



**SCALES NATURE PARK**

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

# Educational Programming- Fall 2021

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# About Us

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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. While our facility and nature trails are currently closed to the public, we are still working hard on vital conservation projects for Ontario Species at Risk, continuing to provide excellent care for our animals, and connecting with guests through both virtual and distanced outdoor outreach opportunities. Our engaging and educational programming is available for camps, families, community groups, public events, businesses, elementary through post-secondary schools, and much more.



## Educational Programs Overview

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Scales Nature Park provides outstanding programming about Canadian reptiles, amphibians, 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 interpretive educational talks, Q&A opportunities with our knowledgeable staff, interactive games and activities, and visual aids such as photos and video. All programming is COVID-safe, educational, easily customizable, and fun for all ages!

# Program Formats

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## Virtual Program

We are now able to provide our popular educational programming in a virtual format! Join us through the video-conferencing platform of your choice for an engaging and educational presentation featuring a number of reptile guests, as well as the opportunity to have your questions answered by our knowledgeable staff. Check out our 'Program Topics' section below to find the program that best suits your group or contact us to discuss a personalized theme!

Included: live virtual reptile and/or amphibian presentation with animal guests and Q&A session with our knowledgeable education staff

Provided By You: virtual programs can be hosted by you or Scales Nature Park on the video-conferencing platform of your choosing

Length: 30-45 minute presentation, up to 15 minute Q&A session



## Off-Site Programs

**COVID-19 UPDATE:** Presentations, Displays and Meet and Greets have been adapted to be run in a COVID safe way. All of these programs are now run in a distanced outdoor format. Due to this, many of our program offerings are subject to change due to weather conditions as many of our animals are sensitive to colder temperatures. **Hands-on opportunities are currently unavailable.** We strive to maintain the highest quality programs, please contact [scaleseducation@gmail.com](mailto:scaleseducation@gmail.com) for more information about our current offerings.

Off-site programs are a great learning experience which can take place at the location of your choice! Programs currently must take place 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:



## **Distanced Outdoor Presentation**

Distanced outdoor presentations are a great way to safely host one of our in-person reptile experiences at the location of your choice! Choose from one of our program topics below, or contact us to discuss a personalized presentation theme. Presentations must take place outdoors (may be in a sheltered area to allow for greater flexibility regarding weather conditions), and participants are required to physically distance themselves from one another and from our staff.

Included: educational reptile and/or amphibian presentation with live animal guests; optional powerpoint or video footage (by request); Q&A session with our knowledgeable education staff

Provided By You: space for presentation (area for presenters, area for audience), outdoors and with enough space for all guests to physically distance from staff and one another

Length: 30-45 minute presentation, up to 15 minute Q&A 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 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, 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. Staff will handle a variety of animals for guests to view from a COVID-safe distance, and will be able to interact with guests and answer questions. Programs must take place outdoors (may be in a sheltered area to allow for greater flexibility regarding weather conditions), and participants are required to physically distance themselves from one another and from our staff.

Included: variety of reptile/amphibian guests, handled by our friendly and knowledgeable staff

Provided By You: Outdoor space with appropriate temperature (our animals cannot tolerate cold) for staff and guests to interact, with enough space for all guests to physically distance themselves from staff and one another; additional outdoor space for staging and set-up

Length: 1-10 hours, multiple days possible

## **Birthday Party**

A distanced outdoor birthday party is a unique way to celebrate a birthday with Scales Nature Park! These bookings include one of our educational programs as well as some time to get a closer look at our animals and interact with our staff. You bring the cake and presents, and we'll bring the reptiles! Choose from one of our Program Topics or contact us to discuss a personalized program theme.

Included: Meet & learn about a number of reptile species, plus a Q&A session with our knowledgeable education staff

Length: ~45 minute presentation and 15 minute Q&A session with an opportunity for an up close look at our animals

## **Reptile & Amphibian Interactive Adventure- CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE**

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

## **On-Site Programs- CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE**

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

## **Workshop**

Workshops provide advanced training regarding a specific topic. A few of our more common workshops are the Teacher 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 virtually or in a distanced, in-person format, either at Scales Nature Park or at a location provided by you, depending on the nature of the chosen workshop.

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 Opportunities

We are always happy to accommodate any special needs or requirements for your specific situation. If there is a special topic of interest to you, let us know and we can work together to create a program around your interests! To discuss a specialized program or other requests, contact us at [scaleseducation@gmail.com](mailto:scaleseducation@gmail.com).

## Program Topics

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### Reptiles at Risk

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

Included: Meet & learn about a number of native Ontario snakes and turtles, plus a Q&A session with our knowledgeable education staff

Length: ~45 minute presentation and up to 15 minute Q&A session

### Turtle 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.

Included: Meet & learn about a number of native turtles that need our help here in Canada, plus a Q&A session with our knowledgeable education staff

Length: ~45 minute presentation and up to 15 minute Q&A session

### Amazing Amphibians - **CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE**

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 - **CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE**

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

# Safety

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Safety for our participants, staff, and animals is paramount to Scales Nature Park.

## **COVID-19 Safety**

During distanced outdoor programs, participants are required to maintain physical distancing of 2m from staff and other guests. Audience sizes will be limited to meet provincial gathering requirements (including our staff). Whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained all parties will be required to wear a face covering. If you have any questions about safety, feel free to contact us.

## **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.

## **Insurance**

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

# Pricing

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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 (and worldwide for virtual programs!) 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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**Website:**

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**We Hope to See You Soon!**