



## Oxbow Regional Park – Summer

We're excited that you will be joining us for a group program at Oxbow Regional Park this summer! In this packet you will find the following documents:

- **Teacher/group leader checklist**
- **Directions to park**
- **Notes to parents**
- **Wildlife watching handouts**





## Metro | *Teacher/group leader checklist*

**Thank you for making your reservation for a field trip to one of our outstanding natural areas. We look forward to a fun and educational experience for you and your students/group. The following checklist will help make your field trip a success.**

- ☐ Communicate **proper field trip attire** to ALL participants and send home the reminder note. Field trips take place **rain or shine** and our natural areas can be chilly at any time of year. Proper field trip attire includes:
  - **sturdy closed toe shoes**, no sandals or flip flops
  - **long pants**, to protect participants from blackberry thorns and stinging nettle
  - **no shorts please**
  - if the forecast is for rain, bring a **raincoat**
  - **layers of clothes** for added warmth, no shorts
  - clothes and shoes that can **get wet and dirty that blend into the forest** (we will be sitting, kneeling and even lying on the ground)
- ☐ Prior to your arrival, the field trip leader will contact you to determine the **number of small groups** that you will pre-divide your participants into **before arriving at the park**. Please know what group your students are in and be ready to split them up when the program begins.
- ☐ **Do not bring payment for your program**. You will receive an invoice in the mail for your program separately and given instructions on how and where to send payment.
- ☐ Make sure **each participant wears a nametag on their outer clothing**. Please print their first name in bold letters (do not use construction paper, as it melts in the rain).
- ☐ **Daypacks and electronic devices** should be left on the bus or in cars and cell phone use is strongly discouraged
- ☐ **Be ready to pay the vehicle fee** when you arrive - \$5.00 per car, \$7.00 per bus or 12-person passenger van. Cash, credit card or personal checks are accepted with proper identification.

**You are now ready for your field trip!**

Thanks! We look forward to a great field experience with you!

*Metro Education Staff*

**Restroom access is limited. So go before you go!**

## Metro | *Directions to parks*

### Oxbow Regional Park

From I-84 eastbound, take the Troutdale exit (17). Go past the truck stop to the 2<sup>nd</sup> light and turn right on 257<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Go 3 miles to Division Street and turn left. Continue east for 5 miles, following the signs. Turn left on Oxbow Parkway and drive 1.6 miles to the park entrance. **The naturalist will greet you at the park office just inside the gate; please wait there for him/her to board the bus.**



### Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

Take I-5 north to exit 307 (Delta Park/Marine Drive). Take the left fork of the off ramp, following the signs to Marine Drive West (don't go east to the airport!) At the light, turn right onto Marine Drive westbound and drive for 2.2 miles. Slow down as you come down from the railroad overpass and turn left at the large brown and white park sign. **The naturalist will greet you; please wait for him/her to board the bus.**



Dear Parent or Guardian:

Tomorrow your child will go on an all day outdoor field trip. The weather at Oxbow is often chilly even in the summer and we will be outside the entire time. Please dress your child according to the instructions below. They will need:

- **sturdy closed toe shoes**, no sandals or flip flops
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Thank you. We look forward to having a fun and educational day!

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## Wildlife Watching

### Stop

**Stop talking** – become a tree, a rock, an animal ...

**Stop** – when there is an alarm call.

**Stop** – when you see an animal or an animal sees you.

**Stop** – learn to **freeze!**

### Look

**Look** – with your **wide angle vision** to see movement.

**Look** – along **edges** of fields and near water.

**Look** – for **tracks** and **signs**.

**Look** – at dawn and dusk.

### Listen

**Listen** – what are the birds saying?

**Listen** – for **alarms** or concentric rings of disturbance.

**Listen** – for a rustle, shuffle, swish, crunch...

**Listen** – can you hear your breathing?

### Move

**Move** – with the **foxwalk**.

**Move** – in **slow motion**. **Avoid pointing at animals**.

**Move** – when an animal looks away from you.

**Move** – with the wind.



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# Wildlife Watching – The Freeze Game

Would you like to know how it feels to **be invisible**?

At the word **freeze!** stay perfectly still. You can breathe and you can blink – but that is all.

Stay “frozen” for a moment. Pretend that you have become a statue, a rock or a tree.

If a rabbit or a deer gets frightened, this is what they do. Then their colors blend in with the forest and allow them to disappear (camouflage).

You will probably only see them if they move.

If you are looking at a deer who has “frozen,” you should try to stay still as long as the deer can. You may have to stay still for a long time! Finally, the deer will forget that you are there. It will look away from you. Now is your chance to move closer to it! Any time the deer looks at you – **freeze!**

Use the freeze game when you are watching wildlife and when you hear an **alarm call**. An **alarm call** is a short, choppy call given by a bird or squirrel to let other animals know there is danger nearby. Even hummingbirds have alarm calls!

If you hear an alarm call – **freeze!** Is the alarm call nearby? Is it far away? Wait for it to stop before you move. Perhaps another animal or person is moving in the woods and the birds have spotted them. Soon you can learn to understand the birds.

