

Discover Nature Programs

“Garden Sense”

Grade level: Kindergarten

Designed to engage the senses of sight, touch and smell, our “Garden Senses” program provides a platform for kindergarten students to explore plants, rocks and soil in a fun outdoor environment. This hands-on program introduces students to the unique smell and texture of herbs while helping them understand their importance in cooking, medicine and everyday life. Next, they will explore the walking trail discovering the similarities and differences among its growing green occupants. Finally, a visit to the Gin House to get the “dirt” on soil by investigating different rocks – their color, texture, and size.

Offered: Spring (April to June) and autumn (August to November)

Corresponding Curriculum: Earth Science (SKE2); Life Science (SKL1c); (SKL2b)

“Forest Friends”

Grade level: 1st grade

Spark your students’ curiosity and imagination with the Columbus Botanical Garden’s “Forest Friends” program. This program provides authentic experiences in birding basics from habitat exploration along the Joann Holt walking trail to understanding unique feeding habits and essential needs among different bird species. Finally, children will go on a “plant hunting adventure” in which they will explore the diversity of plant parts in the farmhouse gardens and go on a guided “hunt” for roots, stems, leaves and flowers.

Offered: Spring (March to June) and autumn (August to November)

Corresponding Curriculum: Life Science (S1L1)

“Garden Life”

Grade level: 2nd grade

The Columbus Botanical Garden’s “Garden Life” program explores the concepts of plant, fungi and insect life cycles. During this hands-on program, students will investigate flowers and seeds with an emphasis on seed structure; diversity; and dispersal mechanisms while learning what it takes to grow a healthy plant. Next, they will have the opportunity to explore the forest floor to learn about fungi — how they live and their contribution to the ecosystem. Finally, butterflies will be the topic of discussion as students learn about metamorphosis, the importance of pollinators and why butterflies are captivated by certain plants!

Offered: Spring (April to June) and autumn (August to November)

Corresponding Curriculum: Life Science (S2L1)

“Dirt Rocks!”

Grade level: 3rd grade

Get “the dirt” on dirt at the Columbus Botanical Garden! Through fun and interactive activities, students will learn about the rock cycle, soil formation and observe first hand different kinds of rocks, minerals and soil components! During the program, students will have the opportunity to become “budding geologists” by performing a variety of simple tests on rock samples to discover their unique physical and chemical qualities.

Offered: Year round.

Corresponding Curriculum: Earth Science (S3E1)

“The Dirt on Decomposition”

Grade level: 4th grade

Investigate the world of decomposers at the Columbus Botanical Garden! As students explore the garden and forest, they will take a detailed look at many important soil inhabitants and their job as decomposers. They will learn how these organisms contribute to the ecosystem by breaking down dead organisms, recycling nutrients and getting rid of waste. From exploring the forest floor to warming up to worms, students will learn about the vital role these soil inhabitants play in helping to maintain a healthy ecosystem.

Offered: (April to June) and (September to October)

Corresponding Curriculum: Life Science (S4L1; S4L2)

“Fun with Phyla!”

Grade level: 5th grade

Discover the many different animal phyla living at the Columbus Botanical Garden! From the forest floor to the great lawn, students will have fun searching for and learning about how and why these different animal species are grouped into their specific phylum.

Offered: (April to June) and (September to October)

Corresponding Curriculum: Life Science (S5L1 a)