for fun in the classroom – learning the basics about birds (bird families, feathers and flight, bird behaviors) and birding (finding and identifying birds in the wild); then fun in the field –finding and identifying some of the 200+ bird species of Fossil Rim.

Vanishing Africa

Explore the geography, wildlife and conservations issues of the exotic home to most of our species. We'll pay special attention to the savanna ecosystem and the many gorgeous species that each perform their own balancing act in their struggle for survival.

Taxonomy: And I Thought My Family was Weird!

Examine how and why we group living things the way we do. We can go in depth on the groups that interest you most. After class and lunch, in our guided tour, we will see ‘live demos’ of many taxonomy groups!

Living and Dyeing with Insects

Insects are amazing and important! One Texas insect is the source of a beautiful red dye. (It's story is told in the book *A Perfect Red* by Amy Greenfield.) We will find this insect in the wild, learn all about it and the dye made from it, then dye a bandana to keep as a fun reminder.

Caring for Biodiversity...

The Lorax

*“UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better. It's not!”*

Discover the powerful message about natural resource conservation found in this favorite children's book written by Dr. Seuss. Students will have the opportunity to visit the Street of the Lifted Lorax and become a part of the story. This integrative program connects the story of the Lorax to an endangered Texas native, the Attwater's Prairie Chicken, of which we have a breeding population on site. The experience is guaranteed to get students thinking about the environment, sustainability, stewardship and their role in it all.

Animal Capture!

How do we safely capture wild animals? How do we make sure they don't get hurt and we don't get hurt? See demonstrations of the tools we use and get involved by using a blow gun to put a dart in the rear end of a zebra! (Don't worry, it's a safety dart and the zebra is drawn on Styrofoam.)

“Go Ahead, Make my Day!”

Investigate the process of enrichment for animals in captivity, then look at some examples of how Fossil Rim keeps its animals healthy, happy and entertained. Participants will make enrichment items, then watch some happy inhabitants of the Children's Animal Center enjoy their gifts!

Plants at Home and in the Wild

Fossil Rim knows that species often become endangered because their habitat (mainly the plants in them) becomes endangered. We face that issue with Texas species: bees, birds, bobcats, bison... Learn the roles plants play in preserving biodiversity and how we can help pull plants/habitats and the species in them back from the brink of extinct! See our pollinator garden and keyhole gardens and get some practical ideas and skills for your own home and yard.

WORKSHOPS:

Species in Peril: A two-hour class focused on any species or group that you select, with a short excursion into the park for an encounter with the real thing or the closest relative we can find!

Dissection Lab: Have a fun, learning dissection experience and let us take care of the set-up, the teaching and the clean-up. Instruction on tools and techniques included.

Conservation in Action: Learn some practical ways you can conserve natural resources, then roll up your sleeves and do an on-site conservation project. (Examples: composting, keyhole gardens, trail maintenance, pollinator gardens, habitat care....) We'll end with a guided tour of Fossil Rim.

DAY CAMPS: (9am – 4pm: multiple events & guided tour.)

African Safari Day Camp:

There is a story that Africa will tell you if you will listen!

Get to know the story's setting, the savanna ecology, and the main characters – including giraffe, cheetah, rhino...and man. Then watch the story unfold (in an involved-kind-of-way!)... predators looking for prey, prey looking for safety, 'everyone' looking for their basic needs and the chance to raise the next generation.

End the day with a guided tour as we are immersed in the African savanna right here in Texas!

Robin Hood Day Camp:

Based on Howard Pyle's classic, *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, this package offers a day of learning and fun! Learn about European red deer, horns and antlers, poaching, and camouflage. Of course, archery included!