



National Outdoor Recreation
and Conservation School



Exploring, Discovery, Learning

Kansas City WOW School

Sept. 19-20, 2026

What Is WOW?

- WOW is a National Outdoor Recreation and Conservation School that introduces families and individuals to a variety of outdoor activities.
- WOW is a hands-on learning experience that attracts a wide range of ages, interests and abilities.
- WOW is a great family outing with an educational component.
- WOW teaches basic skills necessary for families and individuals to enjoy outdoor activities in a safe and responsible manner.
- WOW is a leisure-time recreational activity with health benefits that promote the quality of life while enjoying the outdoors.
- WOW is taught by knowledgeable instructors.

For more information regarding registration, contact
Wonders of Wildlife at 417-225-1162.

For more information about activities, contact the Missouri Department of
Natural Resources at 816-534-4054. More information is also available
online at mostateparks.com/wow

REGISTRATION OPENS at 9 am on August 1, 2026 and closes at 11:59 pm on Sept. 7, 2026. To ensure that the registration process is fair to everyone, registration will only be accepted online. No registrations will be accepted by phone, fax, or email. No late registrations will be accepted. If you cannot register online, please make an appointment with the Kansas City Area Office at 816-534-4054 to register at the office.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Information

Mission Statement	2
General Information	2
Location	2
Registration	3
Confirmation Letter	4
Program Changes	4
Cancellation Policy	4
Age Requirements	4
Physical Activity Guide	5
Special Needs	5
Transportation	5
Scholarships	6

Course Descriptions

Camping 101	7
Beginning Archery	7
Outdoor Cooking	7
Birding for Beginners	8
Intro to Fishing	8
Geocaching	8
Hiking 101	9
Intro to Survival Skills	9
Littles WOW	9
Overnight Campout	10

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Mission Statement

WOW National Outdoor Recreation and Conservation School is designed to teach participants how to enjoy a wide range of outdoor recreation activities while practicing personal safety and outdoor responsibility. Each WOW course will include outdoor skills, conservation, and safety and ethics components.

General Information

WOW School KC is an annual event that offers a chance for families to experience recreational activities with a professional. WOW 2026 will offer an overnight camping experience in addition to a day of recreational activities. Overnight camping spots will be limited to 80 people. Participants will check in on Saturday morning at Camp Lake of the Woods in Swope Park and then proceed to various areas in and around Camp Lake of the Woods to attend their pre-registered classes. Saturday class participants will be able to enjoy a provided morning snack and lunch in the afternoon. Overnight participants will have dinner provided for them and a light breakfast Sunday morning. Menus will be sent along with your final confirmation email. All equipment is provided for programs. Participants should dress for the weather and bring anything necessary to enjoy a day and/or overnight spent outdoors. Suggested items include a water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray, lip balm, a hat and sunglasses, a jacket (if chilly), and closed-toed shoes. Participants are also encouraged to bring a camp chair to use during the lunch hour. If you are planning to camp out with us, you will receive a packing list in your confirmation email. Tents, tarps, sleeping bags and camping pads will be provided for anyone who needs one.

Location, Schedule and Parking

WOW KC will be held at Camp Lake of the Woods in Swope Park. Parking will be available within Camp Lake of the Woods.

Check-in will be Saturday morning from 8:30-9:30 am in front of the Lodge. Check-in will close promptly at 9:30 am, please notify us if you plan to be late. Participants will receive a paper copy of their schedules, a map of the camp and surrounding area, and KC WOW School swag.

