



FIELD TRIPS

AT CONESTEE NATURE PRESERVE



WHAT IS CNP?

CNP is an accessible oasis in the middle of Greenville County. We offer 650 acres of protected greenspace with 14 miles of trails through forests and wetlands. Through responsible stewardship of our unique ecological resources, we provide inclusive opportunities for meaningful connection, discovery, and learning in nature.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe in the power of exploration and inquiry. Here in the Preserve we invite all to be scientists, to ask questions, and to uncover a world apart. Let our children be re-acquainted to woods and wetlands as we embrace place based learning. Our immersive field trips will invigorate students to the possibilities of science beyond the classroom.

Full day field trips are built with effective pedagogy in mind. Our curriculum developers have curated lessons that allow for the 5 step learning cycle: invitation, exploration, concept invention, application, and reflection. These positive, direct experiences in nature promote competence and empathy. Students will be invited to investigate, and through hands-on activities, they will develop and apply their own findings for reflection.

Conestee Nature Preserve is a private non-profit organization working to provide access to nature for everyone. Through generous donations and grants we are able to provide FREE field trips to public school students. To learn more about the Preserve and our education programs please visit www.conesteepereserve.org



BOOKING YOUR FIELD TRIP

Conestee Nature Preserve offers field trips year round to public, private, homeschool, and scout groups. Field Trip requests begin in January for the following school year and are accepted year round. We recommend booking 6 months in advance to get your preferred dates.

Group Requirements and Restrictions

- A minimum of 10 students is required to book a field trip. There must be at least 2 adults per class.
- We can book up to 75 students Monday-Wednesday and 100 students on Thursday-Friday.



REQUESTING A FIELD TRIP

1. Read through the field trip descriptions below. If you don't see one that fits your needs please contact us. We are happy to create custom field trips.
2. Decide how many days you will need to book & pick your top 3 date ranges.
3. Fill out the [field trip request form](#).
4. CNP staff will email you to confirm dates. Then you will receive a confirmation email that contains the specific information for your trip. Please save the email for future reference.
5. Respond to the confirmation email with a personal phone number to finalize the reservation.
6. Submit deposit. The deposit must be received within 2 weeks of the reservation confirmation email or you will lose your dates.
7. Secure transportation for the dates of the field trip.
8. Prep students & parents for the day by making sure they wear appropriate clothing & bring a sack lunch.



Scan here to access the field trip request form.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

PreK

Nature's Alphabet

Help your students develop print awareness and letter-sound knowledge through this scavenger hunt exploration, looking for items in nature to match the letters of the alphabet!

Guided Nature Hike

Every day brings new adventures in the Preserve! We'll explore wonders specific to the season and let kids get hands-on and close up with fun animal artifacts. Duration is flexible.

A is for Ants...and Other Insects

Did you know that there are more insects than humans on Earth!? Ants and other insects are all around us, let's learn about them together.

B is for Birds

Are you a 'night owl' or maybe you're an 'early bird'? Conestee has over 200 different birds that love to visit us throughout the year. Let's find out what makes a bird a bird!

C is for Colorful

You'll find every color in the animals and plants of Conestee Nature Preserve. Do you think they want to blend in or stand out? Let's find out as we explore the preserve together.

K5

Who Lives Here?

Standards: K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, K-LS1-1

Students will sharpen their observation skills and identify the best habitat for the animals that call the Preserve home.

Afterwards, students will engage in games that explore the importance of ecosystem resources and animal adaptations to uncover the secrets of survival.

1st

Plant and Animal Adaptations

Standards: 1-LS3-1, LS1.D, 1-LS3-1

Come explore the woods and wetlands to discover ways that plants and animals utilize adaptations to survive in their environment. We will model beaver adaptations through dress-up.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

2nd

Seed Sleuths

Standards: 2-LS2-2, LS2.A

Students will review plant growth through movement and explore the forest in search of different adaptations that help plants survive. They will also investigate different types of seed dispersal methods that plants have evolved to help increase the survival rate of their offspring.

