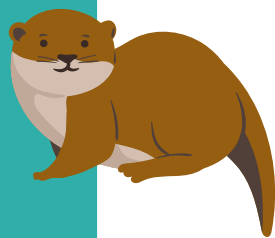


# Homeschool Programs

**WINTER  
2026**



*For more information and to  
register for classes:*

**VISIT OUR WEBPAGE**



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# EcoTarium Explorers

## Ages 5-8

Curious explorers conduct simple, safe, science and nature explorations with their caregivers. Guided by an EcoTarium educator, participants will learn how to ask questions, experiment, and learn more about the world around them through the power of science! Each class within a series will build upon the last.

- 1 hour classes; two-, three-, and four-week sessions
- Up to 12 students per session
- Caregivers attend class with students
- Class fee does not include Museum admission

Session	Cost	Dates/Times	Description
Awesome Astronomy (4 weeks)	\$40	Jan 7, 14, 21, 28 <i>Wednesdays</i> 1:15-2:15 pm	Do you think space is stellar? Do you think astronomy is out of this world? Students will spend time completing hands-on projects and exploring the cosmos in the Alden Planetarium with an EcoTarium educator. <b>Note: content in this session is the same as the Fall 2025 Awesome Astronomy session.</b>
Searching for Life (4 weeks)	\$40	Jan 8, 15, 22, 29 <i>Thursdays</i> 12-1 pm OR 1:15-2:15 pm	We don't yet have scientific evidence for life in other parts of the universe, but there are some exciting possibilities! Through a combination of environmental science, life science, and earth science, students will explore how researchers are looking for life on other planets.
Collections Workshop (2 weeks)	\$20	Feb 5 and 12 <i>Thursdays</i> 12-1 pm OR 1:15-2:15 pm	Did you know the EcoTarium and its collections are over 200 years old? Students will learn about the incredible world of natural history collections and see some awesome specimens! Across the two sessions, we'll work on a collections-related project that students can take home and start a collection of their own!
Cool Communications (4 weeks)	\$40	Feb 26, Mar 5, 12, 19 <i>Thursdays</i> 12-1 pm OR 1:15-2:15 pm	We communicate in many ways including through sound, light, movement, and even code! In this program, students will explore the various ways humans and animals communicate through hands-on activities and challenges.
Urban Ecology (3 weeks)	\$30	Apr 2, 7, 16 <i>Thursdays</i> 12-1 pm OR 1:15-2:15 pm	Students will explore urban ecosystems and the amazing living things that call these ecosystems home! We'll learn about iNaturalist and other citizen science tools, participate in a field study around the EcoTarium, and get an up-close look at the biodiversity all around us!

# EcoTarium Adventurers

## Ages 9-14

Students will dive deeper into interacting with the EcoTarium's exhibits, animals, trails, collections, and/or planetarium in each themed series. Adventurers will participate in hands-on activities, experiments, and projects, with each class building upon the last.

- 1.5 hour classes; two-, three-, and four-week sessions
- Up to 10 students per session
- Drop-off program
- Class fee does not include Museum admission

Session	Cost	Dates/Times	Description
Awesome Astronomy (4 weeks)	\$50	Jan 7, 14, 21, 28 <i>Wednesdays</i> 1:15-2:45 pm	Do you think space is stellar? Do you think astronomy is out of this world? Students will spend time completing hands-on projects and exploring the cosmos in the Alden Planetarium with an EcoTarium educator. <b>Note: content in this session is the same as the Fall 2025 Awesome Astronomy session.</b>
Searching for Life (4 weeks)	\$50	Jan 8, 15, 22, 29 <i>Thursdays</i> 1:15-2:45 pm	We don't yet have scientific evidence for life in other parts of the universe, but there are some exciting possibilities! Through a combination of environmental science, life science, and earth science, students will explore how researchers are looking for life on other planets.
Collections Workshop (2 weeks)	\$25	Feb 5 and 12 <i>Thursdays</i> 1:15-2:45 pm	Did you know the EcoTarium and its collections are over 200 years old? Students will learn about the incredible world of natural history collections and see some awesome specimens! Across the two sessions, we'll work on a collections-related project that students can take home and start a collection of their own!
Cool Communications (4 weeks)	\$50	Feb 26, Mar 5, 12, 19 <i>Thursdays</i> 1:15-2:45 pm	We communicate in many ways including through sound, light, movement, and even code! In this program, students will explore the various ways humans and animals communicate through hands-on activities and challenges. Adventurers will also focus on the use of radio waves to communicate - the science behind the EcoTarium's planned contact with the International Space Station in March 2026!
Urban Ecology (3 weeks)	\$38	Apr 2, 7, 16 <i>Thursdays</i> 1:15-2:45 pm	Students will explore urban ecosystems and the amazing living things that call these ecosystems home! We'll learn about iNaturalist and other citizen science tools, participate in a field study around the EcoTarium, and get an up-close look at the biodiversity all around us!

