WELCOME

The Wild Center, and Wild Walk—an elevated trail across the treetops—is an all-day attraction, including an outdoor trail system, a 54,000-square-foot museum with engaging exhibits and live animals, movies, and hands-on everything.

TOP 5 REASONS TO TAKE A FIELD TRIP TO THE WILD CENTER

1. We have River Otters! The Wild Center is also home to many species of live animals, including native fishes, snakes, birds, and other mammals. Schedule a Live Animal Experience during your visit to get closer than ever.

2. Wild Walk allows you to take a walk on the wild side. Hang 25 feet up in the air in our giant spider's web, climb up into an eagle's nest, and explore all of Wild Walk’s other magic.

3. We are BOCES Approved. Your district may be able to receive aid through Co-Ser.

4. We support student centered hands-on learning throughout the year with our suite of New York State Standards Aligned educational student workshops.

5. Learning and education are fun at The Wild Center, with numerous interactive components that put a new spin on education across our campus.

DID YOU KNOW?

• The Wild Center is located in the Adirondack Park, the biggest state park in the lower 48 states. It can hold Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Glacier, and Great Smokey National Parks inside its borders!

• The Wild Center uses all of the Adirondacks in its collection – from the summit of Whiteface Mountain to the meanders of the Raquette River. The Wild Center interprets all six million acres of the Adirondacks.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

• Use this guide to plan a meaningful and enriching learning experience for students before, during, and after your visit to The Wild Center.

• Adopt our suggested strategies to help students construct meaning.

• Empower chaperones to support student learning by using our planning documents.
A TRIP TO THE WILD CENTER IS...

• INTERACTIVE.
• EXPLORATORY.
• FOR EVERYONE!

We welcome ALL types of learners to The Wild Center. From homeschool students and co-ops, to public and private schools, to college students. Here, there’s something for everyone to learn, explore, create and discover.

Check out everything we have to offer at wildcenter.org.

HOURS FOR EDUCATIONAL GROUPS

Summer & Fall
Memorial Day to Indigenous Peoples’ Day:
10 am-5 pm
Seven days a week

Winter & Spring*
Indigenous Peoples’ Day to Memorial Day:
*Tuesday to Sunday
10 am-5 pm

*Educational groups only
*For general visits see website for hours
*Closed the month of April for exhibit maintenance

DID YOU KNOW...
New York State Teachers can visit The Wild Center prior to their field trip for free? Just show your teacher ID at admissions.

www.wildcenter.org
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- Maps - Indoor & Outdoor  
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## FOCUS STUDENT LEARNING
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- Sample Chaperone Documents  

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### The Adirondack Youth Climate Summit

The Adirondack Youth Climate Summit is a participant-driven educational conference for youth held annually every November. Student lead teams, from across the region, gather at The Wild Center, to learn, discuss and create their own Climate Action Plans.

Too far away to attend? Tune in online during the November summit or we can help you plan your own summit. Join our “Climate Newsflash” to receive updates from the climate movement.

For more information or to sign up for our newsletter contact:

The Wild Center’s Youth Climate Program Coordinator  
youthclimate@wildcenter.org

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School and College Groups – Contact Michael Trumbower, School Programs Coordinator  
schoolprograms@wildcenter.org

Youth, Scout, and Camp Groups – Contact Shannon Surdyk, Group Programs Coordinator  
ssurdyk@wildcenter.org
WHERE TO BEGIN
The Wild Center welcomes you and your group to visit and participate in a self-guided experience or select from offerings within our Wild Classroom Program Guide. Review the program descriptions and choose the option best suited for your group.

TO SCHEDULE A VISIT
1. Go to our website at https://www.wildcenter.org/visit/plan-a-visit/school-visits/
2. Look over the Wild Classroom Program Guide
3. Click on “Registration Form”

IMPORTANT: Please submit the form at least two weeks before your visit. You will receive an email confirmation when your visit has been booked.

Requested dates, programs and times are subject to availability. Animal availability is subject to change based on seasonal availability and care of our living collection.

CHAPERONES
One chaperone is required for every ten students under the age of 18. We suggest that chaperones familiarize themselves with The Wild Center by providing them with the Sample Chaperone Documents (located at the end of this guide). Students will understand the museum better and have a better learning experience when chaperones themselves are well prepared.

