

Phenology and Citizen Science

April Homeschool Class at Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve

Have you ever noticed birds arriving in spring and leaving in fall? Or the time of year that different plants bloom, set seeds, and change color? The study of these seasonal life cycle events is called PHENOLOGY and anyone can help scientists to study it! All you need is a sharp eye and a willingness to learn a bit about the species you are collecting data on. Once you collect phenology data and share it, you are considered a citizen scientist - an important part of the scientific process!

Cedar Creek has been studying the phenology of our plants and animals for decades. We collect detailed data on specific individual plants as well as the migration timing of several bird species. The data collected by phenologists onsite contributes to our understanding of climate change, human impacts, and life cycles. In this month's class, we will learn about the science of phenology, and then contribute to Cedar Creek's long-term data by recording what we find! We'll also participate in a statewide frog calling survey, conditions permitting. Come prepared to learn lots and have a great time outdoors!



By the end of the day, students will be able to:

- Define phenology
- List three ways phenology data can be used
- Use a field guide to identify a plant/tree
- Use technology as well as journals to record phenology
- Identify at least two frog calls