



*Tour:* **Ozark Outdoors**  
 STEM, History & Outdoor Education

*Destination:* **Branson, Missouri**

*Specialization:* Ecology, Biology, Physics, Geology, Animal Sciences, History & Culture

*Itinerary:* 5-days / 4-nights

Ozark Outdoors: STEM, History & Outdoor Education			
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
1	Travel to Branson, Missouri; transfer to hotel and check-in		Welcome, Safety & Orientation Briefing
2	Silver Dollar City: Roller Coaster Physics Master Class + Ozarks Cave Geology Tour + Theme Park Rides & Fun		Dinner & The Track - Go Carts & Fun
3	The National Tiger Sanctuary + Big Cat Master Class	Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery at Table Rock Lake	Pizza Party & Branson Ferris Wheel
4	Dogwood Canyon + Wildlife Tram Tour + 'Conservation Stream' Ecosystem Master Class		The Titanic Museum
5	Depart for Home		Nature & Ecology Ozarks Kayak Tour on Lake Taneycomo
			Dinner & WonderWorks
			Dixie Stampede Dinner Show Attraction



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



**STEM STUDY TOURS**  
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## Day 1

Dinner

*Branson...* Branson is a small Missouri town set in the stunning Ozarks and known for tourism and family values. Its Main Street drag is famously lined with theatres and the town which once hosted mostly music performers, today presents diverse entertainment and a wide range of outdoor activities.

In our Ozarks Outdoors trip, students will get to explore a great selection of fabulous activities. From incredible cave geology to studying the physics of rollercoasters at an international award-winning theme park, from the history of the Titanic to learning about the big cats at the National Tiger Sanctuary, this trip is a perfect get-away for fun and education, all within the stunning Ozark Mountains. In your spare time, you can enjoy everything from mountain roller coasters to ziplines, tubing to trout fishing.



### *Did you know?*

- ✓ The state of Missouri was named after a tribe of Sioux Indians of the state called the Missouris. The word "Missouri" means "wooden canoe people" or "he of the big canoe."
- ✓ Missouri is known as the "Show Me State". The state expression is believed to have begun in 1899 when Congressman Willard Duncan Vandiver stated, "I'm from Missouri and you've got to show me."
- ✓ Jesse Woodson James was born in Kearney, Missouri, the son of a Baptist minister. Some believe that cruel treatment by Union soldiers during the Civil War was what turned Jesse and his brother Frank to a life of crime after the war. Jesse was a known traveler in the Ozarks.
- ✓ Before tourism and during Prohibition, the making of moonshine was a profitable underground Ozarks enterprise. "Taney Country Scotch" and "Booger County Bourbon" were slang names for the product.
- ✓ Missouri ties with Tennessee as the most "neighborly" state in the U.S., bordered by eight states.
- ✓ Missouri has 6,000 recorded caves. Nearly 20 caves are called or connected to saltpeter, which was mined in some caves in the early 1800's because nitrate was needed for the manufacture of gunpowder.
- ✓ Kansas City, Missouri has more fountains than any city in the world except Rome. Hence Kansas City is known as the City of Fountains.
- ✓ St. Joseph, Missouri was the starting point of the famed Pony Express.



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Groups participating in Ozark Outdoors will generally arrive in Branson, Missouri in the afternoon hours. Upon arrival, we will get settled into our hotel, have our Welcome & Safety Meeting, then head out for our first night of fun!



**Sample Hotel – The Welk Resort Branson:** Nestled in the breathtaking Ozark Mountains, the Welk Resort offers great hotel accommodations, a full-service restaurant, exceptional amenities and the perfect location. All hotel rooms feature complimentary WiFi Internet access, data ports, cable television, coffee/tea maker, hair dryer, and all the expected room and bath amenities. Take in the view of the hotel's award-winning gardens from the outdoor patio and enjoy family friendly amenities such as a playground, miniature golf course and game room. Relax in the outdoor pool and cabana covered spa or stay active in the on-site fitness room. The Welk Resort also offers a gift store in addition to a beautiful 2,300-seat theater. Rooms sleep four students in two queen beds per room. Breakfasts are taken on property.

After getting settled in, we'll have dinner locally and then have some fun – on Go Carts!