# Family Science Workshops

## Ages 5+

Hands-on fun for the whole family! Family Science Workshops are designed for scientists ages 5+ to explore and discover together. An EcoTarium educator will ensure that participants of all ages can engage with science and learn something new!

- \$10 per student (children ages 5+) plus the cost of admission
- Caregivers must attend class with students
- Younger siblings are welcome to be in the classroom during the session
- 1 hour classes
- Up to 12 students per session

Topics, schedule, and class descriptions on page 5



## Family Science Workshops

Topic	Date/Time	Description
Owl Pellets	Tue, Jan 6 2:00 PM	Examine owl pellets to find bones, plants, insects, and more! Take a look at what's left over after an owl chows down, and draw conclusions about a habitat and its inhabitants.
Geology Rocks!	Tue, Jan 13 2:00 PM	Do you think that granite is gneiss? (hint: it's pronounced "nice") Or do you find igneous rocks an enigma? Metamorphic rocks a mystery? Examine rocks and minerals and learn how variations in materials, time, and pressure result in the wide world of rocks around us!
Habitat Design	Tue, Jan 20 2:00 PM	Work with an EcoTarium zookeeper to design and build a model habitat for an animal of your choice! We'll think about natural habitats, and how habitat designers ensure that an animal's needs are met if living under human care.
Newton's Laws	Fri, Jan 30 2:00 PM	Push things, pull things, watch them move--or not! Observe objects at rest and in motion and act on them as an unbalanced force with hands-on experiments.
Cool Chemistry	Tue, Feb 3 2:00 PM	Experiment like a chemist! Explore chemical reactions, surface tension, and the tiny molecules that make it all happen through hands-on activities.
Biodome!	Wed, Feb 11 2:00 PM	The planetarium--it's not just for space anymore! Using computer modeling and the planetarium dome, we'll see skulls in incredible detail and learn about adaptations that help animals survive.
Satellites!	Tue, Feb 24 2:00 PM	It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... a satellite! Journey into Earth's orbit in the Alden Planetarium to visit some of the incredible human-made satellites orbiting our planet.
Zoo and You	Fri, Mar 6 2:00 PM	Have you ever wondered what it takes to care for the 35+ species of animals that call the EcoTarium home? Meet an EcoTarium zookeeper and take a behind the scenes tour to learn more about the challenges and rewards of animal care.
Phases of Matter	Tue, Mar 17 2:00 PM	It's not a phase, Mom! ...or is it? Learn about how materials all around us can take different forms whether solid, liquid, or gas...or something else entirely!
Drawing from Nature	Wed, Mar 25 10:30 AM	Drawing and sketching nature is a fantastic way to hone your observational skills, hand-eye coordination, and even contribute to scientific knowledge--and it's just plain fun. Come enjoy the sights of early spring with us! Materials will be provided.
Planetarium Show Workshop	Fri, Mar 27 2:00 PM	Work with an EcoTarium educator and your classmates to design a planetarium show! Will we visit Mars? Take a look at a black hole? View the outer reaches of our galactic supercluster? The sky (and beyond) is the limit!
Science Tricks	Wed, Apr 1 10:30 AM	Come get fooled--or not! at our workshop featuring scientific sleight of hand. We'll try some experiments that look like magic tricks, but can be explained by some awesome science!
Paleontology	Fri, Apr 10 2:00 PM	Dig into the past! Uncover fossils at our simulated dig site and try your hand at being a paleontologist by examining real prehistoric remains.
Rocket Launch	Tue, Apr 14 2:00 PM	It really is rocket science! Learn how rockets fly, then build, test, and launch your own rocket prototype in a mission to improve your design.

# Winter Events

There's always something new and exciting at the EcoTarium! Please note that these events are not homeschool-exclusive and are open to the public. All are welcome!

## **Frosty Festival | Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7**

Join us for a winter festival that will light up your holiday season!

## **Wild About Winter Vacation Week | December 26-30**

This winter vacation, celebrate the wonders of winter with us at the EcoTarium! Dive into the science of snow, curl up like a hibernating animal, or conduct a frigid experiment of your own.

## **Noon Year's Eve | Wednesday, December 31**

Have a blast ringing in the new year at the EcoTarium! Make a time capsule, launch a rocket, add to our 2026 resolution wall, or participate in our annual 12:00 pm kid-friendly countdown!

## **Groundhog Day Celebration | Sunday, February 1**

More information to come – keep an eye on EcoTarium social media!

## **Lunar New Year Celebration | Sunday, February 15**

More information to come – keep an eye on EcoTarium social media!

## **Prehistoric Planet Vacation Week | February 16-20**

More information to come – keep an eye on EcoTarium social media!

