Planning Your Visit

Groups may request an engaging educational program led by a museum educator and an interpreter-led tour to highlight key elements relevant to your group’s needs. Homeschool groups are welcomed. Please note, school group visits and programs are available Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Upper level students have the option of participating in a program with either our education department or museum scientists. Please call 276-634-4187 for scheduling.

Reservations

Reservations are required and must be made at least two weeks in advance. For information or to schedule a visit, please call 276-634-4187 or e-mail discover@vmnh.virginia.gov.

Group Rates

Groups of 10 or more will receive discounted admission. One chaperone is required for every 10 students. Admission for teachers, required chaperones, and bus drivers is complimentary. Additional chaperones are $5 each. Because groups enjoy a discounted admission rate, membership passes and other discounts/coupons are not valid toward group admission fees.

Group rates are found below. Added programs are $4 per student and a guided tour is $2 per participant.

Thanks to the support of Martinsville City and Henry County, education fees are discounted for public schools within these districts.

Museum Store

The Museum Store offers a variety of fun and educational items for your students. Student souvenir bags are available when requested in advance.

Homeschool Science & Engineering Academy

VMNH offers engaging educational programs for homeschool students. Held on the first and third Wednesday (September – May) from 10 to 11:15 a.m., programs are geared for ages 6 plus. Cost is $7 per participant.

www.vmhn.net/education/homeschool-education

Doodle Bugs!

VMNH’s Doodle Bugs program provides children ages 3–5 and their caregiver the opportunity to experience science firsthand! They will learn and grow together with this hour-long program. Programs are held on second Wednesdays (September – May) at 10 a.m. Cost is $7 per participant.

Birthday Parties

Planning a birthday party? The museum is the perfect place to have a Dino-mite celebration!

www.vmhn.net/birthday-parties

Sleepovers

Join us after hours for an exciting night of exploration! We offer programs for audiences of all ages! $45 per participant. One chaperone is required for every five children. $20 for each additional chaperone.

Scouts

Working on badge requirements? VMNH can assist with a wide variety of scout programs including sleepovers.

www.vmhn.net/scouts

Admission Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adults (ages 18–59)</th>
<th>Children (ages 3–17); Seniors 60+; Military</th>
<th>Members; Children under 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Person</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group rates per person (10 or more)</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$3</td>
<td>Free</td>
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</tbody>
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Details

At-the-Museum Programs

Enhance your museum visit by adding a program and a guided tour. Programs presented at the museum are 20 to 60 minutes depending on what other group activities are requested. A minimum of 8 participants is required. Programs are correlated to SOLs.

Outreach Education

Outreach programs bring museum educators to you. SOL-correlated programs are designed to be presented in a school environment, at a community center, or at other off-site locations. Programs are best suited for classes of up to 30 students or participants. Programs are 45 minutes to 1 hour. One program can be delivered for up to four sessions in the same day. In the event additional programs or staff are needed, an additional fee may apply. Programs are offered year-round and can be customized; a new program can be created upon request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sessions</th>
<th>Fee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$90</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$135</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$170</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$210</td>
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Thanks to the support of Martinsville City and Henry County, education fees are discounted for public schools within these districts. A nominal mileage fee will be added for programs outside of Henry County. For more information, please call 276-634-4187.

Programs

Nature of Science

Scientific Investigations

Grades Pre-K–12

Students will learn what it takes to investigate like a scientist! They will engage in experimental design, hone their observation skills, even practice data collection and analysis all in challenging and fun ways. Choose the topic that best suits your students’ needs from below.

- The 5 Senses
- Endangered Species
- Evolution
- Climate Change
- Resource Overconsumption
- Troubled Oceans
- Space
- Current Events
Physical Sciences

Light Science  Grades K-1, 5, 6, 8, 12
Students will explore the science of light, and learn about waves, reflection, refraction, and the color spectrum using hands-on activities!

Marvelous Magnets  Grades K, 2
Students conduct simple experiments involving magnetic fields, poles, attractions, and the uses of magnets.

I Like to Move It, Move It!  Grades K–2
Explore the many ways objects move and the forces that cause movement. Students will design and build a device to demonstrate force and motion.

The Nature of Matter  Grades 2–3, 5–8, 10, 12
Solids, liquids, and gases, oh my! Students will explore the distinguishing properties of matter including, atoms, elements, compounds, mixtures, and everything in between using hands-on experiments!

Sound Detectives  Grades 1, 5, 8, 12
Students will investigate the world of sound by experiencing vibrations using various objects. Concepts include: motion of objects, vibration frequency, waves, and wavelength.

What a Shock!  Grades 5–12
Working together, students will test objects for conductivity and experiment with open and closed circuits. Classes will explore conductors, insulators, circuits, electrical energy, static and current electricity.

Life Sciences

Grow As We Go  Grades Pre-K–1
Does the baby look like its parents? Life processes are illustrated as students investigate the basic needs and life cycles of living things through observing the physical characteristics of plants and animals.

