

# Shenandoah River State Park

Spring Field Trip Opportunities 2026 

## Frequently Asked Questions:

- **How far in advance do I need to schedule a field trip?** - As early as you can! We ask that you schedule at least 2 weeks in advance.
- **How many students can you accommodate per field trip?** - We can accommodate 50 students outdoors and 30 indoors per field trip. More students can be accommodated on a case-by-case basis.
- **How much do you charge for field trips?** - \$3.00 per student, per program. No fees for Title 1 schools.
- **I homeschool. Can I schedule a field trip for my family or co-op?** - Absolutely! We just ask that your group has at least 10 students within a similar age range.
- **Are field trips indoors or outdoors?** - All of our field trips will meet at one of our picnic shelters outdoors or at our River Bend Discovery Center. Our picnic shelters are located close to fully functional restrooms.
- **What do my students need to bring?** - We recommend bringing a bottle of water, and we require students to wear closed-toed shoes. We've got the rest of the supplies covered!
- **When does the field trip season begin/end?** - Spring field trips begin January 2 and end May 15, 2026.
- **Can you come to the classroom?** - Absolutely! We consider school visits as outreach, so we do not charge the program fee. However, only a few of our field trip options are available off-site.
- **How many programs can I choose?** - As many as time and staffing allows. Most groups usually choose 1-3 programs.

To schedule a field trip, please contact Chief  
Ranger of Visitor Experience Megan Goin at  
[megan.goin@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:megan.goin@dcr.virginia.gov) or call (540) 622-2262



## Program Options

Program options are listed below. Programs are separated by subject. The corresponding SOLS are listed after each program. All SOLS listed below are from the Virginia 2018 Science SOL unless noted otherwise.

*Programs with an \* can be presented in your classroom.*

### Botany

**A Forest Grows (Middle - High)** - You know what they say - today's seeds are tomorrow's forests! Through this activity, students will discover some of the forest's reproductive strategies during a 1-mile hike on moderate terrain. SOLs 6.1, 6.9, LS.1, LS.5, LS.7, LS.8, LS.9, BIO.1, BIO.8

**Nature Bingo (Lower Elementary)** - Can you say BINGO first? Lace up your hiking boots and explore our beautiful Bluebell Trail with this interactive scavenger hunt! Students will learn about native and invasive plants, plant cycles, and various water features while looking for signs of seasonal changes within nature. SOLs K.4, K.5, K.7, K.9, K.11, 1.4, 1.8, 2.8, 3.7.

**Spring Wildflower Walk (Elementary - High)** - Discover the wildflower variety of the region during this 1-mile guided hike on Bluebell trail! The ranger will also discuss flower anatomy and life cycles. (March-May only) K.5, K.6, K.7, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 2.4, 3.6, 4.2, 4.8, BIO.2

### Geology

**Rockin' Around Shenandoah River SP (Middle - High School)** - Every rock tells a story, and it's up to us to listen and to understand that story. Take a 1-mile hike with a ranger to discover how the Shenandoah Valley formed and identify the various type of erosion that causes rocks to change over time. SOLs 4.8, 5.8, ES.4 - ES.8



## Ecology

**A Mighty Watershed (Middle - High)** - All of our streams and rivers run together in a common area called a watershed. During this program, students will see how a watershed works and then take a 1-mile hike on easy terrain to discover how a natural filtration system, called a riparian buffer, keeps our waterways clean. SOLs 3.7, 4.8, 5.8, 6.6, 6.8, 6.9, LS.8, LS.90, ES.8

**\*Career Critters (Upper Elementary - Middle)** - Got a problem? Try a natural solution by putting wildlife to work! Wild animals and plants can be used to “manage” some environmental problems. In this program, students will match organisms to help control environmental problems. SOLs K.4, K.7, K.10, K.11, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 3.8, 4.8, LS.7, LS.8, LS.9, ES.8

**\*Carrying Capacity (Middle - High School)** - Carrying capacity affects all things, including humans. During this program, students will demonstrate the concept of carrying capacity by simulating herds of animals seeking food in a physical activity. SOLs 6.9, LS.6, LS.8

**Vernal Pool Expedition (Elementary - High)** - Vernal pools are temporary bodies of water that house extraordinary creatures, such as baby salamanders and fingernail clams. During this program, you'll get the chance to search for these creatures while learning how vernal pools play a key role in amphibian life cycles. (February - April only) SOLs 3.4, 3.5, 4.4, 4.8, 6.9, LS.5 - LS.9, LS.11, BIO.6 - BIO.8, ES.8



## History

**Prehistoric Precision (Middle - High)** - An atlatl (spear thrower) was a hunting tool used by some Indigenous groups during the Paleoindian and Archaic periods. During this program, you'll learn about the Indigenous people who once called the Shenandoah Valley their home, and you'll get the chance to try out an atlatl! Do you think you can hit the bullseye? SOLs USI.2, WG.2, WH.1, VUS, 1

*(History and Social Science Standards of Learning April 2023)*



**\*Gundalow Transportation (Elementary - High)** - Gundalows were boats that would navigate down the Shenandoah River to bring goods to ports such as Harper's Ferry. This was made possible by the Potomack Company. The Potomack Company not only encouraged economic growth in the valley, but it also helped pave the way for the Constitutional Convention! Choose this program to find out how! We also have an optional cardboard boat-building activity for this program. SOLs K.4, 1.4, 1.7, VS.9, USI.7, *(History and Social Science Standards of Learning April 2023)*

## Zoology

**\*Toads, Turtles, and Snakes (Elementary - Middle)** - Witness native wildlife up close! Your students will learn the difference between amphibians and reptiles, as well as their life cycles and dietary needs. SOLs K.7, K.10, 1.5, 1.7, 2.4, 2.7, 3.4, 4.2, 4.3, 4.8 LS.3, LS.7

**\*Mammal Mania (Elementary - Middle)** - Do you know the differences between the gray fox and the red fox? What about the difference between beavers and muskrats? Discover the answers to these questions and more! SOLs K.5, 2.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.3, LS.6, LS.7,

**\*Fashion a Fish (Elementary - Middle)** - The Shenandoah River is known for its bass, sunfish, catfish, and musky that call the river its home. Did you know that all of these fish have different styles of tails, mouths, and body shapes that allow them to thrive in different environments? During this program, students will practice their fish ID skills, then see if they can design the most adaptable fish. SOLs K.7, 1.5, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4, 4.2, 4.3, 4.8, LS.7.

**Feathered Feeders (Elementary - High)** - Birds' beaks come in various shapes and sizes because they have adapted to eat different things! During this program, students will get the chance to discover what it's like to be a bird on a hunt to find its food using the beak adaptations of its species. SOLs K.3, K.7, 1.5, 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.8, LS.6, LS.7, LS.11

