

Thomas Township Nature Center & Preserve
6660 Gratiot Rd. (989) 245-0801

2024-2025

**FIELD TRIP
& SCHOOL
PROGRAM
GUIDE**



Come and experience nature
next door!

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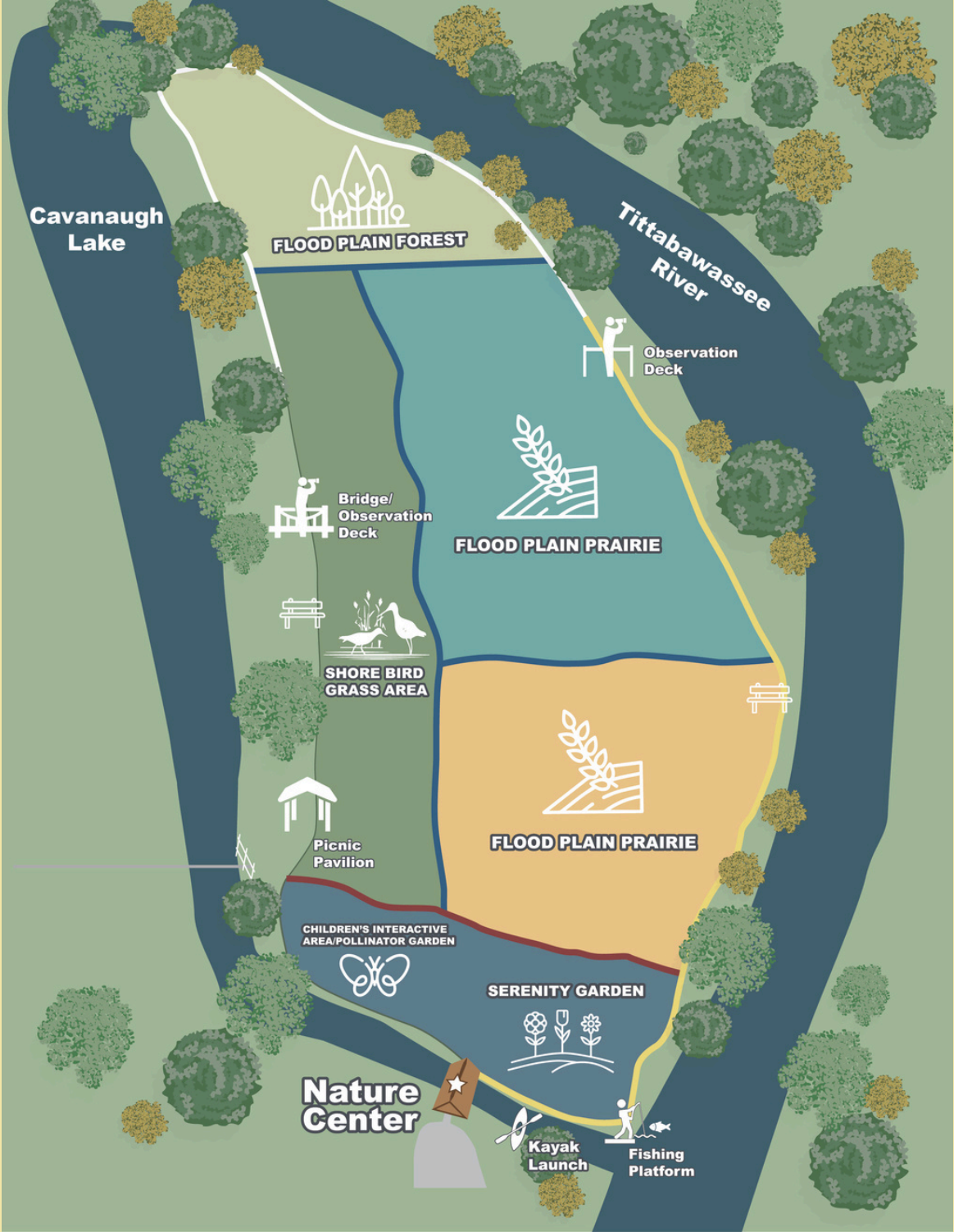
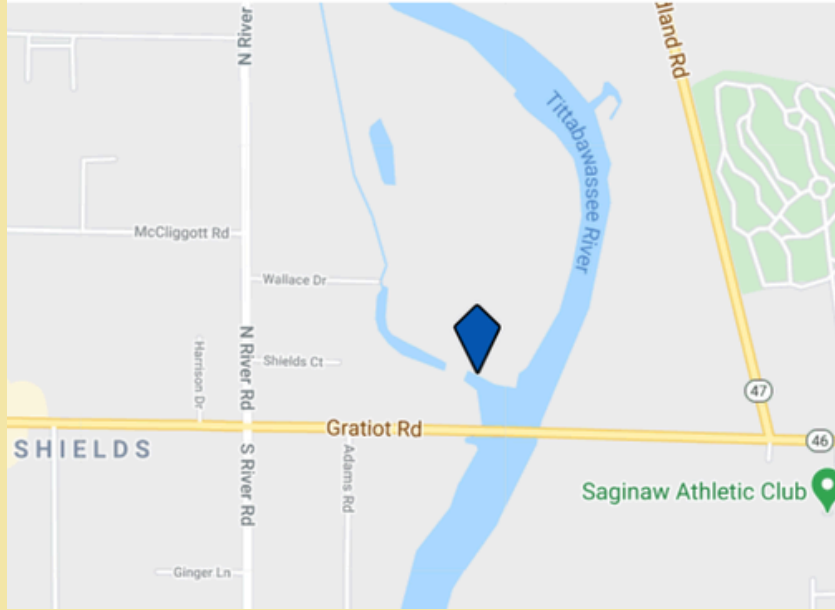
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General Information



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Thank you for your interest in working with the Thomas Township Nature Center & Preserve. Our goal is to work with you to provide activities that enhance the classroom experience on a variety of topics.