VISITING THE WILD SUPPLY COMPANY MUSEUM STORE
We would love for you to visit The Wild Supply Company! Because the space is limited, we ask teachers and trip leaders to please consider the following:

• Please stagger chaperones and their groups by pre-assigning a time to visit The Wild Supply Company so there are no more than 15 students in the store at a time.

• Before your trip date, please let us know that you’d like to visit the store so that we are prepared to accommodate your group. Occasionally, The Wild Supply Company is closed and we will let you know this ahead of time.

• Please ensure that chaperones closely supervise students while in the store.
GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

- While inside the museum and on our trails, stay with a chaperone at all times for safety.

- Please walk while exploring campus inside and out. During rainy or winter weather metal components on Wild Walk may be slippery.

- Be respectful of the live animals’ personal space. It’s safer for them and us if we don’t touch them or their enclosures.

- Please be gentle with our exhibits and electronics.

- Please keep the sand in our Augmented Reality Sand Table so others may enjoy the incredible resource.

- Do your part to keep the environment clean by disposing of trash and recyclables properly. As always, “leave no trace.”

- Please use the Tent, Picnic Areas of other prearranged lunch area during your visit.

- Please ensure that students visit the Museum Store in small groups with their chaperones.
FACILITIES & ACCESSIBILITY

LUNCH
Student groups bringing bagged lunches are welcome to eat outdoors in the Tent, or at the picnic tables by the Pines Play Area, or Meadow Parking as weather permits. During winter or inclement weather, contingency plans will be made as needed by staff. Please note that the Waterside Café is unable to accommodate seating for school groups when the museum is open to the public. Prearranged lunches are possible through the Waterside Café with at least a three-week notice.

IMPORTANT: The museum may occasionally need to coordinate lunch times and locations due to multiple groups and program scheduling. If needed, staff will provide this information during the reservation process.

MUSEUM STORE AND CAFE
Both the Museum Store and Café are likely to be closed during weekday visits that are scheduled between Indigenous Peoples’ Day, in October, and Memorial Day, in May.

WEATHER
Come prepared for variable weather all year. Being prepared with appropriate clothing and other personal belongings like a hat, water bottle and sunscreen will ensure a successful trip to The Wild Center no matter what season you and your students visit.

PARKING
Buses are welcome to drop off or pick up school groups at the entrance of The Wild Center. All school buses may park at the back of the parking lot. Please let the driver know they have access to the museum during the visit at no charge.

ACCESSIBILITY
The Wild Center strives to provide everyone with the opportunity to experience and enjoy the Adirondacks. We offer a variety of services to meet the needs of our visitors, some of which include:

- Manual wheelchairs and walkers available, free of charge
- Power scooter available – please call to reserve
- Wagons/Strollers for children, free of charge
- Universal design of main building and exhibit hall
- Accessible Wild Walk and loop trail (0.2 miles) around Greenleaf Pond
- Captioning available on select theater movies, scripts available for others – please call in advance or request services upon arrival at admissions
- Sensory Packs with earmuffs and fidget items are available upon request
FIELD TRIP FUNDING

We understand that schools have limited funds to dedicate to field trips and that our rural location can limit visits for those schools that have to travel far. Below are some resources that can assist you in providing your students with a new perspective on the outdoors during a visit to The Wild Center.

WE ARE BOCES APPROVED: The New York State Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) may offer aid towards educational field trips through a regional educational support program called Co-Ser. Check out the following available programs:

- Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES - Exploratory Enrichment Co-Ser
- Jefferson-Lewis BOCES – Exploratory Enrichment Co-Ser
- The following BOCES regions can seek assistance from Exploratory Enrichment Resources:
  - Capital Region BOCES
  - Champlain Valley
  - Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery
  - Questar III BOCES
  - Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex
- Don’t see your BOCES district listed? Contact your regional administrator and ask about options for cross contracting services through FEH BOCES.

- Check with your local community foundations, Rotary or civic groups for assistance.
- Target Field Trip Grants program – Typically open annually from August to October 1st
PLANNING CHECKLIST

Plan for success by using our Field Trip Checklist to ensure you’re well prepared for your visit

FIELD TRIP CHECK LIST

At least two weeks before your field trip

☐ Prepare to register.

☐ Choose three potential field trip dates.

☐ Look over the Wild Classroom Program Guide and choose an experience.

☐ Determine the total number of students and chaperones who will be visiting.

