

November 2015

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

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (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!

2. 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.

3. 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!

4. Video Podcasts

Fall Colors and *The Wild Turkey* 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.

5. Kids for Conservation® for November: *The Wild Turkey*

Kids for Conservation® is great for schools, youth groups and families to participate in. The November topic is *The Wild Turkey*. Send us photos of wild turkeys in Illinois (please don't include people in the photos), the county where you saw them and stories/poems/artwork about wild turkeys, and we'll post them 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 December topic is *Illinois Furbearers*.

6. Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant Applications Due November 30, 2015

The 2015 *Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant* application form is posted at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/grants.aspx>. Teachers and youth group leaders in Illinois are encouraged to apply for these funds. Get your students involved in the planning, development and maintenance of these projects while helping to meet several Next Generation Science Standards performance expectations. You'll be helping native wildlife, like monarch butterflies, while doing so. The maximum grant is \$1,000.00 per educator. The application deadline is November 30, 2015. This program is sponsored by the IDNR and the Illinois Conservation Foundation. Funding is provided by the Jadel Family Foundation, Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program.

7. Illinois' State Symbols Resources Trunks Revisions

The *Illinois State Symbols* resources trunks have been revised to include the latest official state symbols: pumpkin pie as the State Pie; sweet corn as the State Vegetable; and the Illinois Saint Andrew Society Tartan as the State Tartan. Have you reserved any resources trunks or packs from the IDNR for your fall 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 Packs* 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. Upcoming ENTICE Professional Development Schedule

Register now for upcoming ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) workshops from the IDNR. ENTICE workshops offer training on Illinois-specific topics and supply you with the tools needed to implement the topic into your curriculum immediately. Participants learn from resources professionals, take part in activities and spend time outdoors (where appropriate). Professional Development Hours are available at all ENTICE workshops. Listed below are the workshops scheduled through May 2016. For workshop details and to register, visit <https://www.enticeworkshops.com>.

Winter Wildlife on the Prairie, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, November 14, 2015 Registration for this workshop will close at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 5, 2015.

Illinois Prairies 101, Online, January 11-24, 2016

Illinois Aquatics 101, Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Chicago, February 13, 2016

Wildlife Basics for Early Childhood Educators, Trailside Museum of Natural History, River Forest, February 27, 2016

Introducing Early Childhood Students to the Nature of Spring, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, April 2, 2016

Illinois Aquatics 101, Online, April 11-24, 2016

Illinois Wild Mammals, The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, April 16, 2016

Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat Development, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, May 21, 2016

9. 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.

10. We're on Facebook!

Visit our Facebook page to find the latest updates about the materials and programs of the IDNR Education Section. You'll also find images from ENTICE workshops! Search for "Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Education."

11. 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.