

IDNR December 2015

1. Kids for Conservation® for December: *Illinois Furbearers*

Kids for Conservation® is great for schools, youth groups and families to participate in. The December topic is *Illinois Furbearers*. Send us photos of furbearers or their signs (tracks, beaver-gnawed tree, beaver lodge, muskrat lodge, etc.) in Illinois (please don't include people in the photos), the county where you saw them and stories/poems/artwork about furbearers, and we'll post your entries on our Web page. All submissions must be the products of Illinois youth (younger than age 18).

Visit <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/outreach/kidsconservation/Pages/default.aspx> for details. The January topic is *Hawks of Illinois*.

2. *Earth Day in the Parks* 2016

Registration opens on January 1, 2016, for *Earth Day in the Parks* events to be held in April and May 2016. This natural-resources stewardship program allows students to perform wildlife habitat improvement projects at participating Illinois state parks. You'll find the details, application form and the list of participating state parks at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/EDITPinstruct.aspx>.

3. *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant*

The *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant* can provide funds for taking your students on a field trip to study Illinois' natural resources. Teachers in Illinois schools and home-schooling educators in Illinois may apply. Funds are to be used to pay for transportation and/or substitute teachers. See the details, application form, Frequently Asked Questions and instructional video podcasts at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/grants.aspx>.

4. Visit the Revised IDNR Division of Education Web Site!

The IDNR Division of Education's Web page has been revised and is now available at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/default.aspx>. You'll find a new look as well as new features to make the information more easily accessible. Updates are being made regularly so visit the site often. Change your bookmarks to reflect the new Web address!

5. New Learning Standards Interactive Web Page

Looking for IDNR lessons to help you meet the Next Generation Science Standards or Illinois Early Learning Standards? Now you can easily find them with the new interactive Learning Standards Web page from the IDNR Division of Education at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/Learning-Standards.aspx>. You can search by grade level, topic, learning standard and/or subject area. Try it today!

6. Video Podcasts

The Wild Turkey and *Illinois Furbearers* are the newest video podcasts available from the IDNR Division of Education. You can access them and all of the other educational video podcasts at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/podcasts.aspx> or through YouTube.

7. Resources Trunks and Packs are Great Teaching Tools

Have you reserved any resources trunks or packs from the IDNR for your teaching, scout troop activities or other youth programs? The topics include: amphibians and reptiles; aquatics; birds; fossils; state symbols; insects/spiders; invasive species; mammals; Native Americans; prairies; and trees. The *Field Trip Pack* is designed for exploring nature with young children. Let the IDNR's resources trunks and packs provide you with the teaching tools that you need. The trunks and packs are available at lending locations statewide.

Visit <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/ItemsForLoan.aspx> for links to all of the resources trunks and

packs. Several lending locations have recently been added or updated, so be sure to check the list for changes in your area.

8. ENTICE Professional Development Schedule

Registration for all ENTICE educator workshops scheduled during January 1 through June 30, 2016, is suspended pending the implementation of an approved state budget for fiscal year 2016. Registration remains open for those workshops scheduled in the State of Illinois' 2017 fiscal year. Updates will be posted on the IDNR Division of Education's Web page and list server and on the ENTICE registration Web site at <https://www.enticeworkshops.com>.

9. Illinois Biodiversity Basics

The *Illinois Biodiversity Basics* unit of 12 lessons for grades six through eight has been revised! You can download the entire unit or individual lessons at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/BioBasics.aspx>. All lessons have been correlated to Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core Standards. *Illinois Biodiversity Basics*, adapted from World Wildlife Fund's *Windows on the Wild: Biodiversity Basics*, is designed to provide ideas for integrating biodiversity into your teaching. The Illinois-specific activities are meant to introduce the topic of biodiversity and take students through levels of increasing complexity. The activities may be completed in any order and may be used singly or in units. The Appendices contain correlations, planning assistance, vocabulary, the conceptual framework and other resources. Start using these lessons now! The revised version of the *Biodiversity of Illinois Video: Supplemental Activities* lesson guide has also been posted to this Web site. Use these activities to help you assess students' understanding of the topics in the *Biodiversity of Illinois* video.

10. Central Illinois Educators: Fishing and Aquatic Ecology Programs Now Available from the IDNR

Educators, if you teach in any of the following counties, the IDNR can help you bring hands-on aquatic education to your students. These programs work to develop positive attitudes towards natural resources, conservation and fishing in young people. Lessons align with the state and national learning standards and are adapted to all grade levels. For more information or to schedule a program, contact Van Grissom at [217-720-3501](tel:217-720-3501) or van.grissom@illinois.gov.

Adams, Brown, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, De Witt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Hancock, Iroquois, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Mason, McLean, Menard, Morgan, Moultrie, Piatt, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Vermillion

11. IDNR Publications

Do you need Illinois-specific, scientifically based resources to support your lessons? Then visit the IDNR Publications Order Form at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/Publications>. You'll find activity books, posters and many other publications available to download and/or order. Many of the publications have a Spanish-language version, too.

12. Wild Illinois History Leads Students on a Journey to Learn About History and Wildlife Conservation

The IDNR is offering a "virtual" trip for late-elementary schoolteachers, students and their parents. With a few mouse clicks, students can journey back to the earliest days of the Illinois Territory when voyageurs and Native Americans hunted the prairies, forests and rivers. Wild Illinois History helps students in grades three through five focus on early French exploration, along with river and settlement geography. Students can learn how wildlife helped Native Americans and early settlers survive. They also can see how wildlife is a part of our lives today. A fictional French trapper in the 18th century Illinois Territory leads students on the trip. Brief story-telling slideshows are mixed with fun, interactive activities. For teachers, Wild Illinois History offers lesson plans, activities, photos, posters and correlations to Illinois Learning Standards. Try it out at <http://www.wildillinois.org/>. For more information, contact Bob Bluett, IDNR Wildlife Diversity Coordinator at [217-782-7580](tel:217-782-7580) or bob.bluett@illinois.gov.