

Lowry Nature Center Social Narrative



Introduction

I am going to Lowry Nature Center in Carver Park Reserve. Lowry Nature Center is located at 7025 Victoria Drive, Victoria, MN 55386. It is open from 9 AM–5 PM Monday-Saturday. On Sundays, it is open from noon–5 PM. At Lowry Nature Center, there are many activities and spaces available for visitors, including the nature center building, a play area, a raptor mew, hiking, and nature exploration.

Planning for My Visit

Before I leave home to visit Lowry Nature Center, it is a good idea to pack a bag with some supplies. I can bring a water bottle, a snack, a shade hat, sunscreen, bug spray and anything else that will make my visit comfortable and enjoyable. I will also check the weather to make sure I wear clothes that will help me stay comfortable while I'm outside.

Arriving at Lowry Nature Center

When I arrive at the entrance road to Lowry, I will see a sign that says Lowry Nature Center. I will drive down the road for a few minutes past prairie and woods. I may see walkers or bikers on a trail near the road. At the end of the road is a parking lot. I can park and visit the nature center for free.



At Lowry, I will see the nature center building, and I will see trails that lead to different natural areas outside. I may not be able to see the building from the parking lot because trees and bushes might be blocking the view. I will walk down a short, paved path to get to the nature center building.



Vestibule/Entryway

When I arrive, I will go through a set of doors to get to the entryway.



I will see a bathroom with a locking door. I will see an elevator. I will see a drinking fountain. I will also see the door to the inside of the nature center.



Vestibule Bathroom

In this bathroom there is a toilet with an automatic flush and an automatic soap dispenser. I will also see a loud hand dryer and an automatic paper towel dispenser in the bathroom. After I wash my hands, I can choose how I want to dry them.



Lobby/Front Desk

When I walk into the nature center, I will see the front desk and the lobby with exhibits. I can ask the receptionist at the front desk if:

- I have questions or need help.
- I need to check in for a program or pay any program fees.
- I want to buy something from the nature center store.
- I want to pick up a paper map that I can keep.



I can explore the exhibits.



If I want to sit down, there is seating near the fireplace.



Restrooms

If I need to use the restroom, I can find one in the lobby across from the front desk. There is one in the vestibule by the front door, too. I will see that all of the toilets are automatic flush. The inside bathrooms have automatic soap dispensers and automatic paper towel dispensers.



Maple Classroom/Library

If I walk down the long hallway, past the bathroom, I will find the Maple Classroom. I will see windows along one wall of the classroom and books along another wall. This is a fun spot to look through the windows for birds at the birdfeeders outside. If I need a quiet space, this is a good place to go to. There are chairs I can sit on.



Tamarack and Oak Classroom

On the other side of the lobby, I will see two doors that go into two classrooms. One classroom is called Tamarack. The other is called Oak.



Sometimes, the partition is open so the two classrooms become one big room.



On the Tamarack Classroom side, there are animals in enclosures that I can look at. There are snakes, frogs and toads, turtles, and a salamander. I will not tap on the glass of the enclosures because it scares the animals. There might be activities set out for me to try, like puppets, blocks, or a puzzle. On the Oak Classroom side, there are large windows with a view of the forest. If there are furs or other items on the counter, I can touch them.



Balcony

I will see a door that leads to the balcony. I can go out this door to get to the balcony. On the balcony there are rocking chairs and benches for me to sit on.



If I look into the backyard, I will see the raptor enclosures and the sugar shack building. The raptor enclosure houses three raptors that I might be able to see: an owl, a falcon, and a hawk. If it's February, March, or April, I might be able to see maple syrup cooking in the sugar shack.



Getting to the Lower Level: Elevator or Stairs

There are two floors in the nature center. I can get to the lower level by taking the stairs in the lobby.



I can also choose to take the elevator that is located in the entrance vestibule.



Lower Level

On the lower level, I will see a big space that has lots of tables and chairs. It looks like a cafeteria. Sometimes students eat lunch here. There is also a corner that is used as a classroom. I will see a rug and a white board in that corner. I will see a door that goes out to the backyard.



There is a small kitchen for the staff to use.



Raptor Mew

I will see three raptors in the raptor mew. Raptors are birds that catch food with their feet. I will see a big owl, a small falcon, and a big hawk. I will stay behind the railing and use a quiet voice when I look at the raptors. I can see pictures of the raptors attached to the railing.



Sugar Shack

I will see a building in the backyard called the sugar shack. I will notice the sugar shack only has two walls. At the end of winter, I might see maple syrup cooking in the sugar shack. I can take a break in the sugar shack if I am being safe.



Trails

I will see trails that lead away from the nature center building. I can use a map to learn where the trails go. I will see a metal map on a post in the backyard. I can get my own paper map from the front desk.

Some of the trails have woodchips for me to walk on. Some of the trails have gravel for me to walk on. Some of the trails have grass for me to walk on. Some of the trails have blacktop for me to walk on. Some trails have bridges for me to walk across. I can ask nature center staff about what trails would be best for me.



Nature Exploration Area

If I walk down the trail to the right of the raptors, I will find the Nature Exploration Area. In this area, I can climb on logs and boulders. I can build forts. I can explore. I can look for toads and bugs. I can walk across a bridge. I can sit and enjoy nature.



Habitats Play Area

Habitats Play Area is a small playground with different places for me to explore. There is a slide that is up high. I have to take steps to get to the top. There are two other slides called otter slides for me to go down. There is a pretend beaver den. There are pretend lily pads to jump on. There is a big umbrella to block the sun on hot days. There are trails that lead out of Habitats Play Area.



Crosby Dock

I can visit the dock by Crosby Lake. I might see ducks, geese, or swans on the water. I might see turtles, fish, or insects in the water. I might see birds flying over the water.

I need to keep my feet and my body on top of the dock. If I want to feel the water with my hand, I need to get down and put my belly on the dock and then reach down into the water. This is how I stay safe.



Leaving Lowry Nature Center

When it is time to leave, I will gather my things and head back to the parking lot. I can come back to Lowry Nature Center to visit on another day and do the same activities or different activities. I can bring a program guide booklet home with me to learn about other activities I might like.

