



SCALES NATURE PARK

*The Best **Canadian** Reptile Experience!*

Educational Programming



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About Us

Established in 2009, Scales Nature Park is a conservation organization focused on Canadian reptiles, amphibians, fish, and the habitats that sustain these creatures. Our nature centre is home to the largest and most diverse live collection of Canadian reptiles and amphibians in the country. The animals are an integral part of our instructive programming and other conservation activities. Our exhibits and nature trails are open to the general public during seasonal hours. Educational programming is provided on-site or off-site at a wide variety of venues across Ontario, with clients including Parks Canada, Ontario Parks, NGOs, First Nations, schools, community events, libraries, and many more.



Educational Programs Overview



Scales Nature Park provides outstanding programming about Canadian reptiles, amphibians, fish, and their habitats. Our goal is to facilitate the conservation of these unique creatures through increasing awareness, changing attitudes, and engaging people to take action. Programs can involve educational talks, hands on interactions with animals, outdoor exploration, and visual aids, such as powerpoints, posters, and videos. All programming is safe, educational, easily customizable, and fun for all ages!

Educational Program Formats

On-Site Programs

On-site programs are a great interactive learning experience which also includes access to our nature trails and exhibit hall, containing amphibian and reptile displays. We offer a variety of different on-site programs, all of which can be done individually or combined to create a longer experience.

1. Choose your on-site program(s):

Presentation

Learn about amazing animals then get to meet them in our most popular program! Presentations have two parts. First, our staff will deliver a talk on amphibians and/or reptiles (see 'Presentation Descriptions' below for available options) which can be chosen by you or left up to staff discretion. Next,, several animals from the presentation will be available for hands-on interactions, during which everyone will be given the opportunity to touch or hold.



Pond Study

The pond study is a great way to get outdoors! Using dip nets, participants will try to find wildlife in our onsite pond. After collecting specimens, our staff will identify the different creatures, talk about their life cycles, and explain the importance of wetlands. **not available during the winter**

Guided Trail Walk

Want to learn more about local flora and fauna? Our guide will take your group for a hike around our nature trails to learn all about the different plants, animals, and ecological communities you see, and their integral roles in the circle of life! Time of year and weather dictate what you may find.

Active Games

Explore the great outdoors through active play! This activity is a perfect addition to one or more other programs, and is a fun way to take a break and let loose. Games will take place outside and may vary based on weather and your group preferences.

2. Choose your group size:

Small On-site Group (<30)

On-site programs for small groups begin with a staff-supervised exploration period in our exhibit hall. You will then begin whichever program you have chosen from the above options. If multiple programs are chosen, there may be time allotted in between for lunch or a snack break. You are encouraged to explore our trails outside afterwards to try and find some more wild animals in the great outdoors!

Included: exploration of Exhibit Hall, one or more on-site programs, access to trails

Provided By You: snacks and/or lunches if needed, appropriate clothing for the weather if applicable to program

Length: 15 min exploration of exhibit hall, 1-1.5 hours per program, possible 30 min lunch or snack break if multiple programs, unlimited time to walk nature trails

On-site Birthday Party (<15)

An on-site birthday party is a unique way to celebrate a birthday at Scales Nature Park! The on-site birthday party is similar to a small on-site group, but can be customized to the interests of the birthday child. Birthday parties include guaranteed access to the Discovery Room or Picnic Area (weather dependent) for food, cake, and/or presents. Please bring reusable or paper products for eating as all non-recyclable, non-compostable waste must be taken home with you.



Included: exploration of Exhibit Hall, one or more on-site programs, space for cake & presents, access to trails

Provided By You: food, drinks, presents, and any utensils required, appropriate clothing for the weather if applicable to program

Length: 15 min exploration of exhibit hall, 1-1.5 hours per program, food & presents limited to <45 min if inside but if outside there are no time restrictions, unlimited time to walk nature trails

Large On-site Group (>30)

To allow all members of large on-site groups, such as camps, clubs, or school groups, to have a chance to participate in the different program activities, Scales Nature Park employs a rotating station set-up. The group will be split into smaller sections which will move from program to program throughout their stay. If only one program is booked, there is always the option of doing self-guided walks on our trails or taking a break for lunch for those groups not engaged in a program. Feel free to contact us to discuss which set-up fits best for your group!

Included: exploration of Exhibit Hall, one or more on-site programs, access to trails

Provided By You: snacks and/or lunches, appropriate clothing for the weather outside

Length: varies depending on group size and number of programs

Off-Site Programs

Off-site programs are a great learning experience which can take place at the location of your choice! Programs can take place indoors or outdoors, as long as weather conditions are appropriate. We offer a variety of different off-site programs, all of which can be done individually or combined:

Presentation

Learn about amazing animals then get to meet them in our most popular program! Presentations have two parts. First, our staff will deliver a talk on amphibians and/or reptiles (see 'Presentation Descriptions' below for available options) which can be chosen by you or left up to staff discretion. Next,, several animals from the presentation will be available for hands-on interactions, during which everyone will be given the opportunity to touch or hold. In some settings, such as schools, it may be easier to go around class by class after the presentation to allow everyone a chance to handle the animals.