**The Track** – At the Track Family Fun Park, you're sure to have a blast! Check out the go-kart tracks, water blaster-equipped bumper boats, themed miniature golf courses, plus more! 2-hours of time are included.

## **Day 2**

*Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own*

Rise, shine and get ready for an action-packed day! Today we're on our way to Silver Dollar City!

**Silver Dollar City Theme Park** - Travel back in time to the simplicity of 1880s America. At Silver Dollar City, you'll discover attractions, shows and entertainment including toe tapping harmonies, hilarious comedy and traditional favorites. Take a turn on over 30 fun-filled rides and attractions, meet over 100 demonstrating craftsmen whose skills have been passed down from generations of dedicated artisans creating heirloom keepsakes right before your very eyes, sample fares from a dozen delightful restaurants showcasing the Heartland's unique style of country cooking. Enjoy!



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While at Silver Dollar City, groups will participate in two Master Classes allowing for plenty of time to have fun for crafts, rides and shopping.



***Spelunkin' In Marvel Cave*** - Have you ever wondered what it was like to be a real cave explorer? We'll gear up and hold on as we join a cave guide (or spelunker) through Marvel Cave, one of Missouri's deepest treasures. Learn about Marvel Cave's beginning, its rock formations, its living creatures and other fun facts along the way.

Specific concepts include stalactite and stalagmite speleothem identification, area animal identification, understanding the effect of geography and climate on cave plant and animal life, and learning how human activity impacts the ecology of the cave. 1-hour in duration and led by a specialist cave guide.

***Ecology of Marvel Cave*** - Additionally, this **teacher-led cave lesson** may also be incorporated on Ecology. Believe it or not, Missouri is currently home to over 6,000 caves. To explore this ecology lesson, students will list the biotic and abiotic factors that they encounter.

Next, we'll explore Physics... Trip Leaders may choose one or include both of these **teacher-led** (self-guided) lessons for participation.

***The Physics of Roller Coasters*** - Imagine yourself rushing through the air at over 65 mph feeling weightless as you descend from a loop that made your stomach jump with excitement. You have just experienced one of Silver Dollar City's wild roller coasters! Have you ever thought about how fast you were going as you fell? Welcome to the wonderful world of physics where every inch of track and every bit of speed counts. Test out some of Silver Dollar City's coasters and learn the facts as you figure out the velocity as they fall. Who ever said learning can't be fun? This program is teacher-led (self-guided) and takes up to 3-hours. Students participating should have a good understanding of physics terms and formulas. SDC provides the instruction material.



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**Potential & Kinetic Energy** – Energy for the body comes in all forms: drinks, chocolate, and sunlight just to name a few. When it comes to Physics in motion, energy comes in two main forms: Potential and Kinetic. Each plays a very significant role in the enjoyment and safety of a roller coaster ride. Both Potential and Kinetic energy affect a rider's emotions, adrenaline levels, and nervous system. Grab a friend and go see what happens as you come across high levels of Potential and Kinetic energy. Then complete the fun activity which identifies a few of those areas. This program is teacher-led (self-guided) and takes up to 3-hours. SDC provides the instruction material.

Next, we're off to explore some incredible history....

**The Titanic** - As the whole world remembers the world's most famous luxury liner, the Titanic Museum in Branson will continue to open the door to the past in its one-of-a-kind way – letting “passengers” experience what it was like to walk the hallways, parlors, cabins and grand staircase of the *Titanic* while surrounded by more than 400 artifacts directly from the ship and its passengers. As students touch a real iceberg, walk the grand staircase and third-class hallways, reach their hands into 28-degree water, and try to stand on the sloping decks, they learn what it was like on the RMS Titanic by experiencing it first-hand.



The tragic story of Titanic has been with us for more than 99 years. It is more than just the account of perhaps the most memorable maritime catastrophe of the 20th century. Titanic is a lasting symbol of the great age of immigration that brought the hopes and dreams of many people to our shores. The Titanic Museum promotes the awareness and knowledge of the world's diverse cultures by recreating actual rooms of the Titanic and by displaying actual objects that bring to life individuals and events that have had a significant impact on human history. [Titanic Education Guide](#)

After we've had an opportunity to learn about the incredible Titanic, we will wrap up with a pizza party and then a spin on the Branson Ferris Wheel!

