

## **The Woods**

*The Woods* exhibit is an adventure-based wilderness that contains a three-story tree house, underwater tunnel and crawling tubes that encourage children to challenge their physical abilities and use their imaginations. Explore a cave, follow animal tracks, climb a rock wall and see hidden treasures in the layers of the earth. Be sure to complete the treasure hunt!

The Woods is a re-creation of a forest found in the area, containing plants and animals indigenous to the area. The sounds of different types of birds can be heard along with a waterfall that goes into a pond filled with turtles and fish. A treasure hunt leads the visitor around the exhibit in search of a secret treasure (this changes every couple of months). Clouds also pass over this forest changing the sun light from bright to dim whenever a cloud covers the sun. A climbing wall, climbing maze, tree house, clubhouse, caves and a slide are also located in the Woods.

There is a designated area for preschoolers only (ages 5 and under). This is the spider web area located behind the slide. If older visitors are playing in this area, gently remind them that this area is for children 5 and younger and that they may enjoy the other part of the Woods better.

The Woods is wheelchair accessible. There is a lift that will take visitors that are unable to use stairs to the second story. The lift is located behind the pond. If a student needs to access the second story using the lift, please contact a staff person.

## **Slide**

- Do not climb up the slide.
- Come down the slide on your behind and feet first.
- Come down one person at a time.

## **Treasure Hunt**

- There are eight clues in a treasure hunt. Every couple of months the treasure hunt will change. The beginning is always the same though! The first clue is always next to the bottle across from the slide. A small purple bottle marks each clue (except for the one in the cave, which has a pink bottle).

## **Animals**

In the pond:

- Red-eared Sliders
- Redear Sunfish
- Striped Bass
- Spiny Soft Shell Turtle

- Bluegill
- Golden Shiners

**Other Animals throughout the Woods:**

Eastern Fox Squirrel, Red Fox, Grey Fox, Virginia Opossum, Common Raccoon, Bobcat, Salamanders, Butterflies (one type is the Monarch Butterfly).

**Birds in the Woods:**

- A female Red-Bellied Woodpecker (on Sycamore tree near slide).
- A male Rufous-Sided Towhee (near the tree house kite).
- A male Rose-Breasted Grosbeak (under pirate flag on the tree).
- A Male Wood Duck (at the top of the waterfall).
- A Screech Owl (on top of the log above the ladder going up).
- A male Cardinal or Red Bird (near pot-bellied stove, under the tennis racket).

**TRACKS in the Woods:**

In the Woods there are tracks that lead to various animals in the exhibit. If you follow the tracks you will find the animal!

**Virginia Opossum-** The hind and fore prints of the opossum are parallel and close together. The hind print has 5 toes with 3 middle toes together. The fore print is in a star-like fashion.

**Grey Fox (Mother and 2 kits)** - The claws **CAN** be seen on a fox track.

**Bobcat-** The claws **CANNOT** be seen on the bobcat's tracks. You can see four toes and the hind and fore print is similar.

**Raccoon-** They have a long hind print (looks like a small human footprint). The claws show on all five toes. The raccoon is flat-footed like bears and humans. The left hind print is almost right beside the right fore print.

**FOSSILS IN THE CAVE**

In the cave walls behind the turtle tank (Pond) and in where the spiders light up on the walls, there are also fossils. Thousands of years ago an ocean covered this area. One way that we know this is by looking at the fossils that we find! (FYI- dinosaurs never lived in Cincinnati).

**Crinoid-** Also known as the "Sea Lily" because of its ability to trick its prey. The prey would think that it was a plant, swim too close, and would be quickly caught for food. Their arms were used to channel food into the mouth on the upper surface of the calyx. Fossilized doughnut-shaped fragments and columns are what most people find.

**Trilobites-** The hard outer skeletons of the trilobite are commonly found. Sometimes they may be found rolled up in a ball (like that of a related pill bug) or in their natural life position. Fossilized tracks may also be found in the hollows where they dug into the mud. The trilobite is also Ohio's state fossil.

**Pelecypod-** A sluggish bottom dweller with two valves, a right and left joined by a hinge. Externally they are a mirror image.

**Bryozoa-** "Moss Animals" A microscopic colony. It is the most common found fossil in Cincinnati. When found, they look like twigs or branches with a porous appearance.

**Brachiopod-** "Lamp Shells" They are the second most common type of fossil found in this area. They lived in shallow water and attached to the bottom or other hard surface by a pedicle. Some are free upon the bottom and others burrowed in the mud.

