Earthkeepers

4th-5th grade
3 days in Fall + year-round classroom visits
A non-residential earth education program, Earthkeepers helps students develop a positive personal relationship with the natural world through outdoor experiences and conserving natural resources while also teaching key ecological concepts such as food chains, interrelationships, and cycling of earth resources. To become Earthkeepers, students earn four keys representing Knowledge, Experience, Yourself and Sharing.

Students begin their Earthkeepers journey by spending three consecutive school days outdoors at Emily Oaks. Emily Oaks staff continue the Earthkeepers experience throughout the school year, visiting your classroom and providing materials to students.

Activities “Munchline Monitors” and “Connection Inspection” are included in the complete program. Typically only one class can be scheduled at a time. A detailed program brochure is available upon request.

Bilingual Classrooms
Please advise our staff how we can accommodate your bilingual students and families. Many of our activities can currently feature vocabulary words in Spanish.

Apply for a Grant to Visit for Free!
Schools may apply annually for the Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant, which is offered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to completely cover the cost of field trips to native Illinois habitats. Download the application at: www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/grants.aspx

Correspondence:
CSchaeffer@skokieparks.org.

Enhance Your Curriculum

Curriculum Standards
Each of our activities for school groups is aligned with the science curricula of local schools and meets at least one of the Illinois State Standards in Science/Common Core Standards.

Children and Nature Movement
Various studies show that children benefit physically, mentally and emotionally from spending time outdoors. Place-based education also enhances classroom learning. Emily Oaks is a valuable local resource for children to play and learn in the natural world.

Plan Your Visit

Scheduling
Reservations are required for all groups. Please make reservations as early as possible, but no later than one week in advance of the desired activity date. To schedule an activity, call Emily Oaks Nature Center at (847) 674-1500, ext. 2500. For more information, e-mail School Program Coordinator Cassie Schaeffer at CSchaeffer@skokieparks.org.

Group Size & Fees
Group size is limited to 30 participants per activity. Minimum fees apply to groups of 10 students or less. Payment is due at the time of your visit.

In the Event of Rain...
Please note that when on-site activities take place outdoors, no alternative indoor activities are available in the event of rain or inclement weather. We will do our best to reschedule your visit should you need to cancel due to weather.

Lunch
Groups may bring lunches and eat at tables located in the playground, though picnicking is not permitted within the Nature Center.

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About Emily Oaks
Nature Center

Philosophy of Earth Education
Our educational programs follow the principles of Earth Education, which is the process of helping people live more joyously and harmoniously with the natural world. Our dynamic staff create engaging outdoor learning adventures that motivate students to actively pursue these outcomes:

- Understanding key ecological concepts
- Developing positive feelings for the natural world
- Promoting lifestyles that are more in harmony with the earth and its life

Native Illinois Habitats & Species
Emily Oaks Nature Center is a natural oasis in a suburban setting, featuring pond, prairie, and woodland habitats. Native plant and animal species thrive here, including a variety of wildflowers, grasses, trees, reptiles, mammals, amphibians, birds, and fish.

Find the Right Activity
for Your Class

-bold words highlight science curriculum connections-

Enhance your science curriculum with our dynamic, hands-on outdoor experiences!
Find the Right Activity for Your Class

Bold words highlight science curriculum connections.

Mousewalk
Preschool (ages 3-4) ¾ hour
Fall, Winter, Spring
Explore and play outdoors, after being transformed into a mouse! We will be busy making a mouse house, finding mouse food and hiding from foxes—just like the real animals living in the woodland. Two classes can be scheduled at the same time.

Time for Wonder
Preschool-Kindergarten 1 hour
Fall, Spring
When the clock sounds, it is time to touch, see, hear or smell the wonders in the woodland. Guided by an Emily Oaks Timekeeper, you will use special tools in four fun activities designed to develop sensory awareness of the natural world. Two classes can be scheduled at the same time.