Saturday schedule:

8:30 – 9:30 am: Check-in

9:30 am – 9:45 am: Welcome & Orientation (Inside Lodge)

9:55 am – 11:10 am: Session 1

11:20 am – 12:35 pm: Session 2

12:35 pm – 1:15 pm: Lunch

1:25 pm – 2:40 pm: Session 3

2:50 pm – 4:05 pm: Session 4

4:15 pm – 4:30 pm: Snack, pick up kids from Littles WOW
4:15 pm – Non-overnight participants depart Camp Lake of the Woods
4:30 pm – 6:30 pm: Free time (yard games, unload vehicles & set up sleeping bags & such) (Those who said they can set up their own tent can do so during this time)
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm: Dinner
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm: Crafts in lodge, campfire, s'mores, campfire program
Optional: bring an instrument and jam!
10:00 pm: Lights Out

Littles WOW for ages 5-9 will run from 9:45 am to 4:15 pm. See course description for more details.

Sunday schedule:

7 – 8 am: Breakfast
8 am – 10 am: Take down tents and pack up
10 am: Depart

Registration

WOW School registration is now done online! To register, please visit <https://wondersofwildlife.org/education/wow-school/>.

WOW KC registration opens at 9 am on August 1, 2026 and closes at 11:59 pm on Sept. 7, 2026. Each individual must pre-register to participate. Overnight camping is limited to the first 80 people to sign up. The registration fee is \$15 per individual for daytime programming only and \$25 per individual for daytime programming and overnight camping. This fee covers instruction, use of equipment, WOW t-shirt, snacks, and meals.

To ensure that the registration process is fair to everyone, registration will only be accepted online. No registrations will be accepted by phone, fax, or email. No late registrations will be accepted. If you cannot register online, please make an appointment with the Kansas City Area Office at 816-534-4054 to register at the office.

To register for WOW, you must:

- Complete online registration for each participant.
- A parent or guardian must attend classes with children between the ages of 10 and 17 years old.
- At least one adult for every two children is required.
- Children ages 5 – 9 must register for Littles WOW and have a registered parent participating in the day's activities. The parent does not have to attend Littles WOW with their child.
- Payments must be made online during your registration.

- **Scholarships are available; see page five.**
- Please make sure to fill out your registration form and the liability/photo release in full.
- Participants under the age of 5 will not be allowed at the event.
- Pets are not allowed.

Please note: If any of the above (registration information, payment, liability/photo release) is not received, your registration will not be processed.

Confirmation Letter

Participants will receive a confirmation email after registration has been completed. Participants will receive another detailed confirmation email on September 15th. The email will provide the schedule of classes that you have enrolled in, any special instructions for the day, a list of what to bring, the final event schedule, the menus for all meals and any other important information to prepare you for the event. The confirmation email is meant to ensure that participants are aware of their responsibilities and expectations before arriving at WOW.

Program Changes

Organizers reserve the right to cancel, reschedule or relocate any proposed offering without prior notice. Examples of why a program offering could be canceled include insufficient enrollment or emergency cancellations by the instructors. Organizers also reserve the right to substitute instructors if necessary.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation and refund requests must be submitted via email prior to Sept. 9, 2026 to edu@wondersofwildlife.org.

Absolutely no refunds will be given after Sept. 9, 2026. All cancellation requests are subject to a nonrefundable \$10 service fee. When applicable, refunds will be processed after a three-week (minimum) waiting period.

If you cannot attend, any notifications should be sent to Kaylee.Holt@dnr.mo.gov or Edu@wondersofwildlife.org.

Age Requirements

Children ages 5 – 9 must register for Littles WOW and have a registered parent participating in the day's activities. Parents are not required to spend the day with their child at Littles WOW.

For children ages 10-17, an adult must register for and attend all classes and program activities with their children. For every two children that are registered, there must be at least one adult to accompany them. Parents/guardians must be registered for and attend the same classes as the child.

No children under 5 years old are allowed to attend Kansas City WOW School.

Physical Activity Guide

To help participants anticipate what physical levels to expect for each course, a physical activity rating system has been created with ratings listed in the description of each course. Please note that all of these activities, including lunch, take place outdoors and on uneven surfaces.

Low – Requires minimal physical movement or endurance, no bending or twisting, a mix of standing and sitting.

Medium - Requires moderate physical movement or endurance, optional bending or twisting, standing or walking at steady pace on uneven surfaces and slopes.

