ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

Jennings prairie is considered providing a diverse array of environmental education and community programs year-round. Over 167,000 visitors, 280 schools, 11 colleges and universities, and several civic organizations are served by Jennings each year. Educational programs are age-appropriate and promote learning through an inquiry-based approach.

School Programs (Pre-K to 12)
Curricular and standards-based programs are available for all grade levels, Pre-K through 12. During programs, students actively explore the unique environments at Jennings, including the prairie ecosystem, streams, wetlands, and abandoned railroad treatment systems. Students make inquiry and discovery, collect and analyze data, and learn to think critically about environmental problems and solutions. Students bring samples and visual diaries that can also participate in programs adapted to reach their grade levels. Programs must be arranged in advance by contacting the program coordinator at 724-786-8660.

Visitor Center
While at Jennings, take some time to explore the educational exhibit and Native Shop. Exhibits are informative, interactive, and provide a closer look at what makes Jennings unique. The Native Shop offers a variety of items, many of which are locally made.

College
Jennings provides a variety of programs for courses ranging from wildlife ecology to chemistry to interpretive methods. Internship opportunities are available for students seeking degrees in environmental education, resource management, park and recreation, biology, and related fields.

Teacher Professional Development
A variety of on-site, regional, and locally focused curriculum workshops are available to teachers. These development opportunities are designed to provide teachers with strategies that can be easily integrated into the classroom.

Public Programs
Community programs present several opportunities to learn about and experience things such as native and orienting way through natural resources, wildlife, and birds. A schedule of programs is available at the center office and online at https://events.dcnr.pa.gov.

Special Events
Jennings provides seasonal special events, including maple sugaring every spring, scent programs, the Goldeyfinch Festival each May, and major volunteer workshops in the fall, winter, and spring.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Prairie Ecosystem

“Prairie” is a French word for meadow, which was used by early explorers to describe any open, grassy area. The prairies experienced by early explorers were extremely dark and inhospitable, making open areas rare and valuable. Open areas provided an opportunity for early explorers to see trees, woodlands and prairie animals. By 1820, Butler County’s colonists realized the economic value of the forest. As the forest was removed, so were the hardwoods. By the 1900s, a drier, hardwood forest consisting primarily of oak, maple, hickory, and cherry. Early colonists valued these trees for their protected the forest floor. Wildflowers and grasses support a vast array of insects that serve as food for amphibians, reptiles, birds, and small mammals. The prairies are home to a great diversity of wildlife, including birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. The prairie prairie is one of the few places in the state where this

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Jennings Environmental Education Center is one of several state parks specifically devoted to providing environmental education for students of all ages and communities. A variety of programs that connects people to the beauty and importance of our natural resources are available for school groups, teachers, and the public. By taking some time to explore Jennings through its trail network or community programs, visitors can enjoy the outdoors while learning to be good stewards of Pennsylvania’s outstanding natural resources.

Jennings' unique combination of prairie and woodland offers a wide array of education and research opportunities. The park’s main feature, the 28-acre prairie reserve, is located within the prairie plant community and the endangered complex meadow-soothe grassland. The most northerly and spuriously prairie flower is the blazing star flowering plant in the first family established in Pennsylvania in pursuit of individual plant species and recreate the only public and protected prairies in the commonwealth.

Directions
The center is 13 miles north of Butler, on PA 528. The office is open from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and some weekends. Call ahead for the weekend schedule. The grounds are open from sunrise to sunset, seven days a week, for hiking and other provided activities.

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Enjoy the Winter

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: All trails are available for skiing, which is popular at Jennings. Snowshoe trails are available to encourage. Monday through Thursday, there is no adequate cover. Call ahead for more information.

HISTORY

Legacy of the Land

The Paleo-Indian People were the first humans to the area. Living about 13,000 years ago, these nomadic humans followed the migrating herds of the giant animals, such as mastodons, mammoths, and ground sloths. This constant pursuit of the giant animals led to the discovery of plant foods, which were eventually domesticated, and the discovery of competition between humans and giant mammals, which led to the development of hunting and trapping.

The Hohokam people were the first to inhabit the area. Their presence is dated to about 1200 AD, when they lived in the area for 100 years. The Hohokam people were the first to cultivate corn, squash, and beans, which they used for food and trade. They left behind many artifacts and remains, including pithouses, mounds, and rock art.

The Spanish people were the first to explore the area, and they made contact with the Native Americans in the 16th century. The Spanish people introduced the concept of hunting and trapping, which led to the development of the fur trade. The fur trade continued for several centuries, and it became a major source of wealth for the Spanish people.

The invention of the gun and the development of the musket were major advancements in the fur trade. The musket allowed the Spaniards to hunt large game, such as the buffalo, which provided them with food and clothing. The musket also allowed the Spaniards to protect themselves from the Native Americans, who were often hostile to the Spanish people.

The introduction of horses and the development of the驿站 system were also major advancements in the fur trade. The驿站 system allowed the Spaniards to travel quickly and efficiently, and it allowed them to reach new areas more quickly.

The invention of the early tobacco was also a major advancement in the fur trade. The tobacco provided the Spaniards with a new source of income, and it became a major commodity in the fur trade.

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