Habitat Hunt

Standards: 2-LS4-1, LS2.A

Students will compare the animals and plants found in the different levels of a forest habitat. They will explore by participating in a log lab, pretending to be deer in the understory, and try out binoculars to study the canopy.

A River Runs Through Greenville

Standards: 2-ESS2-1, 2-ESS2-2, 2-ESS2-3, 2-ESS3-1

Students will discover similarities and differences of freshwater systems through interactive experiments and observations of the Reedy River and Lake Conestee.

3rd

Life Cycles

Standards: 3-LS1-1, LS1.B

Students will search the water and the land for the animals and plants out and about that time of year. Through exploration, games, and discussion we will uncover what's next in their journey.

Survival of the Fittest

Standards: (3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 3-LS4-4)

How do organisms deal with flooding? Where do animals go when it's hot or cold? We will explore these and many other questions about how organisms survive in their environment during this exploration.

4th

Mastering Migration

Standards: 4-LS1.A, 4-LS1.D

Why do some birds migrate? Where do they go? How do they find their way? We'll find these answers and more by thinking like broad-winged hawks! We'll use compasses to navigate on our journey, discovering everything a bird needs to master migration.





PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

5th

Need Food, Will Travel

Standards: 5-PS3-1, PS3.D, LS1.C, 5-LS1-1, 5-LS2-1, LS2.A, LS2.B
Students will use their observation skills to investigate where different organisms find energy to fuel their bodies and the part all organisms play in maintaining a healthy ecosystem.

Our River, Our Problem

Standards: 5-ESS3-1, ESS3.C
Students will learn the history of the Reedy River by exploring the landscapes at Conestee Nature Preserve. Then, they will perform visual stream surveys, chemical tests and collect aquatic invertebrates to determine the water quality of the Reedy River. Limited to 50 students per day.

7th

Ecology Excursion

Science Standards: 7-LS2-1, 7-LS2-2, 7-LS2-3, 7-LS2-5
Students visit a terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem to compare sources of energy and the flow of energy through the environment. They will use dip nets to search for organisms in the aquatic environment and sweep nets in the terrestrial. Limiting factors and predator/prey interactions will be explored through games.

High School

Water Quality

Standards: B-LS2-7, B-LS4-6
Students perform visual stream surveys, chemical tests and collect aquatic invertebrates to determine the water quality of the Reedy River. Limited to 50 students per day.

Not My Dam Problem

Standards: B-LS2-7, B-LS4-6, E-ESS3-1, E-ESS3-4
Conestee Nature Preserve's history is a story of natural landform (floodplain) leading to land use (dam/industry/farming) and human impacts on the land and water. Students will discover these connections and more through three stations: History/Human Impact; Soil/Land; river morphology/impact of dams. Limited to 30 students per day.

PLANNING YOUR DAY

Transportation

Please secure transportation as far in advance as possible. Be sure to go over the time frame with the bus driver. If the discussed time needs to be altered to better accommodate the bus schedule please let us know.

Chaperone Selection

We require at least 2 chaperones per teaching group for all groups. For pre-k, K5, and 1st grade we suggest bringing 1 adult for every 5 students. For all other grade levels, the 2 required adults (1 teacher plus 1 chaperone) is sufficient.

Waivers

You will find an adult and student waiver in the field trip confirmation email. Please print and get them signed by every student and adult. You can bring the paper copies with you and turn them into us during orientation.