**Branson Ferris Wheel** - The Branson Ferris Wheel was formerly Chicago's iconic Navy Pier Ferris Wheel, ridden by nearly 17 million people from 1995 to 2015. Standing 150 feet tall, its 40 gondolas hold 240 riders, and it lights up the night with 16,000 LED lights. The Branson Ferris Wheel boasts spectacular views of the famed entertainment corridor and the picturesque Ozark Mountains.



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### **Day 3**

*Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own*

Good morning Ozarks! After breakfast in our hotel, we're off for a fascinating experience...



***National Tiger Sanctuary*** – With a classroom nestled in the Ozark Mountains, the National Tiger Sanctuary educates all ages about the environment, the ecosystem, and even how to tell the difference between individual tigers just through observation of mannerisms. The National Tiger Sanctuary is a non-profit organization established in 2000 to create a safe and protected environment, also utilized by national zoos to assist with the Species Survival Programs. The sanctuary's focus is on big cats as examples of the beauty and diversity needed to preserve the survival of our planet by providing a safe, stress free, forever home for the animals. Our specialized tour will include classroom time, viewing of the big cats, and feeding (teachers will feed the cats). We'll get to watch as the cats' different personalities emerge when being fed; their distinctive behavior fascinating to see and hear. Approximately 2-hours.

In the late afternoon, we'll check out the local Fish Hatchery.

***Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery*** - Beneath the dam, the Missouri Department of Conservation operates a fish hatchery used to stock trout in adjacent Lake Taneycomo. Since trout cannot naturally reproduce in Lake Taneycomo because of the fluctuating water levels, Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery produces more than 400,000 pounds of trout every year. Not only does it supply Lake Taneycomo with trout, but also to most Missouri hatcheries and some Missouri rivers and creeks. The dams have created the ideal environment for trout, a fish that thrives at lower water temperatures.



Next, it's time to immerse yourself in the great outdoors!



***Nature & Ecology Ozarks Kayak Tour*** - White River Kayaking is dedicated to the sport and spirit of kayaking and the enjoyment of nature at its most intimate level. Kayaking lets you quietly enter a unique habitat and closely observe its wildlife undisturbed. Groups will meet their Ozarks guides and after getting fitted with your life jacket, receive an introductory lesson to kayaking and basic water safety. Get ready to paddle as we tour the beautiful Lake Taneycomo to see amazing wildlife, geology and nature at every curve. Groups can choose from single or tandem kayaks.



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After our exciting day, we will wrap up with dinner and then some evening fun at WonderWorks.

**WonderWorks: An Amusement Park for the Mind** – WonderWorks is an indoor amusement park with 48,000 square feet of “edu-tainment”. The attraction combines education and entertainment with more than 100 hands on exhibits that challenge the mind and spark the imagination. What is the state of matter? Can you get your kicks on route 66? What is Branson’s most famous fish? What does it feel like to go ZERO GRAVITY? Find the answers to these questions and more in an evening of fun!



#### **Day 4**

*Breakfast & dinner included; lunch on own*

Rise and shine Branson! After breakfast in our hotel we will set off for our final day of adventure. Today we will be traveling about 45 minutes outside of Branson to Johnny Morris’ (Bass Pro / Cabela’s) beautiful Dogwood Canyon. We will grab a packed lunch en route so we can have a picnic in the park!

**Dogwood Canyon Nature Park** - Dogwood Canyon’s aim is to inspire the next generation of conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts. This 10,000-acre paradise focuses on protecting the natural environment and its wildlife and plant life by promoting the acquiring and maintaining of ecologically significant, undeveloped land to benefit the general public. Aside from a few amenities to make Dogwood Canyon Nature Park more accessible to our guests, the rugged landscape has been left untouched and, with just a little imagination, you can travel back to a time when European settlers first entered the area or, even further, to explore the mark that Native Americans left on these Missouri hills and hollows.