Use a hand signal for “**freeze!**” on your walks. You don’t want to shout “**freeze!**” and scare everything away!

**Try not to point** at an animal to show it to other people. This is very hard to, but the animal may think you are trying to catch it or throw something at it when you point and it will leave. Keep your arms down, make yourself as small as you can, and say “I am just part of the surroundings” with your body.

If you have an hour or two, try finding a nice spot in a park, forest or your backyard. Then sit down, get comfortable and **freeze!** After a while the birds begin to sing and come closer to you. Soon you will be in a new world full of surprises – animals talking, eating, playing or hunting. That’s the way the forest is when there are no people around!

You have become invisible!



## ***Wildlife Watching – Wide Angle Vision***

Would you like to see twice as much wildlife – even in your own backyard?

Most people have learned to focus on one small area at a time. We look at a person's face, a book, or a television and blot out the surrounding areas. It is like looking through a little tube all the time.

Most animals see in a different way. They have to be aware of what is moving all around them – is it food or will it eat me? They need to see and hear in all directions – not just in front of them. Their lives depend on this.

We can learn from our animal friends how to see much more – using **wide angle vision**.

First, put your arms straight out to your sides at shoulder level. Then point your fingers up and wiggle them. While you are looking straight ahead, get so that you can see both hands:



Think of seeing out of the corners of your eyes. This is your peripheral vision.

Everything may seem a little blurry, but you will now be able to catch the slightest movement around you, even at your sides. If a bird hops, you'll see it! A blade of grass moves differently than the others! Is there a mouse there? Every bug in the vicinity will be seen too! If you spot something you want to look at, then you can focus as you normally do.

After a few tries, **wide angle vision** becomes automatic and easy for anyone to do.

The next step is to sit down in your backyard, a field or a forest and practice your **wide angle vision**.

Welcome to a new world!



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# Wildlife Watching – The Fox Walk

We can learn from our four-legged friends how to walk silently and unseen. The fox is especially good at sneaking softly through the forest.

First – **stop talking!**

Then – try the **fox walk**:

1. Try taking a short, slow step and place only the outside edge of your foot on the ground.
2. Gently roll your foot down flat.
3. Then slowly move your weight forward.
4. Repeat with the other foot...



With this walk you can **freeze** easily (if an animal looks towards you or you hear an alarm call). If you feel a twig that might break, just pick up your foot and place it in a new spot. You don't need to look down – just feel the way.

It is best to use **slow motion**.

Try the **rabbit game**. Have your group form a circle with one person in the center pretending to be a rabbit. When the rabbit looks at you, **freeze!** When the rabbit is not looking at you, **fox walk** toward it. See who can reach the rabbit first. Try two rabbits. This is the same way to sneak up on a real animal.

Try the **fox walk** at home. See if you can sneak up on a cat or dog. Don't scare them. Just try to get near them, and then let them know that you are there and just practicing.

Then go outside and try the **fox walk** on beetles, bugs, birds, frogs, chipmunks, squirrels, deer or anything else. With care you can get close to lots of different animals. Remember, just get near and enjoy watching them, don't touch them or startle them.

**Fox walking** is part of **becoming invisible** and sneaking into the world of wildlife that most people never see.





## ***Wildlife Watching – Focused Hearing***

How much can you hear? As much as a deer, a fox or an owl?

Close your eyes, take a deep breath, relax and listen...

Take your time and focus.

What is the most distant sound you hear?

What is the nearest sound you can pick out?

How about all the sounds in between the near and far?

**Can you hear your own breathing?**

Can you hear your heart beating?

**Listen closely to what the birds are saying.**

Are they making long and musical sounds? If they are, they are **singing** and all is well with them.

Are they making a short, choppy and hard to locate sound? That is called an **alarm call**. Birds use **alarm calls** to warn other birds and animals of approaching danger. Some alarm calls are loud and easy to hear, like a jay's or a crow's. But even very small birds have alarm calls – it may be a tiny chirp that is hard to hear. Even the smallest alarm call is the birds' way of shouting, "There is danger coming! Hide! Run away!" to all other animals in the forest.

If you hear an **alarm call** near you, chances are that the bird is warning other animals in the forest that you are approaching! If you hear an **alarm call** not in your immediate area, it could mean that there is another animal moving. Or it could be that there is a disturbance being made even further away...

You see, if a loud, scary, dangerous animal moves through the forest (like a human, for example), the **alarm calls** will move outward from the source of the danger. It is like dropping a rock in a pond – the **concentric rings of disturbance** move out in larger and larger circles.

**Can you detect any concentric rings of disturbance?**

Birds will make different types of **alarm calls** for different dangers – people, deer, fox, snake, etc.

You can even learn to understand them!



Another type of **concentric ring** is a bird flying rapidly through the forest.

If the forest is very quiet, it means that some danger is near, or has passed through recently, or that you are creating a disturbance.

Try putting on **deer ears**. Just cup your ears with your elbows pointed forward. This will let you focus and amplify the slightest rustle, swish or sound in the forest.