Meetup Locations

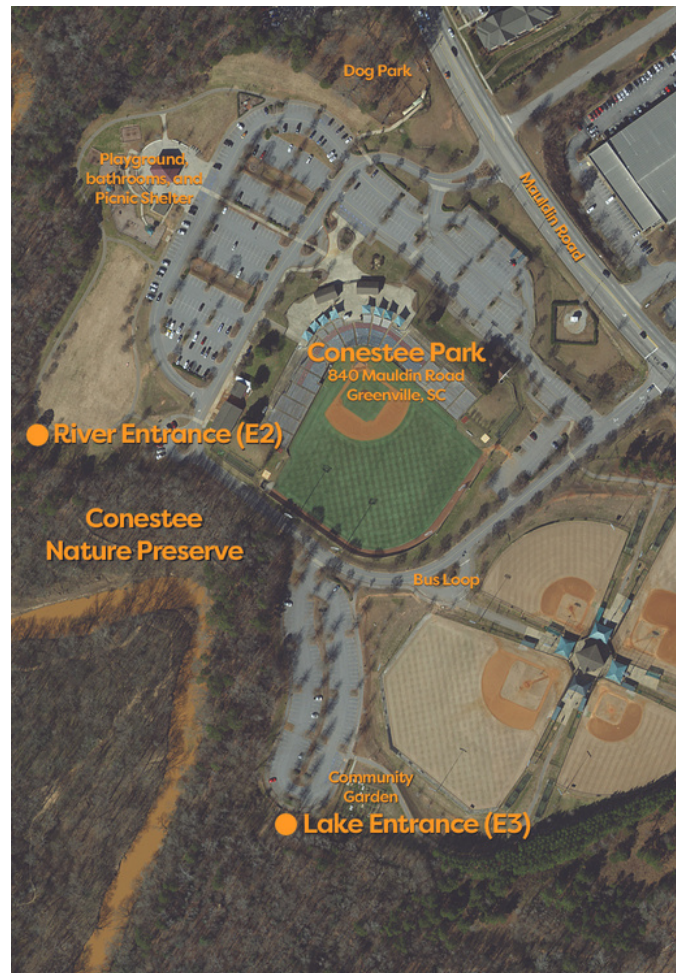
We have several different locations around the Preserve that we use for our field trips. Each of them have a different address and/or meetup spot. DO NOT rely on searching for the Preserve on your GPS. Please enter the address given to ensure that you show up at the correct location.

• Locations at 840 Mauldin Rd. (See Map)

- The River Entrance (E2) - this entrance is located next to the large recreation field by the playground and picnic shelter. The buses can drop the students off at the picnic shelter.
- The Lake Entrance (E3) - this entrance is located closest to the little league baseball fields. The best way to find this entrance is to enter Conestee Park at the traffic light at the intersection of Mauldin Rd. and Ridge Rd. There is a small turnaround on your left near the baseball field house. Buses should turn into the turnaround to drop students off. Caravans can go a little further down the road and take the next left into the parking area.

• Location at 601 Fork Shoals Rd. (not shown on map)

- The Meadow Entrance (W2) - this entrance is a small gravel parking area next to a small stone house. There is a short driveway with a yellow farm gate located just south of the traffic light at Fork Shoals Rd. and White Horse Rd. Ext. We will post 'Event Parking' signs in the parking area to keep the parking area clear for your field trip.



PLANNING YOUR DAY

What to Bring/Not Bring

Our field trips take place entirely outside, even lunch! Most classes will walk between 1 - 1.5 miles depending on the age group and class. Please be sure to prep your students and their parents ahead of time so that everyone shows up in appropriate clothing and shoes.

- ✓ **Dress for the weather**
- ✓ **Proper footwear**
- ✓ **Sun protection**
- ✓ **Bug Repellent**
- ✓ **Water**
- ✓ **Lunch**
- ✓ **Trash bags**
- ✓ **First Aid Kit**
- ✓ **Medications and Epipens**
- ✓ **Change of clothes (optional)**

- ✗ **Dogs and Pets**
- ✗ **Weapons**
- ✗ **Negative responses to wildlife**
- ✗ **Strollers**
- ✗ **Siblings not involved in the program**
- ✗ **Distracting devices**

Lunch

Please make sure everyone has a sack lunch for the field trip. There are local restaurants that will deliver boxed lunches as well. If you would like a list of vendors please let us know.

