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*Environmental Learning Center  
of Goshen College*

# Nature's Recyclers

## 1st - 2nd

### Program Description

We know about paper, plastic and glass, but how does nature recycle? Through interactive exploration, students visit forests, prairies and wetlands to learn that everything in the natural world is eventually broken down into its basic parts. Get face-to-face with some wriggly recyclers and discover why decomposition is such an important process in nature.

### Program Objectives

Students will:

- Discover how everything in nature is recycled and broken down
- Learn how all living things are made of elements that are eventually returned to the soil

### Program Outline

#### 1. Hike

Students head out on our trails to get a close-up view of the recycling process happening in nature. They participate in age-appropriate scavenger hunts, games and other hands-on activities.

#### 2. Vernal Pond Exploration

While on the hike, students stop at one of our vernal ponds to search for macroinvertebrates and amphibians living in the water.

#### 3. The afternoon is filled with a variety of age-appropriate activities. Options include:

- **Worm Castings:** Students see our active worm composting bin and discuss how humans can use worms to compost food scraps.
- Games

### Vocabulary

- Recycling
- Decomposer
- Fungi
- Conservation
- Bacteria

### Quick Facts ←

**Season** Fall: September - November  
Spring: April - May

**Grades** 1st - 2nd

**Program Length** 4 hours

**Maximum # of Students** 80 Students

### Standards Correlation

**LS1.A: Structure and Function:** All organisms have external parts. Different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and seek, find, and take in food, water and air. Plants also have different parts (roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits) that help them survive and grow. (1-LS1-1)

**LS1.D: Information Processing:** Animals have body parts that capture and convey different kinds of information needed for growth and survival. Animals respond to these inputs with behaviors that help them survive. Plants also respond to some external inputs. (1-LS1-1)

**LS4.D: Biodiversity and Humans:** There are many different kinds of living things in any area, and they exist in different places on land and in water. (2-LS4-1)