**Cephalopod-** Squid. This is the hard shell of the squid. The soft arms (there were ten) and head parts decay.

**Gastropod-** Snails. Gastros=stomach; Podos= foot. A majority of these creatures are aquatic.

**Ammonite-** Cephalopod mollusks (relatives to the present day nautilus, octopus, and squid). Their shells are often spiraled and ridged like a ram's horn.

**Horn Coral-** Corals (Coelenterate)

People find the skeletons of these animals and mistake them for dinosaur teeth. Horn coral resemble the modern sea anemones but had a thick calcium carbonate skeleton. There are growth lines on the side of this fossil for every day of the year. Horn coral resemble the modern sea anemones but had a thick calcium carbonate skeleton. There are growth lines on the side of this fossil for everyday of the year.

#### **FORMATIONS IN THE CAVE**

Inside the cave there are stalactites, stalagmites, and a column. These formations are wet cave formations. They are produced through a chemical reaction. Water runs through the ground and deposits calcium carbonate, creating the formation.

**Stalactites-** You can remember what they are because they hang "tight" (tite) to the ceiling (c). They grow down from the ceiling.

**Column-** A column is created when a stalactite and stalagmite meet.

**Stalagmites-** They grow up from the ground (g or like a mountain-m). You also "mite" trip over one of these in a cave. These form when water from the ceiling drips onto the ground and the minerals build up, forming a stalagmite.

**BIRD STATION**

Listen to the sounds of bird calls and try to match up with the correct bird.

In the preschool area of the Woods, a small spider web and tunnel are available for preschoolers to crawl through. There are also animal costumes especially designed for them.

## *Knowledge and Skill Development*

- Cognitive
  - Recognize needs of living things
  - Follow items in order (scavenger hunt)
  - Recognize objects are local
  - Literacy-reading labels; scavenger hunt
  - Communication-speaking with adults about exploration
  - Sensory-touch/smell/sound
- Motor
  - Climbing, crawling, sliding, walking (on uneven ground)
  - Visual tracking
  - Sensory-touch/smell
- Social-Emotional
  - Recognize needs of living things
  - Sense of accomplishment-exploration
  - Valuing others-taking turns
  - Cooperative play-exploring with new friends
  - Communication
  - Dramatic play-discover interests and new perspectives
  - Impact of choices-fossil wall

### *Curriculum Connections:*

#### *Ohio-Science:*

- 6. Shown a natural event, the learner will ask several questions related to what happened and what may have caused it to occur.
- 2. Given a collection of evidence resulting from an event, the learner will seek clarification, and propose an explanation for the event.

#### *Ohio Fourth Grade Proficiency Outcomes-Science:*

- 14. Identify and/or describe the relationship between human activity and the environment.

#### *Kentucky-Science:*

- 2.6 Students understand how living things and nonliving things change over time and the factors that influence the changes.

### *Classroom Connections:*

*The Woods* provides a great opportunity to study habitats! Discuss the habitats of humans, animals and plants. Plan an art activity for children to create their habitat. Look for the different habitats found in *The Woods*.

### *Safety tips:*

This is a high-energy exhibit, please remind students to walk at all times. Since it is often difficult to stay directly with your group in this exhibit, provide a meeting spot for students and do visual checks periodically. This exhibit is designed for children eight years old and above. Adults are welcome to explore the

exhibit with their students. If you are accompanying younger students we ask that an adult is directly supervising at all times.

**Rules of the WOODS:**

- NO RUNNING! Please **walk** while in the WOODS. It can get busy and kids will be kids, but there should be no running so that no one gets hurt. If you see someone running, ask if they could please walk. If you feel as though you need assistance, please call a staff person.
- NO TAG! Yes, the WOODS would be a cool place to play tag, but this is an outside game. It should be played outside the museum since running is not allowed and these games tend to involve the players in running. If you see a group playing tag, remind them that it is an outdoor game, not an inside game. Give them an option; tell them that they could play follow the leader or complete the treasure hunt.
- YOU MUST WEAR SHOES! If you see children with their shoes off, ask them to put their shoes back on so that nobody steps on their bare feet.
- NO HIGH HEELS/SPIKE SHOES ON THE BROWN FLOORING/"MUD"! Remember with these types of shoes you may "Sink in the mud!" Stay on the blue/creek path.