Meeting at The River Entrance?

We will eat at the large shelter at the county park. This shelter is managed by Greenville County Park and Recreation so we can not guarantee use of this shelter. If the shelter is reserved by the county then we may have to make adjustments to where we eat. The lunches can stay on the bus or in cars until lunch time. There are trash cans at this entrance that can be used by our groups.

Meeting at The Lake or Meadow Entrance?

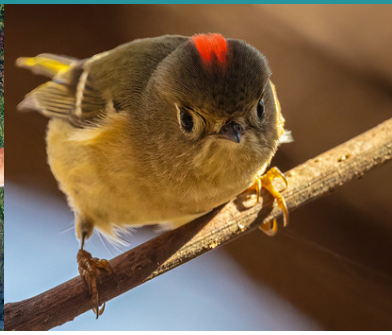
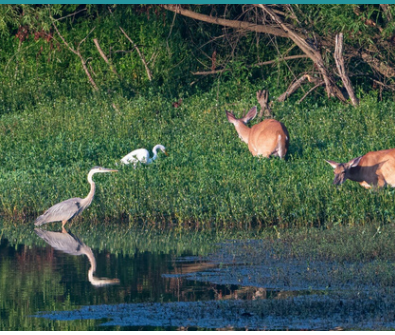
The lunches will need to be carried with you for a little while and you will need to bring trash bags to carry out your trash. Not all classes will end up going straight to the picnic area where lunches can be unloaded. We suggest that you bring rolling coolers and wagons to make it easier for adults to get the lunches to the picnic area. Some schools choose to make the students carry their own lunches which is fine. Just keep in mind that they may be asked to carry lunches for one of the other classes. This is determined by the number of classes on site that day and the routes chosen by CNP staff.

Weather Plan

Our field trips take place entirely outside so please make sure you are keeping an eye on the forecast to properly prepare your students. The forecast can change drastically overnight so we don't cancel field trips until the morning of the trip. We understand this can be a major inconvenience but more often than not, we are able to hold our field trips despite what was posted in the forecast the day before. If you decide to cancel prior to the morning of the field trip you will be charged the cancellation fee. If we cancel the field trip due to weather we will work with you to reschedule for a later date.

Playground Use

There is a playground at the County park by the River Entrance to the Preserve. Our preference is for you to save playground time to the end of the field trip. If this is something you think your group wants to do please make sure you include that extra time in your transportation request.



FEES

Public Schools

FREE

Private Schools

- Full day: \$10/students
- Two-hour: \$8/student.
- You can bring 1 chaperone for every 5 students for free. Any additional adults are asked to pay the student rate.

Homeschool Groups

- Full day: \$10/student, \$5/adult & siblings
- Two-hour: \$8/student, \$4/adult
- Children 2 & under are free.
- We will create a private event page for your group so that each family can register for the field trip. Everyone attending must be registered 2 weeks prior to the field trip.

Cancellation Policy

If a cancellation is initiated within 30 days of the planned trip by any party other than the Preserve a cancellation fee will apply. Cancellations made outside of the 30 day window will not be charged.

Cancellation Fee

A fee of \$50 per class is due for all cancellations within 30 days of the scheduled event. The school or field trip organizer will be invoiced.



EXPECTATIONS

Students

1. Be engaged! Ask questions! Explore!
2. The instructor is always the line leader. They are the ones that know where to go and what to look for to keep everyone safe.
3. Please stay on the trail unless your instructor tells you otherwise.
4. Don't touch or pick up anything, including dogs, without permission.
5. Never wander away from the group.
6. Have fun and enjoy a chance to immerse yourself in nature!