☐ Share any relevant special needs of your group/students with Wild Center staff.

☐ Complete the online field trip registration form at bit.ly/WildClassroom

   ○ Note: the registration form must be submitted three weeks prior to your visit.

☐ Complete necessary school paperwork (i.e. field trip documents, student permission slips, etc.).

☐ Coordinate transportation.

☐ Recruit chaperones (1 to 10 ratio).

☐ Prepare yourself and your students. If possible, visit The Wild Center prior to your field trip.

   General admission to the museum is free for teachers with staff card.

At least one week before your field trip

☐ Prepare chaperones by sharing maps and our Chaperone Document.

☐ Create chaperone groups. Remember to follow the chaperone-student ratio of 1 to 10.

☐ Prepare itineraries for chaperones including times to visit the museum store and gather any necessary materials for students. Scheduled program times will be provided by The Wild Center staff.

☐ Complete any needed pre-field trip activities in the classroom.

On the day of your field trip

☐ Distribute maps and itineraries to chaperones. Highlight important meeting times and locations.

☐ Lunch – The Wild Center has bins available to store lunch bags upon arrival.
PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE:
NEW YORK STATE SCIENCE LEARNING STANDARDS, & NEXT GENERATION ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS and MATHEMATICS STANDARDS

Educational standards have shifted from just knowing to having an emphasis on doing. The Wild Center provides a forum to apply the standards in multiple literacies and is a great resource for phenomena that can be the basis for inquiry. Students have the opportunity to make a claim about science, find the evidence to back it up, and share their reasoning. A field trip can be part of in-depth, project-based learning that draws on classroom experience, independent conclusions, and the museum visit experience.

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<td>Grades 6th - 8th</td>
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www.wildcenter.org
INDOOR EXHIBIT SPACE

Experience the history and diversity of Adirondack Ecosystems, from marshes and lakes to the high peaks. Students are able to explore and immerse themselves with Adirondack Natural History.

HAUDENOSAUNEE THANKSGIVING ADDRESS
Explore The Wild Center’s newly reinterpreted living wetland exhibit through the lens of the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address.

OTTER FALLS
Charismatic river otters can be seen swimming, foraging, and playing right here at Otter Falls. This space provides the background to teach about adaptations, animal behavior, and a species’ recovery.

PLANET ADIRONDACK
Watch the Earth come to life in an amazing display that will help you see the world with new eyes. Using this technology we are able to bring global events to a local level here in the Adirondacks. Check it out at: https://sos.noaa.gov/What_is_SOS/
PLANNING YOUR VISIT

Whether you are interested in a staff-led experience or self-guided exploration, connecting a field trip experience to classroom learning provides students focus and enough time to observe and closely examine the natural world around them.

In order to meet specific learning objectives, focus your field trip on one or two relevant themes. A focused field trip supports and enhances your students’ learning and provides students with necessary background information and time to reflect, making the trip meaningful.

THERE ARE THREE MAIN PARTS TO A FOCUSED FIELD TRIP:

1. Pre-field trip activities
   completed in the classroom

2. Field trip activities
   at The Wild Center

3. Post-field trip activities
   done back in the classroom

JUNIOR NATURALIST PROGRAM

Become a naturalist! Students take a closer look at the natural world around them through this self-guided, environmental education booklet.

After completing a variety of activities that engage children across the museum and outdoor campus, each student earns a patch honoring their work.
BEFORE YOUR VISIT

A successful trip begins well before students board the bus.

GOALS

- Students have realistic expectations about what they will see and do while visiting The Wild Center.
- Students understand the goals for learning at the museum.
- Students understand how the field trip fits into classroom learning.
- Students complete activities that prepare them for learning at The Wild Center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies: Students can...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for the Field Trip</td>
<td>• Examine a museum map&lt;br&gt;• Explore The Wild Center website&lt;br&gt;• Discuss students’ prior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>visits to The Wild Center or other museums&lt;br&gt;• Communicate behavior expectations and</td>
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<td>consequences&lt;br&gt;• Create a list of what students want to discover while exploring The</td>
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<td>Wild Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare for the Field Trip</td>
<td>• Review or introduce relevant content and vocabulary&lt;br&gt;• Distribute field trip activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>sheets and review directions&lt;br&gt;• Model field trip activities/expectations</td>
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TRIP TIP:

Use a book to introduce students to something they may see or do at The Wild Center.
We recommend:
- Owl Moon – Interview a staff member about the owls that live at the museum.
- Weslandia – Visit the Pines Play Area and let students’ imaginations soar.
GOALS

• Students thoughtfully engage with the museum resources through focused activities to meet the trip’s learning objectives.