Peruse this guide to see what we offer. Most programs can be adjusted to meet your needs. For more information, email naturecenter1@thomastwp.org or call (989) 245-0801.

If you decide to pursue a field trip or program, follow the following process:

1. Check out this guide or email/call to choose your options.
2. Email/call us to get your field trip on the schedule and to get a Field Trip/Program Form.
3. Fill out Field/Program Form and return it to us.
4. We will verify date and content of field trip or program.
5. Attend the field trip/program and complete payment.

Contact Information:

phone: (989) 245-0801

email: naturecenter1@thomas.twp.org

website: www.thomastwp.org

FEES AND AVAILABILITY

Fees: The costs for field trips and school programs are the same. The only difference is that if we travel to you, there may be an additional mileage fee. Program cost includes instructional time, activity time, planning time, and basic supplies. If additional equipment and supplies are needed, sharing of expenses will be agreed upon before program occurs.



Program Length:	Location:	Cost:	Mileage Information:	
1-2 hours	Thomas Township Nature Center	\$5 per student (10-60 students)	Distance:	Fee:
2.5-4 hours	Thomas Township Nature Center	\$7 per student (10-60 students)	0-20 miles	\$.70 per mile + \$10 travel time
1-2 hours	Your site	\$5 per student + mileage, see chart (10-60 students)	21-50 miles	\$.70 per mile + \$20 travel time
2.5-4 hours	Your site	\$7 per student + mileage (10-60 students)	51+	\$.70 per mile + \$20 per hour travel time



Availability: Field trips are generally available all day Monday, 8-2 on Tuesday, and 8-12 on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Groups are limited to 60 students at a time, and chaperones are expected to be an active part of the experience. Field Trips are NOT available April 23-May 7.



ACADEMIC FIELD TRIPS AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Field trips to the Thomas Township Nature Center are typically divided into an indoor component and an outdoor experience. The indoor component can consist of full group instruction, multiple activity stations, and small groups. The outdoor component can consist of a hike to the observation deck, a scavenger hunt, search and identification of plants or animals, pond dipping, and other related activities.

Chaperones' assistance during activities is an integral part of the experience.

Academic Field Trip topics are connected to State Curriculum Expectations, but can be adjusted for multiple grade levels.



Elementary/M.S.

Grade Level	Science	Social Studies
Pre-K	Animals/Habitat	Environment
K	Ecosystems	Farm Life
1	Plant Structure	Native American Family Life
2	Food Chains	Local Community
3	Fossils	Voyageurs-Fur Trade
4	Erosion	Logging History
5	Organisms in Ecosystems	Tittabawassee River Watershed
6	Ecosystems/Population	Climate Change
7	Drinking Water	Biodiversity
8	Rocks/Fossils	Thomas Twp. History

High School

Subject	Program
Physical Science	Tittabawassee River-water quality
Life Science	Ecosystems
Earth Science	Fossils
Engineering	Real-world solutions for nature center problems
World History	Michigan 15-18 th century
US History	Logging and Industrial Revolution
Civics	Thomas Twp. History/Government
Economics	Cost/Benefits-Logging History
Math	Area-topo map
Spanish	Forest vocab/poetry
Art	Nature-murals, paint inspiration
English	Nature-get inspired, write own poetry, prose



RECREATIONAL FIELD TRIPS AND PROGRAMS

In addition to academic-based field trips and programs, we offer a variety of recreational field trips. Bring your ideas to us and we will see what we can do! The same fees and procedures apply!

Nature-based Games,
Activities, or Story time

Holidays, Seasons,
Weather

Hiking, Nature
Appreciation, Birding

Social Emotional
Learning

Volunteer/Service Work



ABOUT THE NATURE CENTER!

Thomas Township Nature Center: The Nature Center building was built in 1968 as the Hidden Hollow Restaurant and Lounge before becoming the Heritage Insurance Agency. It became the Thomas Township Nature Center and opened in August 2023. The nature center is a 4,000 sq. ft. building built over water that has two bathrooms, a historical display area, program space, seating areas that overlook the nature preserve, an indoor habitat area, a touch table, a children's interactive area and a small kitchenette. There are plenty of independent activities to entertain and educate our visitors.



ABOUT THE NATURE PRESERVE!

Thomas Township Nature Preserve: The Nature Preserve has been around for a long time as Native American fishing grounds along a trail on the Tittabawasse River, farm land, a golf course, and a natural space. The Thomas Township Nature Preserve opened to the public in 2023. The 67-acre preserve has gravel trails along a berm around the most of the perimeter of the preserve. The gravel extends .5 miles to a two-story observation desk on the east side and .3 miles to a bridge on the west side. The north end is a rustic trail. In the interior of the preserve, there are multiple native-planting areas and grass trails. Additional amenities and native plants will be added to the preserve as we grow.



Lynda Thayer is the Thomas Township Nature Center & Preserve Director and is your contact person as well as the program planner and educator. She retired from Swan Valley Schools in 2020 and has experience teaching all grade levels K-12.

