

Huron County Wilderness Arboretum

Life Cycles

Lesson Plan

Level: 2nd – 3rd Grade

Developed by Bob Tallman with funding support, in part from the Huron County Nature Center

Program Description: Students will visit two or more habitats at the Huron County Wilderness Arboretum. Students will explore the habitats looking for examples of plant and animal life cycles.

MEAP Objectives:

SCI III.2.3: Describe life cycles of familiar organisms.

SCI III. 2 4: Compare and contrast food, energy, and environmental needs of selected organisms.

SCI III 2. 5: Explain the functions of selected seed plant parts.

Pre-Visit Suggestions:

1. Be sure that every student is dressed for the weather conditions. Layers work best. Tell them to wear shoes that can get muddy.
2. Remind the students to take only memories, leave only footprints.
3. Some things may be collected for a classroom display at the discretion of the leader.

Visit:

Students will be shown parts of life cycles and through discussion develop the concept of a life cycle in plants and animals.

For example:

- **Spring:** tent caterpillars (eggs, egg cases, tents, moths)
 - Gypsy moth caterpillars
 - Amphibians (eggs, tadpoles, adult frogs, toads or salamanders)
 - Adult plants, flower parts, young plant seedlings
 - Nest with bird eggs, adult birds
 - Toadstools and mushrooms, spores
- **Summer:** Butterfly/moth eggs, cocoons, larvae, adults

- Wolf spiders carrying egg cases
 - Plant seed pods, adult plants
 - Moss fruiting bodies, mature moss
 - Young birds and adults
 - Ferns with sori
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- **Fall:** Different seeds (look at dispersal), adult plants
 - Difference between annuals, biennials, and perennials
 - Mullen – adult, first year plants, seed on dying plants
 - Fruit with seeds, adult plants
 - **Winter:** Witch Hazel flowers or seeds on the snow
 - Hawks and owls build nests
 - Squirrels are nesting
 - **Any season:** pine cone with seeds, small pine trees, male and female flowers

Post-Visit Suggestions:

- Have each student draw a picture of one of the life cycles observed labeling the parts. Students may include the parts they did not observe.
- Have students write thank-you notes including a description of one of the life cycles.