**Wildlife Tram Tour** - Call it a “ride on the wild side.” Step aboard the comfortable, open-air trams and explore the beauty of Dogwood Canyon on the very informative 2-hour narrated Wildlife Tram Tour. You’ll wind through the canyon floor, past towering bluffs and waterfalls, and make stops at the 1800’s-style Chapel, Thunder Falls Crossing to feed the fish, and Glory Hole (a magnificent blue-green pool where some of the park’s largest trout reside). Then, cross the Arkansas border and enter the Bison~Elk Country pasture where you’ll encounter some of the largest residents of Dogwood Canyon, American bison, elk, whitetail deer and Texas longhorn.

After getting our feel for the park, we’ll jump into a specialized Conservation Master Class!



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***Conservation Stream Ecosystem EdVenture*** - We will start with a 10 to 15-minute hike to the classroom site in the beautiful Ozark Mountains. During the class, students will learn how aquatic invertebrates can be used as an indicator of water quality and the important role they play in the stream ecosystem. Students will split into groups so that some can enter the stream to collect aquatic insects, crawfish and other invertebrates, while others on the bank will work to identify what their classmates have gathered. \*Close-toed shoes that strap to the feet must be worn for this program. Old tennis shoes, Chaco's or water shoes are acceptable. Participants may also want to bring extra shoes and clothes to change into afterwards.

This evening we will have time for one last amazing adventure. We're off to the Stampede!



***Dolly Parton's Stampede Dinner Show*** - Amidst the fog, the sound of beating hooves begins to grow...the crowd watches in amazement and the excitement spreads throughout the grand arena...suddenly, as if by magic, a herd of wild buffalo appears. Welcome to the Stampede! A fun-filled, action-packed Dinner and Show extravaganza celebrating the Wild West. It's the only place that brings together stunning performers, amazing horse feats, fantastic stunt riders, magic and audience participation with a delicious four-course dinner extravaganza!

## **Day 5**

*Breakfast included*

Good morning Missouri! This morning we will get packed and ready for departure. We will wave goodbye to our new friends as we leave for home and hopefully, take away memories that will last a lifetime!

*Farewell Branson!*



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## Some additional activity possibilities to make an awesome trip!

[College of the Ozarks Campus Tour](#)

[The Butterfly Palace](#)

[The Hollywood Wax Museum](#)

[The Branson Landing](#)

[Branson Zipline](#)

[Snowflex Tubing Hill](#)

[Table Rock Dam and Dewey Short Visitor's Center](#)

[Branson Scenic Railway](#)

[Sightseeing Cruises on Lake Taneycomo](#)

[The Veteran's Memorial Museum](#)

[Wonders of Wildlife Museum \(Springfield\)](#)

[Runaway Mountain Coaster](#)

[The Showboat Branson Belle](#)



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## OZARK OUTDOORS: STEM, History & Outdoor Education

**Minimum Booking Numbers:** 20 students

**What's Included:**

- Roundtrip flights or motorcoach transfers
- 4-nights' accommodation
- Breakfasts & dinners daily
- The Track (2-hours of play) excursion
- Silver Dollar City Theme Park
- Marvel Cave – Ozarks Cave Geology Tour
- Roller Coaster Physics – Self-Guided Class
- The Titanic Museum
- Branson Ferris Wheel
- National Tiger Sanctuary + Master Class Tour
- Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery
- Nature & Ecology Kayak Tour on Lake Taneycomo
- WonderWorks
- Dogwood Canyon Nature Park + Wildlife Tram Tour
- Conservation Stream Ecosystem Master Class
- Dolly Parton's Stampede Dinner Show
- Personal Tour Ambassador
- Fund-a-Forest: A tree is planted in the name of each guest
- Dollar\$ For Scholars: \$2 donation in the name of each guest
- 24-hour emergency cover

**What's Not Included:**

- Airport transfers in your home area
- Fully comprehensive insurance (mandatory)
- Lunch, snacks and extra beverages in destination
- Transportation not indicated in itinerary
- Cost of visas, full or collective passports
- Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
- Additional sightseeing & entertainment options
- Hotel incidental bills – meals, mini-bar items, recreation charges, purchases billed to room, etc.
- Personal expenditures
- Any gratuities – drivers, hotel services, tour ambassador, private guides
- Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or service charges levied by the governments or our suppliers
- Luggage handling

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As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming.  
If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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