

## **AMAZING ANIMALS**

**TIME: 2.5 HRS**

**DESCRIPTION:** This program highlights the lives of the amazing animals found at Ojibway Park. Their needs and characteristics are discovered as the students are guided through Ojibway's forest, pond and prairie communities. An investigative hike, animal study and bird feeder watch are some of the activities designed to help the students develop a clear understanding of how animals live in their natural environment.

### **PLANT AND ANIMAL NEEDS DISCUSSION**

Through an interactive presentation, the naturalist reviews the basic needs of Ojibway's plants and animals. Topics include seasonal food sources, shelter from predators, nesting areas and nesting materials, shelter for winter survival, and water availability. Animal behaviour and life stages are also discussed. Students are encouraged to think about what signs might tell them which animals could be in the area.

**BREAK** – A short break is scheduled for the students to use the washrooms and have a small snack and drink.

### **AMAZING ANIMALS SAFARI**

The naturalist leads the students on an investigative hike through Ojibway Park to discover signs of wildlife including tracks, nests, cocoons, galls, chewings, rubbings, and scat. Students are encouraged to keep their eyes and ears open for any interesting natural features as they explore woodland, pond and prairie habitats.

Opportunities to see deer, chipmunks, raccoons, squirrels, birds, turtles, snakes, fish, dragonflies, caterpillars, spiders, and many more insects, are part of this hike. Life stages are discussed as animals are discovered.

### **VISITING BAT HOUSES**

The naturalist brings the group to the man-made bat houses located next to the Nature Centre. Students will learn why we have erected bat houses and why we like to have bats living nearby.

### **BIRD FEEDER WATCH**

While inspecting the life in the wildlife feeding area, the naturalist helps the students discover the needs of animals and how they are met in this particular area.

### **VIEWING NATURE CENTRE EXHIBITS**

A naturalist roams amongst the students, answering their questions as they view the Nature Centre's live animal displays and natural history exhibits. Students are encouraged to view and touch a variety of natural objects in the discovery centre.

*Please note that the Nature Centre has a Nature Shop with bird seed, feeders, books and children's items for sale.*

**Teachers may choose one of the following to complete their Ojibway field study:**

**A. STUMP STUDY**

Students look under a stump or log to discover the wide variety of creatures living there. The role of decomposers is explained and students draw some of the insects they find. This activity will allow students to realize the importance of decomposers as an integral part of an ecosystem in the breakdown of biomass into new soil.

**B. HANDS-ON SNAKE TALK**

The students are introduced to one of the centre's resident snakes. The naturalist discusses characteristics, senses and habits of snakes and explains the concept of endangered, vulnerable and extinct species. Each child is given the opportunity to pet one of the Nature Centre's resident snakes.

**C. SCAVENGER HUNT**

While hiking with the naturalist, students look for wildlife photos throughout the park and check off items on their scavenger hunt checklist.