High – Requires high levels of physical movement or endurance, bending and/or twisting, walking or quick movements on uneven surfaces and slopes.

Special Needs

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, WOW staff will make every effort to accommodate people with special needs. Please include any relevant information regarding needs and accommodations on the event registration form.

Transportation

Participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from Camp Lake of the Woods in Swope Park. For those utilizing public transportation, there are two bus stops conveniently located near Swope Park. The first is located on Swope Pkwy at Meyer Northbound and the second is located on 63rd at Jackson Eastbound. All of the day's sessions will take place in Swope Park so participants will be able to leisurely walk or travel a short distance to each session location, except for fishing. Participants will take a shuttle to the fishing location.

Scholarships

Scholarships for up to 75% off of registration will be available for participants who are in need. For questions about the scholarship process, call 417-225-1162.

Submit online form here:

<https://wowaquarium.formstack.com/forms/scholarshipapplication>

A separate scholarship application will need to be submitted for each member of your household seeking to apply. **The online form takes about 3 minutes to fill out, and no proof of income level or hardship is required.**

All participants applying for scholarships must contribute at least 25% of their registration fee.

If you elect to contribute 25% of the fee:

- \$3.75 per person for daytime activities only.
- \$6.25 per person for daytime activities plus overnight camping.

If you elect to contribute 50% of the fee:

- \$7.50 per person for daytime activities only.
- \$12.50 per person for daytime activities plus overnight camping.

If you elect to contribute 75% of the fee:

- \$11.25 per person for daytime activities only.
- \$18.75 per person for daytime activities plus overnight camping.

Please wait to hear from Wonders of Wildlife staff about the status of your scholarship before registering online. Someone will call you within approximately 2 weeks of submitting your application to help you register for the program and take whatever payment you elected to contribute over the phone.

SATURDAY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

You must be pre-registered for WOW to participate.

On-site registration is not available.

Four, 75-minute course sessions will run from 9:55 am to 4:05 pm.

The following WOW courses will be offered during the day on Saturday.

Participants will choose their top 6 course choices while registering and we will do our best to assign them to their top 4. Note that some classes are only held during certain session times. Participants must meet the enrollment requirements and attend the specific course in which they have been enrolled for each session.

Enrollment is limited for each course.

CAMPING 101

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Physical Activity: Moderate

Age Requirement: 10 & up

Sessions 3 & 4 only – required for first time campers

Be ready to conquer your first time setting up camp. Feel more confident and avoid unneeded stress and anxiety when camping. Participants will learn packing tips, important safety tips, State Parks campground etiquette, and the Leave No Trace principles. Participants will also get the chance to practice setting up a tent and campsite. Participants will leave with the knowledge and confidence to camp more in our beautiful state parks!

BEGINNING ARCHERY

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Physical Activity: Moderate/High

Age Requirement: 10 & up

Class size limited to 15 participants

Find your inner Hawkeye and join staff to learn all the basics of archery! Archers will learn archery safety and ethics, shooting techniques, archery vocabulary, and practice with targets. This activity is a great way to spend time outside with your loved ones, and it's a great workout too! Participants must wear closed-toed shoes to this activity.

OUTDOOR COOKING

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate

Age Requirement: 10 & up

Class size limited to 15 participants

Are you tired of only cooking hot dogs and s'mores over your campfire? In this session, participants will learn all about the various tools available to make a hot and delicious campfire meal! Missouri State Park staff will discuss cooking with Dutch

ovens, pie irons and more. You will also return home and WOW your family with some recipe ideas for your next outdoor adventure.

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

MISSOURI DEPT OF CONSERVATION

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate
Age Requirement: 10 & up
Sessions 1 & 2 only
Class size limited to 20 participants

Want to learn about birdwatching but don't know where to start? Join a Naturalist to explore an urban oasis for birds in the middle of Kansas City. Participants will learn how to use binoculars, the basics of bird identification, and tips and tricks for observing birds. We'll travel the trail at a leisurely pace alongside forest, prairie and aquatic habitats to enjoy a variety of birds. Binoculars will be provided for program use, but feel free to bring your own if you have them! All participants should wear closed-toed shoes and bring bug spray/or sunscreen.