Included: educational reptile and/or amphibian presentation, hands-on experience with live animals, optional powerpoint (by request)

Provided By You: space for presentation (area for presenters, area for audience), space(s) for hands-on

Length: 30-45 min presentation, 30-45 min per hands-on session



Display

Displays are a perfect way to bring Scales Nature Park to your event, park, festival etc.! A standard display setup includes tables with reptile and/or amphibian tanks, touch table items, additional reptiles and/or amphibians for hands-on, and knowledgeable staff to educate and interact with guests.

Included: tents (if outdoors), tables (2-10 dependent on event size and budget), reptile and/or amphibian exhibits, touch table items, hands-on animal experience, interpretive staff

Provided By You: access to water, space with appropriate temperature (our animals cannot stand colder temperatures)

Length: 1-10 hours, multiple days possible

Meet & Greet

The meet and greet format is an easy way to provide a reptile experience at less formal events for a reduced cost. A meet and greet consists of staff with reptiles for hands-on interactions with guests.

Included: reptile and/or amphibian hands-on experience, interpretive staff

Provided By You: space with appropriate temperature (our animals cannot tolerate cold)

Length: 1-10 hours, multiple days possible

Reptile & Amphibian Interactive Adventure

Spend a day exploring our native wildlife with Scales Nature Park's Reptile & Amphibian Interactive Adventure! This is a drop-in, large-scale event with multiple components running at the same time, meant to be housed at a high traffic location, such as a community centre. The day centres around an animal display, hands-on animals, and several educational presentations throughout the day. In addition there will be videos on our large screen, a touch table and staff on hand to answer any questions or discuss different conservation or wildlife topics. Games and craft projects may also be incorporated in some venues; extra costs may apply for craft supplies and additional staffing. The exact size and layout will vary with the nature of the venue, please provide dimensions of the area and projected attendance.

Included: presentations, animal display, hands on animals, touch table, video screen with footage, other optional activities (crafts, games, outdoor adventures)

Provided By You: large space, tables, electricity (one 15A circuit is enough), 2 hours set up time, optional other spaces (access to outdoors preferred)

Length: 4-10 hours

Workshop

Workshops provide advanced training regarding a specific topic. A few of our more common workshops are the Teachers Workshop, including resource guides and lesson plans to bring back to school, the Advanced Reptile Workshop, including ID skills and detailed information on our native species, and the Rattlesnake Workshop, training employees, landowners etc. on proper identification, movement, and management of rattlesnakes. Workshops can take place either at

Scales Nature Park or at a location provided by you, with specific needs dependent on the type of workshop you wish to chose.

Included: staff to teach the workshop, any animals needed for workshop, workshop materials

Provided By You: if you chose to host the workshop at your own location, a list of necessary provisions will be discussed

Length: half-day or whole-day



Other Outreach

We are always happy to accommodate any special needs or requirements for your specific situation. If you are interested in something else that isn't listed here, feel free to contact us to discuss your idea further.

Presentation Descriptions

Reptiles at Risk

Many of Canada's reptiles are at risk! Explore Canada's amazing snakes, turtles and lizard, and learn about how you can help them as part of your daily lives.

Hands On: >4 Snakes

Audience Size: any

Turtles in Troubles

Turtles are in trouble all around the world! Meet some of Canada's extraordinary turtle species and learn how to get them off the roads and support their habitats.

Hands On: 1 Turtle

Audience Size: any

Amazing Amphibians

Amphibians are so great at hiding, most people don't realize that they're around! Encounter some of Canada's frogs, toads and salamanders and learn how to find them in the wild and protect their ecosystems.

Hands On: 1 Frog + 1 Toad + 1 Salamander *(may vary based on venue and audience)*

Audience Size: <100



Wetland Wildlife

Wetlands are a home for many animals - but human development has led to a wide-scale loss of these unique ecosystems! Experience the stunning biodiversity of wetlands, from bugs to amphibians to reptiles, and learn why we must work to save them. **not available during winter**

Hands On: Various aquatic specimens in containers + 1 Frog + 2 Snakes *(may vary based on venue and audience)*

Audience Size: <100

Other Programs

If there is a topic of special interest to you, let us know and we can work together to create a program around your interests! Example topics include forest wildlife, reptile research, and the turtle cycle of life.

Safety

Insurance

Scales Nature Park maintains \$2M liability insurance, and has an exemplary safety record.

Our Animals

Safety, for our participants, staff, and animals, is paramount to Scales Nature Park. All of our animals that are brought out to meet the public are accustomed to interacting with strangers. However, as with any animal, there is always a small chance of a minor injury, such as a bite or scratch. Luckily, bites and scratches from our hands-on species are smaller and less serious than that of a kitten, and generally do not require a bandage or other first aid. Statistically, we have found only 1 person in approximately 15000 program participants receives a bite, with most cases due to having recently handled a prey animal, such as a mouse or fish, and not washed their hands. In addition to participant safety, we are also concerned with the well-being of our animals. Animals selected for hands-on situations are healthy and calm to minimize stress and chances of injury. If you have any questions about safety, feel free to contact us.

Pricing

Pricing is determined by several variables:

- Program Format
- Number of Programs
- Number of Program Attendees
- Distance (for off site bookings only)

We are available for bookings across Ontario 365 days a year, although dates may fill up. Book your program as far as possible in advance for a pricing quote and to secure your date!

Contact Us

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We hope to see you soon!