## **International Space Station Day | Saturday, March 14**

More information to come – keep an eye on EcoTarium social media!



# Homeschool Membership

Enjoy 12 months of free admission and other incredible benefits!

Take advantage of all the EcoTarium has to offer with a Homeschool Membership! Homeschool members receive all benefits of standard EcoTarium membership plus early access to homeschool class registration at no additional cost.

## Membership Benefits

- Free admission including all public programs and event days.
- Free or reduced admission to 1,000+ museums, zoos, and gardens through the EcoTarium's three reciprocal networks: Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) Passport Program, Association of Children's Museums (ACM) Reciprocal Network, and North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) Association.
- Discounted rates on train tickets, planetarium shows, museum shop purchases, birthday parties, and camp programs.
- Early access to EcoTarium Explorers, EcoTarium Adventurers, and Family Science Workshop homeschool class registration.

## Homeschool Membership Details (as of December 2025)

- \$175 admits up to 4 individuals; one of those individuals must be an adult cardholder
- Add individuals for \$25 per person, up to 8 total

## Discounted Rates:

- \$2 off Explorer Express Train tickets
- \$1 off planetarium show tickets
- 10% off purchases in museum shop
- 10% off gift memberships
- 10% off birthday parties
- Discounts and early access to summer and school vacation week camps

**[Become a Homeschool Member Today!](#)**

# ISS Contact

In March 2026, students at the EcoTarium will contact an astronaut on the International Space Station (ISS) using amateur radio!

ARISS (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station) lets students worldwide experience the excitement of talking directly with crew members of the International Space Station, engaging them with amateur radio and inspiring them to pursue interests and careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

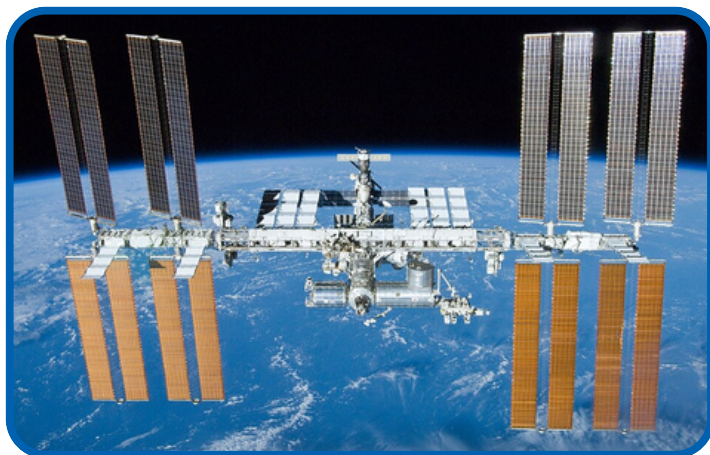
While only ten students will get the chance to speak directly with an astronaut in orbit, there are lots of ways to get involved!

- Participate in the contact as a selected student (10 student max)
- Attend the contact (TBD week of March 9–14)
- Submit questions for astronauts
- Attend the celebration on March 14!
- Participate in related educational programming at EcoTarium
- Utilize our Educator Toolkit as part of your homeschool curriculum

More information will be available in the coming weeks! If interested in getting involved, please fill out our interest form to be added to our communications list.

## ISS Contact Interest Form

<https://forms.gle/SaQbXQ9YhrYdiSuy9>



# Expectations and Policies

## Payment Policy

All class payments are nonrefundable.

## Class Cancellation and Schedule Changes

The EcoTarium reserves the right to cancel or modify a class or program due to inclement weather, staffing limitations, or under-enrollment. If a class needs to be canceled, only enrolled students will be contacted and full refunds of the class fee will be provided.

## Student Absences

Class payments are nonrefundable, and the EcoTarium cannot guarantee make-up sessions or alternative options in the event of student absence.

## Drop-off and Pick-up Policy

Students in the “EcoTarium Adventurers” program are expected to be dropped off on-time for class. Only adults listed as authorized pick-ups upon registration are permitted to pick up students from class. A photo ID is required for anyone picking up a student.

## Behavior Expectations

All students are expected to demonstrate mutual respect for each other and for staff. Bullying or harassment of any kind is not tolerated, and appropriate action will be taken in partnership with caregivers to ensure a safe and engaging environment for all.

## Learning Accommodations

Students who would benefit from having an aide, translator, caregiver, or therapist in class are welcome to do so. If there are any learning accommodations that you would like our staff to be aware of, please complete the "Learning Accommodations" section of class registration.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The EcoTarium welcomes youth and adults of all backgrounds. Together we work to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, age, cultural background, ethnicity, faith, gender identity, ideology, income, nationality, race, or sexual orientation has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity, feel accepted, and enjoy being a part of our community.