INTRO TO FISHING

MISSOURI DEPT OF CONSERVATION

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate
Age Requirement: 10 & up
Class size limited to 20 participants

Fishing is a great way for kids and families to have fun outdoors, learn about conservation, and make happy memories. Join Missouri Department of Conservation Staff for a hands-on introduction to fishing course. Participants will learn basic fishing techniques and skills. All fishing gear will be provided by the instructors. Please wear clothing and close-toed shoes suitable for outdoor and water activities. *A shuttle will be provided to transport participants to this class.*

GEOCACHING

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate
Age Requirement: 10 & up
Sessions 1 & 2 only
Class size limited to 15 participants

Are you ready for a treasure hunt? Learn to navigate yourself and find some goodies along the way using a handheld GPS. Geocaching is a fun way to get outside and explore your community. You will also learn about the Geocaching program and app accessible from a smartphone. All equipment will be provided.

HIKING 101

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Physical Activity: Moderate/High

Age Requirement: 10 & up

Class size limited to 15 participants

Whether you are looking to explore your first trail or looking to build your confidence outdoors, this course will show you how to connect with nature and explore new places. A successful hike isn't determined by its destination, but your preparation, safety, and respect for what nature has to offer. You will learn the basic skills and knowledge every hiker should know, from choosing the right gear, to trail safety and resources. Please wear clothing suitable for the outdoors and close-toed shoes comfortable for prolonged outdoor walking.

INTRO TO SURVIVAL SKILLS

MISSOURI DEPT OF CONSERVATION

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate

Age Requirement: 10 & up

Throughout human history, new tools and technologies have transformed the way we live, but some skills have endured overtime. The knowledge of how to create fire and tie dependable knots has been passed down from generation to generation. These skills have survived alongside advancing technology because they remain reliable and practical. In this course you'll learn the same fire starting and knot tying skills that our ancestors relied upon to survive.

LITTLES WOW

MISSOURI DEPT OF CONSERVATION

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Age Requirement: 5-9

Class size limited to 20 participants

This year we are offering a WOW school for your young campers. Participants will experience activities such as nature art, hiking, birding, games and crafts with Missouri State Parks staff experienced in young childcare. The Missouri State Parks Rangers will offer a Hug-A-Tree program to teach participants about hiking safety. Little WOW campers will join their families for lunch. This program requires registration. Children of all abilities are welcome.

This program:

- Runs from 9:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
- Is designed for children 5-9 years old.
- Requires weather-appropriate clothes and closed-toed shoes that can get dirty.
- Requires parents/guardians to apply any necessary insect repellent or sunblock to children before the program begins and throughout the day. Staff are not allowed to apply these products to participants.

- Parents must be registered and must attend 2026 Kansas City WOW School. Parents can attend their own sessions and are not required to stay with their kids at Littles WOW but, can if they wish.

OVERNIGHT CAMPOUT

MISSOURI STATE PARKS

Physical Activity: Low/Moderate

Age Requirement: 5 & up

Class size limited to 80 participants

Put your new skills to the test and camp out with us at Camp Lake of the Woods for the night! Learn how to put up a tent, sit around a campfire, enjoy a camp cooked meal, and make some delicious s'mores with the help of WOW staff! Register for this campout experience when you register for your WOW class schedule. Dinner, snacks, s'mores, and breakfast on Sunday morning will be provided. Evening activities will include a Spider Sniff program, a night hike, an Owl Prowl, a campfire, and other nighttime fun. Some camping gear is available to borrow upon request, such as tents and tarps, sleeping bags, and sleeping pads. Please list any gear you are requesting to use in your registration.

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Wonders of Wildlife



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