Teachers and Chaperones

1. You know your students the best, so please help us maintain group control and safety during the program.
2. We will ask the students a lot of questions. Please refrain from answering for the students and allow them adequate time to process the information for themselves.
3. Cell phones should only be used for taking pictures, checking the time, or for emergencies.
4. We want children to be able to develop their own opinions towards nature so please refrain from expressing negative attitudes towards wildlife and nature during the trip.
5. Please make sure students stay behind the instructor and on the trail at all times.
6. Do not let students touch or pick up anything, including dogs, unless given permission.
7. During lunch please supervise the children, correct any unsafe behavior, and make sure they clean up after themselves, thank you!

Park vs. Preserve

When visiting the Preserve for a field trip, what are the differences between the county park and the non-profit preserve?



Park

Man Made
Parks include man made spaces and lawns, like a playground or baseball field

Get loud
Parks allow for different activities that encourage people to move, cheer, and play!

Store Bought
Landscaping the parks are mostly ornamental plantings that are bought from landscaper supply stores.

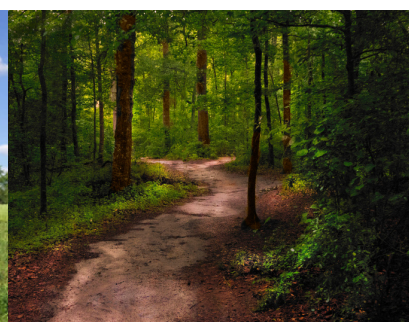


Preserve

Natural
Preserves are natural spaces with limited human activity. Guests stay on the boardwalks and trails.

Move Quietly
Preserves encourage you to move quietly, through them, so that we don't disturb the wildlife.

Home Grown
All the plants in the Preserve are those that occur naturally. These were planted by nature.



DAY OF YOUR VISIT

Safety in the Preserve

Safety in the Preserve is the highest priority when visiting Conestee Nature Preserve.

Wildlife in the Preserve

An abundant population of flora and fauna calls the Preserve home. When encountering wildlife, it is important to look and not touch. Most wildlife encountered on the trails are harmless, but still nervous around humans. However, some wildlife can present a threat if guests do not respect their space. Here are some common risks out on the trail, but it is important to appreciate all wild animals from a distance and to only touch plants that you are familiar with.

Snakes:

When encountering a snake, especially a potentially venomous snake, simply let it pass from a distance, or you may calmly go the other way. Never try to move a snake, even with a stick, and never taunt or try to harm a snake by throwing something at them.



Yellow Jackets:

On warm days, yellow jackets and other stinging insects can be prominent on the trails, especially around fragrant blooms, left behind snacks and drinks, and in leaf litter. Yellow jackets are not typically aggressive, unless provoked. The best thing to do around yellow jackets is to remain calm, leave the area, or gently blow on them to mimic the wind.



Poison Ivy:

Poison ivy is a naturally occurring plant that has three leaves and often is found climbing up a tree with a hairy looking vine. When in doubt, do not touch plants that are unfamiliar to you.



WHY CNP?

"We really can't thank you enough for giving this experience to our students. They have come back so excited about science and nature and exploration. It has been so refreshing and encouraging. Our classes came back talking about it non-stop! See you next year!"

*3rd Grade Teacher
Cannons Elementary, Spartanburg, SC*

Exploring the trails

Programs will include both guided hikes and exploratory time for students to engage with the setting. When traversing the trails, be aware of uneven surfaces and shifting ground. If walking, pick up your feet, instead of shuffling, to reduce the risk of tripping. If stopping to investigate, look underfoot to make sure you have not stepped on a fire ant mound. Don't run ahead without knowing where to go, and stay behind the leader.

Dogs on the trail

Many guests bring dogs on the trails. These are to remain leashed for the duration of their visit. If your program encounters a dog on a leash, step to the side and let the owner and dog pass without petting the dog. Even if the dog seems sweet, we cannot know how dogs will react to large groups. If your program encounters a dog off leash, or without an owner, your program guide will contact the appropriate team to assist. Never try to catch a loose dog.



