YOUTH PROGRAMS
AT VOLO BOG STATE NATURAL AREA
Volo Bog State Natural Area is home to Illinois’ only remaining open-water quaking bog. The site’s 1,243 acres provide a variety of natural habitats including woodlands, ponds, marshes, prairies and of course, Volo Bog itself. Our eighteen educational programs utilize the site’s biodiversity to explore scientific concepts and our interrelationships within the natural environment. Pick 2 programs for a 3.5 hour visit including a lunch break in between.

GROUP SIZE & CHAPERONE RATIOS
We require at least ten age-appropriate students for our group programs. We accommodate up to 60 students for a day-long visit.

Student/Adult Ratio: The ideal S/A ratio varies and is listed with each program. In addition to assisting with discipline, chaperones are expected to set a good example by participating in the activities.

ACTIVITY GUIDES & WORKSHEETS
Our Bog programs require completion of an activity guide before arrival. Many programs involve worksheets. To encourage student involvement, teachers are expected to collect these for credit or grade.

COST
There is NO CHARGE for our youth programs — “The best things in life, and your state tax dollars at work.” The Friends of Volo Bog, our site’s not-for-profit 501(c)(3) members’ group happily accepts donations. Class & school memberships are available. Grant money for bus transportation is available through the Illinois Entice Biodiversity Field Trip Program. Look for it at www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/grants.aspx

WHEN TO SCHEDULE
Registration for SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS begins at 8 am on the FIRST Wednesday in:

- March for Fall (September—December)
- September for Winter (January—March)
- December for Spring & Summer (April—August)

SCOUT AND OTHER YOUTH GROUPS are accommodated on weekends. Groups of less than 20 people may be combined with other groups for non-bog programs.

MHSP: Upon request, programs marked MHSP are also available at Moraine Hills State Park. No indoor lunch facilities at this site.
TO REGISTER CONTACT  
Naturalist Program Coordinator  
815-344-1294

BOG LIFE: DISCOVERING VOLO BOG  
Year  
2nd—5th grades  1.5 hours  indoor/outdoor  Trunk  
Learn the geologic history of Volo Bog and then explore this unique wetland for rare and fascinating plants and secretive animals. Scary tales of boggi men and bog bodies conclude Bog Life.  
Activity Guide  S/A = 6/1

BOG LIFE: EXPLORING VOLO BOG  
Year  
6nd—8th indoor/outdoor  Trunk  1.5 hours  
Our middle school version includes recording observations on a data sheet as we proceed through the zones of succession.  
Activity Guide  S/A = 6/1

THE ECOLOGY OF VOLO BOG  
May—Oct.  
9th—12th indoor/outdoor  Trunk  4 hours  
This in-depth, interdisciplinary program utilizes our 24 page activity guide beginning with two required in-school class periods. The guide is then used during the visit for interactive data collection and creative reflection. Extensions explore the students’ connections to their local community and beyond.  
S/A = 10/1

SMALL WONDERS OF…  Pack  
Year  
PK (min. age 4) - 1st indoor/outdoor  45 — 90 min  
Choose a Habitat: Wetlands, Woodlands, or Prairie.  
We’ll look, listen, touch & smell as we explore connections. Each version has its own hero—Muskrat, Chipmunk or Pollinators, and includes a story, coloring page, song and hike.  
S/A = 6/1

AQUA SAFARI  
Trunk  May—Sept.  
2nd—6th outdoor  1.5 hours  
This is a get-your-hands-wet exploration of the amazing lives of aquatic animals. Older students discuss diversity of invertebrates as environmental health indicators.  
S/A = 6/1

A SHOVELFUL OF EARTH  
May—Sept.  
3rd—6th outdoor  1.5 hours  
The formation & importance of soil is discussed. Then students get face-to-face with the secret inhabitants of the “underworld.” Biodiversity is introduced through fun comparative data collection and analysis appropriate to elementary levels.  
S/A = 6/1

BATTY ABOUT BATS  
1st—5th indoor  1.5 hours  
Bats aren’t blind! Our bats don’t suck your blood— but some do drink it! We’ll learn the truth about bats through crafts, games and a video.  
S/A = 5/1

INSECT SAFARI  
Trunk  June—Sept.  
2nd—6th outdoor  1.5 hours  
Using sweep nets, discover more animals than ever imagined on our “backyard” safari. Learn how insects and spiders differ, some of their survival adaptations and how they fit into our lives.  
MHSP  S/A = 6/1

ANIMAL HOMES  
Oct.—April  
2nd—5th indoor/outdoor  1.5 hours  
Everybody needs a HOME! Or DO they? Through stories, real home samples and a scavenger hunt or interactive game, students learn the needs of all animals and to distinguish home and habitat.  
S/A = 6/1

MAMMALS  
Trunk  Nov.—March  
2nd—6th indoor/outdoor  1.5 hours  
What do all mammals—including ourselves— have in common? How are they different from all other animals? Hands-on study skins and outdoor searches introduce Illinois’ mammals. Older students are introduced to taxonomy too!  
MHSP  S/A = 6/1

BIRDS  
Trunk  Oct.—April  
2nd—8th indoor/outdoor  1.5 hours  
Birds are all around us—visible and familiar!  
What makes a bird a bird? How and why do they migrate? What do they need and how can we help them? This program has four interactive stations to explore the world of birds, including how to use binoculars.  
S/A = 6/1

WEB-O-LIFE  
Trunk  May—Oct.  
3rd—6th indoor/outdoor  1.5 hours  
Web-o-Life explores communities: first our hometown, next a natural outdoor community, and finally a pictorial wetland. We explore food chains and energy webs through hands-on exploration to discover the interrelationships and interdependencies of all members in a community. Final discussion addresses the most powerful animal of all…  
MHSP  S/A = 6/1

ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS  
Oct.—April  
4th—8th indoor/outdoor  1.5 hours  
We’ll compare animals that are similar yet different to explore how each has evolved to be uniquely adapted to their environment. Then, through activities including our Un-nature Trail and either our Hawk & Rabbits or Bat and Moths games, we’ll reinforce the concept of animal adaptations.  
S/A = 7/1

TRAIL OF TWELVE TREES  
Trunk  May—Oct.  
6th—12th outdoor  1.5 hours  
Discover twelve common native tree species, learn their identifying features, wildlife and human uses and lore. Learn how to measure the height of a tree. Older students learn how to use a dichotomous key. Solo reflection time is spent writing and/or drawing then we gather to share thoughts and inspiration with the class.  
MHSP  S/A = 8/1 (minimum 3 adults)

DIPPING INTO ASTRONOMY  
Year  
4th—6th indoor/outdoor  1.5 hours  
Learn the phases of the moon, how seasons work, the planets in our solar system, and why the sun and stars appear to move across the sky. Finish with an introduction to fun constellations like Cassiopeia and the Big Dipper. All this is explored with members of Lake County Astronomical Society through a fun, interactive approach!  
S/A = 7/1

TOMORROW’S LEADERS  
Year  
9th—12th indoor  1.75 hours  
Students assume roles as members of a community to simulate a town meeting with some very important decisions to make concerning their future. This is a high-spirited program which stimulates discussion that often follows the students on the bus back to school and home!  
S/A = 10/1