Bears in the Forest  Grades Pre-K–2
Have fun learning about habitats, seasons and the life needs and characteristics of bears in this active role-play program adapted from Project WILD®.

Animal Needs  Grades Pre-K–4, 7–12
Meet the museum’s live animals! Students will explore life needs, characteristics, adaptations, and habitats as they interact with our friendly critters.

Dino Dig  Grades Pre-K–3
Students will think like paleontologists during a mock dig for dinosaur “bones,” touch fossils from different geological periods, and learn how fossils are formed.

Fantastic Food Webs!  Grades 1–4, 6–12
Explore food web basics and the connections between organisms and the environment. Please choose one:
   - Owl Pellets: Students will explore the predator/prey relationship as they dissect owl pellets. There is an extra $2 charge per student for this option.
   - Live Animals: Students will learn about food webs while getting up close and personal with a variety of live animals!

Let’s Make a Fossil  Grades 3, 5, 7–12
Students will explore what makes a fossil a fossil, make observations to determine what we can learn from fossils, and explore the processes of how fossils form. Students will even make a fossil of their very own to keep! There is an extra $2 charge per student for this program.

Exploring Nature in the Community  Grades K–12
Enjoy a unique experience in an outdoor, natural laboratory exploring terrestrial or aquatic ecology. These hands-on, highly interactive programs can be customized.
 Programs continued

Earth Sciences

Rocks and Minerals Uncovered Grades 1, 4–5, ES
Students will explore the bountiful resources of the earth through rock and mineral samples.

Digging In Grades 2–5
Students will explore the causes and results of weathering and erosion, the landforms that are affected and what part plants and animals play. Let’s get a little dirty as we examine the components of soil, its origin and its importance as a Virginia natural resource.

Water Cycle Voyage Grade 3
Students will learn about the water cycle as they “become” water droplets through highly interactive games. Additional fee of $1 per student.

History & Social Studies

Eastern Woodland Indians Grades K–5
Students will learn about the natural resources that Eastern Woodland Indians used in their daily activities. Students will examine artifacts and reproductions to get a glimpse of the lifestyles of the Indians before colonization.

Link to the Past Grade 3
Students will get a choice to explore either ancient Egypt and China or ancient Greece and Rome through comparison of cultures. Student led inquiry will be followed by a craft reinforcing important cultural topics.

Historical Climate Change Grades 6–12
Explore past climates and their effects on historical populations within North America. Students will be able to map climate change and discuss its impact on how people interacted with their environment.

Math and Engineering

Speedy Building Grades 3, 5
Students will use LEGO bricks, axles, and wheels to build cars to race to explore motion, friction, energy, and simple machines. They will measure distance and time traveled, and will construct a graph to understand how to calculate speed.

Pollution Prints Grades K–12
Water is a valuable natural resource. In the program, students will learn about the importance of water, evaluate their water footprint, and look at what causes water pollution and prevention.

Trees for the Future Grades Pre-K–12
We all need trees! During this hands-on program, learn about types of habitats, tree parts, and the role that trees play in an ecosystem.

Exhibits

The museum offers innovative, award-winning exhibits highlighting the unique features of Virginia’s natural history. All exhibits and presentations are correlated to Virginia education standards. The following is an overview of the 2021–22 exhibits.

The Harvest Foundation Hall of Ancient Life serves as an exciting gathering space that introduces the museum’s research and collections.

Displays include:
• Ice Age Exhibit
• Allosaurus
• Eobalaenoptera
• Pteranodon
• Stromatolite
• Acrocanthosaurus
• Stories from Skeletons column case exhibit
• Viewable working laboratories including the Elster Foundation Vertebrate Paleontology and Archaeology Labs.

The Hooker Furniture Discovery Reef provides an exciting underwater adventure area for young children on a sunken ship.

Uncovering Virginia features representations of six research sites in Virginia where VMNH scientists and their colleagues have worked or are working.

Lee & George W. Lester, II How Nature Works demonstrates how energy from within the earth’s crust and the sun have shaped the earth.

• How Nature Works: Rocks features dramatic landscape models that reveal how the world is shaped by geological forces.
• How Nature Works: Life teaches visitors that almost all living things on earth depend, directly or indirectly, on the sun as an energy source.

Hahn Hall of Biodiversity features a variety of taxidermied African mammals including a lion, hyena, and several antelope.

Fossil Overlook is a prehistoric life exhibit located on the museum’s upper-level, and includes a variety of fossils, detailed models, and casts for visitors of all ages. An up-close and personal view of the flying reptile, Pteranodon is available here, as well. The exhibit features new displays sponsored by the Hermes Family Foundation from prehistoric seas including a Dunkleosteus skull and Mosasaur fossils.

Wild About Cats is now open in the Science Exhibit Hall through November 6, 2021. Take a photo safari around the world and learn more about wild cats.

Lepidoptera is now open by the first floor elevator. Explore over 700 species of butterflies and moths from all over the world.


