



## General Program Topics

**Earth Awareness** - A series of highly participatory activities and interpretive experiences focused upon connecting with Nature through heightened senses, guided explorations, and self-discovery. Specific involvements may include:

- *Series of Nature Games*
- *Sensory-based Hunts*
- *Discovery Stations (solving mysteries)*
- *Nature "Show and Tell"*
- *Seasonal Nature Hikes*

**Field Ecology** - Interpretive experiences focused upon life, their interactions with one another, and their relationships with the environment. Field Ecology programs are generally habitat-based, reflect seasonal influences, and may include the following:

- *Terrestrial Ecology*: studies in field, shrub or forest.
- *Aquatic Ecology*: studies in standing water systems (lentic) – lake, pond, marsh, swamp and bog; or in flowing water systems (lotic) – streams and rivers.

**Wildlife Studies** - This area includes a wide range of programs focused upon wildlife adaptations, behaviors, vocalizations, lifestyles, and life signs. Topics include:

- *Wildlife Adaptations*: utilizes an extensive collection of animal pelts with a focus on Mammal studies.
- *Skulls and Bones*: a collection of skulls/bones are used to teach about wildlife lifestyles and food choices.
- *Animal Talk*: the language of animals is taught through calls, recordings, and instructor/group vocalizations.
- *Bird Studies*: with a collection of mounts, feathers, skulls, and vocalizations, participants learn bird identification and behaviors.
- *Wilderness Animals*: utilizes mounts, furs, skulls, and entire skeletons to learn of wilderness and, in particular, animals associated with this environment, such as the Timber Wolf, Grizzly Bear, and Moose.
- *Web of Life Puzzles*: with two very large puzzles depicting forest and pond ecosystems, we convey the interactions and interconnection of life within these systems.

**Botanical Studies** - These include several programs focused upon plant identification, ecology, and uses of our local plants. Topics include:

- *Wildflower Surveys*: using field guides and instructor expertise, we focus on wildflower identification, classification, ecology, and uses of local wildflowers.
- *Tree Surveys*: utilizes activities and guided exploration to focus upon tree identification, classification, ecology, use, and, if desired, lessons in forest management.
- *Herbalism*: a unique program that shares an understanding of wild plants as food and medicine by means of plant identification, ecology, folklore, and chemical properties. A follow-up to fieldwork involves a sampling of remedies and concoctions from the "Travelling Medicine Show" and, in some cases, lessons in the actual preparation of these timeless medicines.



**Native American Studies** – This program involves discussion and activities focused upon the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) People of New York State and may include the following:

- *Iroquois History and Culture*
- *Storytelling*
- *Artifacts Collection*
- *Historic Games*

**Winter Adventures** - A variety of experiences that highlight Winter recreation, survival skills, and ecology, including the following:

- *Snowshoeing*: a brief indoor introduction to snowshoe history and design followed by fieldwork focused upon snowshoe skills, games, and Winter ecology. NOTE: Earth Spirit staff utilizes both traditional and high-tech snowshoes for its programs.
- *Snow Shelter Construction*: includes the skills, tools, and varied techniques for constructing a functional snow shelter (Quinzee).
- *Wildlife Tracking*: an indoor introduction to tracking utilizing a life-size collection of animals tracks followed by fieldwork in the areas of track patterns, walker types, and the various means of identifying the tracks.

**Maple Sugaring** - Earth Spirit staff share the art and science of Maple Sugaring as practiced by Native Americans, early settlers, and modern producers. Specific teaching stations may include:

- *Collecting the Sap*
- *Making the Syrup*
- *Gifts of the Trees Hike*
- *Historic Games*

**Live Animal Demonstrations** - Using fully-licensed instructors, we work with both native and non-native wildlife species in an educational setting. These demonstrations may include:

- *Reptiles and Amphibians*: classroom discussions on the adaptations, behaviors, and ecology of reptiles and amphibians which may include individuals ranging from snakes, turtles, lizards, and alligators to frogs and salamanders.
- *Birds of Prey*: a general overview of Birds of Prey regarding adaptations, behaviors, and ecology and could include various species of hawks, owls, and falcons.

**Survival Studies** - A series of lessons focused upon survival skills training designed to enable participants to feel more comfortable and confident in “wild” settings. Specific topics may include:

- *Shelter Construction*
- *Fire-building Techniques*
- *Water Gathering/Purification*
- *Foraging Skills (wild foods and medicines)*
- *Primitive Tool-making*
- *Maps and Compass*
- *Reading the Landscape*