Welcome to the Woodland
Preschool-Kindergarten 1 hour
Fall, Spring
Get to know this special habitat by visiting with our woodland puppet friends! Grasshopper, Tree, Squirrel and Wildflower are waiting to make your acquaintance and will help you explore their exciting home, the woodland. Classes can be scheduled at 30-minute intervals.

That’s a Living Thing!
Kindergarten-1st grade 1½ hours
Fall, Spring
Discover the characteristics and needs of living things. Prepare a plate with an animal’s favorite foods, listen to a “Breath-O-Meter,” and chart plant and animal life cycles. Then sing the “All Living Things” song as we explore the woodland in search of living plants and animals. Classes can be scheduled at 30-minute intervals.

Groundhog’s Winter Tale
Kindergarten-2nd grade 1½ hours
Winter
Visit a 5-foot-tall, talking groundhog to hear Groundhog’s life story, then head outdoors to explore the woodland in winter. Look for plants under the snow, visit Groundhog’s burrow, and use the sunshine to make your own predictions about the coming of spring. Classes can be scheduled at 30-minute intervals.

Fledge’s Springtime Story
1st-2nd grade 1½ hours
Spring
Explore along with the life-cycle adventure of Fledge, a baby Red-winged Blackbird who lives in the marsh habitat. Interactive games illustrate how birds claim a territory, find a mate, build a nest, and care for their young. Classes can be scheduled at 30-minute intervals.

Earthwalk
1st-2nd grade 1 hour
Fall, Winter, Spring
Reawaken your senses on an Earthwalk in the woodland! Use Rainbow Chips to see incredible colors outdoors, share Prickly and Tickly touches with a friend, and Scratch ’n Smell the wonderful smells outdoors, among other activities. Two classes can be scheduled at the same time.

Meet Wind & Thundercloud
1st-2nd grade ¾ hour
Fall, Winter, Spring
Wind and Thundercloud will share their roles in the amazing world of weather and air! Find out how wind and thunderstorms are formed through interactive science demonstrations and a story about the water cycle. Then learn how to be safe during threatening weather conditions. This activity takes place indoors.

Munchline Monitors
3rd-4th grade 1¾ hours
Fall, Spring
Investigate food chains at Mama Nature’s Munch Room! Here you will train to become a “Munchline Monitor,” exploring the woodland for evidence of sun, plant and animal munchers, and assembling food chains found in Munch Bags. Only one class can be scheduled at the same time.

Sun, Seeds & Salads
1st-2nd grade 1½ hours
Fall, Spring
Explore the wonders of plants! Learn about the parts of a plant, and find out what plants need to live and grow. Eat a plant snack, give special gifts to Grandma and Grandpa Tree in the woodland, and plant your own vegetable seeds to watch the plant life cycle at home! Classes can be scheduled at 30-minute intervals.

Keys to Life
3rd grade 1½ hours
Fall, Spring
Discover the four key elements of an ecosystem that make plant and animal life possible. See a student-sized drop of water, participate in the Great Air Exchange, discover the benefits of sun energy, and enjoy a soil banquet as you learn about the Keys to Life! Then unlock the Life Box to find out what’s inside. Two classes can be scheduled at the same time.

Connection Inspection
4th-5th grade 1½ hours
Fall, Spring
Lock yourself into the intricate web of life! Take on the role of a native Illinois plant or animal, and connect to your needs for energy, soil, air and water in the ecosystem. Learn to recognize the countless interrelationships between living things and their environment. Only one class can be scheduled at a time.

Solarville
5th-6th grade 1½ hours
Fall, Spring
Journey from the sun to the earth, where you’ll have lunch in Solarville. While ordering your pizzas, you will discover the energy involved in food chains, food production and transportation, including solar energy and fossil fuels. Because sunlight energy is not taken for granted in Solarville, you must use energy resources wisely to pay for the true costs of your pizza! There is an additional fee for pizza lunch, if eaten on-site. Only one class can be scheduled at a time.

Call today to schedule your visit! (847) 674-1500, ext. 2500