SAMPLE ITINERARIES

Full Program

- 9:20-Unload buses
- 9:30-9:45 Program Orientation, hike to starting location
- 9:45-11:15 Lesson: part 1 (Typically include hikes, hands-on activities and experimentation, exploratory elements)
- 11:15-12:00 lunch and bathroom break
- 12:00-1:15 Lesson part 2 (Typically include hikes, hands-on activities and experimentation, exploratory elements)
- 1:15-1:30 Closing reflections, hike out
- 1:30 Load up busses and head back to school

Half Program

- 9:30 Unload buses
- 9:30-9:45 Program Orientation, hike to starting location
- 9:45-11:15 Lesson (Typically include hikes, hands-on activities and experimentation, exploratory elements)
- 11:15-11:30 Closing reflections, hike out
- 11:30 Load busses and head back to school

FAQS

Are there restrooms?

There are restrooms located by the pavilion, nearest the River Entrance and the other is located at the concession stand by the baseball fields and the Lake Entrance. We have 2 Port-a-Johns located at the Meadow Entrance. One is in the parking lot located to the left of the trailhead. The second Port-a-John is located in the meadow near the pathway to Shortleaf Shelter, where we typically break for lunch.

What if it rains or is too cold?

We will let you know if a class needs to be canceled or modified based on the weather. You will receive a phone call the morning of the class to alert you on the status of your class. You can cancel your class prior to this but you will lose your deposit. We save dates at the end of the season to reschedule groups as needed.

Will we encounter wildlife?

A nature preserve is home to a variety of species. We never know what we will see as each season provides a unique look into their environment. We have a better opportunity to see animals if we are staying quiet and keeping our voices down. An animal we have the best chance of seeing (and hearing) at any time are birds (we are home to over 220+ species of birds).

How many chaperones do I need?

1:5 for prek-1st; for 2nd and up we recommend 2 adults per class.

Are there indoor facilities?

No, there are currently no indoor facilities at our preserve. We have an open air shelter called Shortleaf Shelter in Henderson Meadow.

What if I need to cancel or reschedule?

Please give us ample time so we can reschedule your class, keeping in mind, we might not be able to fit you in for another date. If a cancellation is initiated within 30 days of the planned trip by any party other than the Preserve a fee may apply.

SELF-GUIDED TRIPS

Looking to explore the preserve with a group? No problem! However, we do ask that you contact us to let us know. Our registered programs will be given priority to hiking trails and lesson areas. We can also let you know if another large group or event is happening in the same location. If you are planning a picnic, party, or meeting, please ask us about our rentals.

Self-Guided Tour

- 9:30 Arrive at the Preserve through the county park
- 9:30-11:30 Hike the trails
- 11:30-12:15 Lunch and play on the county park playground
- 12:15-1:30 Hike the trails
- 1:30 Load up buses and head back to school

Recommended Hikes from River or Lake Entrances

- Yellow Route: about 2.2 miles
- Red Route: about 1 mile
- Green Route: about 1.5 miles
- Purple Route: about 1.1 (enter at E2 and exit E3)

Our mobile is a great resource for planning hikes and learning while in the Preserve.



OTHER OFFERINGS

Nature Discovery Club

In these twice-monthly sessions, child(ren) will discover the Preserve as young naturalists, letting their curiosity guide their hands-on exploration. Options are available for pre-k-middle school. See the events page on our website for more information.

Homeschool Days

We offer 3 homeschool days in the fall and spring just for homeschool students. These are drop off only programs for elementary ages. Check the events page on our website for more information.

Community Programs

Conestee Nature Preserve is committed to providing the community with opportunities for education, enrichment, and outright fun! Programs vary in theme and length. Visit our website for current offerings. From night hikes, to creative writing, and history talks, there is something for everyone!



conestee
NATURE PRESERVE

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