Farmers, Warriors, Builders: The Hidden Life of Ants is now open in the Suzanne M. Lacy Education Center. This Smithsonian exhibit features stunning macro photographs that tell incredible stories about the lives of ants. This exhibit was donated to VMNH for educational purposes by the Smithsonian Institution at the end of its national tour in 2016. The original tour ran from 2011 to 2016.
**Festivals**

2021

**Dragon Festival**
October 15-16
Science, history and myth collide during Dragon Festival! Explore the lore of dragons, the impact these creatures have had on societies across the globe, and the science behind the growth and dissemination of their myth! All of the sights and sounds that make the myth of dragons so alluring will be in full-force throughout the day!

2022

**Flight Festival**
January 22
How do animals fly? Celebrate the opening of the new *Science of Flight* exhibit and enjoy crafts and activities.

**Wildlife Festival**
June 13

**Dino Festival**
July 22–23
Life-size cast skeletons of iconic dinosaurs, such as *Stegosaurus*, *Acrocanthosaurus*, *Allosaurus* and more will be on display, along with an abundance of actual dinosaur fossils, dino-themed crafts and activities, face-painting, balloon animals, dino art, costumed dinosaurs and more!

Please visit www.vmnh.net for festival details.

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**Doodle Bugs!**

*Sign up today!*

Pre-registration for ages 3–5 is required one week prior to each event by contacting the museum at 276-634-4187 or discover@vmnh.virginia.gov.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September 8</th>
<th>Wild About Cats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Fantastic Fossils</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Virginia Indians</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Marvelous Food Messes</td>
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<td>January 12</td>
<td>Winter Wildlife</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Under the Sea</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>Roll with the Wind:Engineering/Force &amp; Motion</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>April Showers Bring</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>Bugs, Bugs, Everywhere</td>
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Memberships

Are you a VMNH member? Join today to support the museum while receiving special members’ only benefits, including free unlimited admission, invitations to receptions and events, discounts in the VMNH Museum Store, and free reciprocal admission to hundreds of museums and science centers nationwide. Save 20% by taking advantage of the two-year option. For more information, please visit our website at www.vmnh.net/membership/new or call 276-634-4162.

Virtual Programs

Virtual programs bring your students to the museum without ever having to leave their seats! Through the use of two-way video your class will join museum educators as we explore Virginia’s natural heritage and uncover its rich biological and geological history. Together, with the use of videoconferencing and interactive activities, we will spark imagination, enhance curricula, and support Virginia and national educational standards. Distance learning programs can be developed and adjusted to meet your needs. Education staff will work with you to establish your videoconferencing connection in advance. Let us know how we can connect with you!

Email discover@vmnh.virginia.gov or call (276) 634-4187 to find out more.

Fees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Fee with VMNH staff onsite</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
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<td>Four</td>
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</tbody>
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Fees do not include travel or field trip costs. Costs vary. Please call for more information.
Dawn of the Dinosaurs
Did you know no dinosaur bones have been found in Virginia? Join educators as we examine fossils from the Age of the Dinosaurs and look at characteristics and adaptations. This program teaches students about dinosaurs while prompting them to draw conclusions based on visual evidence.

Unsolved Mysteries
Why would the fossils of marine animals and land mammals from long ago all be deposited in the same place? With VMNH educators, students will view fossils from an active dig site along the Fall Line north of Richmond. We will look at a re-creation of a bone bed and hypothesize what may have happened along this ancient shoreline to cause the deaths of such a wide variety of animals. By examining fossil evidence and understanding how Earth’s surface changes over time, students will explore scientific explanation of this location 14 million years ago.

Walking Among Giants
Travel back in time 14,000 years to the last Ice Age — a time when muskox, mastodons, mammoths, and giant ground sloths lived in Virginia. By examining casts of bones, teeth, footprints, and real fossils we will explore how the behavioral and physical adaptations of these animals helped them to survive in the not too distant climatic past.

Trash to Treasure
Don’t miss out on this unique opportunity for students to explore archaeology. By examining artifacts such as pottery pieces, animal bones, and projectile points, students will be able to make conclusions about American Indian culture both before and after European contact. Led by VMNH education staff, students will better understand how trash of past civilizations can be a valuable tool for archaeologists.

The Earth as We Know it
Join educators for an exciting investigation of the forces that shape the world. With models and demonstrations, students will make connections between how the energy trapped inside the earth has moved continents and has shaped the earth’s surface over time.

The Circle of Life
By investigating the relationships among organisms and looking at examples of producers, consumers, and decomposers, students will understand the transfer of energy that occurs among all living things and the fundamental processes it fuels. Students will have an opportunity to see the museum’s live turtles, snakes, or Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches in action!

Classification: 101
Amidst specimens from the African Savanna, students will follow educators on a journey through our spectacular African mammal collection. Step into the shoes of a scientist by using observable characteristics as a basis for species classification. By examining the physical characteristics of different mammals, students will understand more about species identification, variation, and adaptations. Students will have an opportunity to see the museum’s live turtles, snakes, or Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches in action!

All Distance Learning programs are tailored to specific standards of learning based on your grade level.