• Students build on concepts and skills learned during the pre-field trip activities.

• Students have fun learning!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies: Students can…</th>
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</table>
| **Obtain, Evaluate and Communicate Information** | • Play “I spy”  
• Work in groups to create a scavenger hunt in an exhibit space, then exchange and complete another group’s hunt  
• Watch and discuss the behaviors of an animal in its enclosure for five minutes |
| **Develop and Use Models** | • Create detailed, labeled, scientific drawings of specimens  
• Take pictures or make sketches in preparation for creating a model of an animal or habitat after the field trip |
| **Plan and Carry Out Investigations** | • Ask a question and gather evidence at the museum to create an explanation (ex. How are the teeth of carnivores and herbivores alike and different?) |
| **Practice Reading and Writing** | • Create a comic strip to illustrate what happened before, during and after an event  
• Write a detailed description of a specific specimen  
• Take notes to write a newspaper article reviewing an exhibit |

TRIP TIP:

As you plan how to empower chaperones to lead small groups around The Wild Center, consider the space and how it may take students extra time to travel from one place to another. Make sure to stress this to chaperones so students are on time to any scheduled programs.
AFTER YOUR VISIT

Encourage students to reflect on their experience at The Wild Center and synthesize learning after the trip.

GOALS

- Students reflect on their field trip experience.
- Students share what they learned at The Wild Center.
- Students discuss and investigate questions that arose during their visit.
- Students connect field trip experiences to learning at school.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Strategies: Students can...</th>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate Information</td>
<td>• Create a class book that illustrates field trip learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Edit pictures or film to create a final presentation, public service announcement, or museum advertisement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create a scientific poster to display evidence gathered about an organism or habitat at the museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and Use Models</td>
<td>• Create dioramas to represent a habitat or organism from the museum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work in groups to design a museum exhibition; students can serve as naturalists for guests or another classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Speaking and Writing</td>
<td>• Share field trip findings during a classroom discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Write a journal entry about your experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Present field trip observations and learning to another class or group of parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigate Further</td>
<td>• Investigate museum-inspired questions</td>
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<td>• Conclude experiments or investigations to learn more about what was explored at the museum</td>
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</table>
TRIP TIP:
Get involved! As you explore exhibits or participate in a program, encourage the students in your group to think about what they’re seeing and doing. Resist the temptation to supply students with answers! While exploring the exhibits, try asking your group some open-ended questions:

- What do you wonder?
- Why do you think about that?
- How do you know?
- Have you seen something like this before?
- How do you think it works?
- What do you think is happening here?
- What does this remind you of?
- What does this make you curious about?
- What did you discover?

THANK YOU!
Please explore and enjoy this special place with your students. As teachers and chaperones, you know them best. Your active involvement scaffolds and enriches their experience as they create memories that will remain with them for a lifetime.
Date: _________________

Dear Field Trip Chaperone,

Thank you for joining us on our field trip to The Wild Center! Our visit is scheduled to take place on ________________. Please meet us at ________________ at _______________. We will return to school by ________________.

During this field trip, the students will learn about _____________________________.

At The Wild Center, we will visit: __________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

While visiting these spaces, students will ____________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

You will be assigned to lead a small group of students during the visit. Please make sure students stay with you at all times and are on task. If you have questions or need help, please contact me or find a museum staff member or volunteer.

Let me know if you have any questions before the trip. Again, thank you for sharing your time with us.

Sincerely,

____________________________________________

(teacher name)

____________________________________________

(contact information)
Group Leader/Teacher: ________________________________  Contact info: ____________________________
Number of Students in Your Group: ___________________  Departure time: _________________________

**Itinerary**

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Lunch time and location: ____________________  Museum store time: __________

**Remember:**

- Stay with your group at all times.
- Please arrive a few minutes early to scheduled programs.
- Bathrooms are located down the hall to the right of the Maine Entrance.
- Be respectful of our live animals’ personal space for your safety and theirs.
- Please closely supervise students while in the museum store.
- Have a question? Ask one of the museum staff members or volunteers wearing The Wild Center shirts.