



# EXPLORE & DISCOVER BIG CANOE CREEK NATURE PRESERVE

*2025-2026 Field Trip Guide*



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[SpringvilleParksandRec.com](http://SpringvilleParksandRec.com)



# Choosing the Right Field Trip for Your Students

This guide will help you select the most appropriate field trip experience for your group based on age, curriculum focus, and learning goals. All programs are outdoors, inquiry-based, and designed to foster environmental stewardship and curiosity.

## Each field trip includes:

- Age-appropriate activities
- Built-in curriculum connections
- All materials provided by BCCNP (unless otherwise noted)
- Flexible options for group sizes
- Students may get wet during some field trips



## Meet Our Education Coordinator

Hi there! My name is Lucy Cleaver, and I'll be your guide during your visit to Big Canoe Creek Nature Preserve. I'm originally from Lee County, Alabama, and I've always had a deep love for the outdoors and for helping people connect with the natural world.

I hold a Bachelor of Science in Agriscience Education and a Master's in Natural Resource Management, both from Auburn University (War Eagle!). Before joining the team at Big Canoe Creek, I spent five years teaching high school and also have experience with younger students, having taught at a preschool for nearly a year. Whether you're a curious kindergartner or a science-loving senior, I believe every student can find wonder and excitement in nature. I'm thrilled to share this special place with you and help you discover all the incredible things that make our watershed, wildlife, and woods so unique!

## Contact Information:

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# Field Trip Guide 2025-2026

**All field trips are hands on and scalable from Kindergarten through High School**

## **Creek Critters & Aquatic Life Exploration**

Spend 1.5-2 hours learning about what lives in the creek! Insects, salamanders, fish, and more. \*Students will get wet during this activity.

## **Nature Scavenger Hunt & Trail Adventure**

Spend 1.5-2 hours discovering your senses through plant and animal identification. Learn about mapping and GPS coordinates.

## **Tracks, Traces, & Outdoor Detective**

Spend 1.5-2 hours exploring forest edges and animal behavior through their tracks, scat, nests, fur, and signs of feeding.

## **Hidden Treasures-Endangered Species**

Spend 1.5-2 hours learning about endangered species at BCCNP. We will explore their habitats and discover the life cycle of a mussel.



# Creek Critters & Aquatic Life Exploration

**Best For: Grades K–12**

**Focus: Aquatic ecosystems, biodiversity, and conservation**

**Highlights: Students explore the creek and search for macroinvertebrates to assess water quality and understand the role of aquatic organisms.**

## Sample Activities by Grade Level:

- **K–2: Scoop for "wiggly water friends," coloring critter cards, clean water talk**
- **Grades 3–8: ID macroinvertebrates, build food webs, discuss indicator species**
- **High School: Conduct bioassessments, test water quality, analyze pollution impacts**

**Ideal For: Science classes, environmental clubs, or nature-themed units**



# Nature Scavenger Hunt & Trail Adventure

**Best For: Grades K–12**

**Focus: Observation, ecology, and sensory exploration**

**Highlights: An engaging trail-based experience that builds observation and inquiry skills while exploring diverse habitats.**

## Sample Activities by Grade Level:

- **K–2: Sensory scavenger hunt, storytelling, nature colors and textures**
- **Grades 3–8: Habitat scavenger hunt, trail journals, nature bingo**
- **High School: Mapping sightings with GPS, journaling ecological relationships, habitat comparisons**

**Ideal For: General education, language arts enrichment, or cross-curricular learning**



# Tracks, Traces & Outdoor Detective

**Best For: Grades K–12**

**Focus:** Wildlife tracking, critical thinking, and animal behavior

**Highlights:** Students search for and interpret animal signs like tracks, scat, and nests to learn about local wildlife.

## Sample Activities by Grade Level:

- **K–2:** Track matching, animal story and search, sensory exploration
- **Grades 3–8:** Measure and sketch tracks, ID animal signs, track detective worksheet
- **High School:** Cast tracks (optional), human vs. wild habitat comparison, wildlife corridor discussion

**Ideal For:** Life science, conservation units, or animal adaptation studies



# Hidden Treasures: Endangered Species of Big Canoe Creek

**Best For: Grades K–12 (adaptable)**

**Focus: Endangered species, biodiversity, aquatic ecology**

**Highlights: Students meet two unique species found in Big Canoe Creek — the Canoe Creek Clubshell Mussel and Trispot Darter — while learning about endangered species and how to protect them.**

## Sample Activities by Grade Level:

- **K–2: Critter intro (photos/models), movement game, storytime, art activity**
- **Grades 3–8: Habitat scavenger hunt, filter demo, species threats & solutions**
- **High School: Case studies, mapping species range, debate, citizen science planning**

**Ideal For: Conservation-themed units, biology, or environmental science**



## **Optional Add-On: Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center Visit**

**Best For: Grades 7–12 (small groups)**

**Focus: Endangered species recovery, freshwater mussel life cycle, conservation careers**

**Highlights: BCCNP staff can help coordinate an extension trip to the Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center (AABC) in Marion, AL. This hands-on visit gives students a rare look at mussel propagation and real-world science in action.**

### **Trip Details:**

- **Best for older students in small groups (up to 15)**
- **Students will see the mussel life cycle up close**
- **Visit a working facility where endangered species are being recovered**
- **Transportation must be arranged by the school system**
- **BCCNP staff do not schedule field trips on behalf of schools, but we are happy to support teacher-led coordination**

**Ideal For: Biology classes, career exploration, advanced conservation topics**

