



## General Program Topics

Programs can and will be tailored to your needs if possible. Please contact us with any questions regarding program descriptions.

**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 backyard, 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 multiple very large puzzles depicting various 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 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. (A limited number [appx 25 pair] of snowshoes will be provided)
- **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 animal 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. Program available in March only. Specific teaching stations may include:

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

**Live Animal Demonstrations** - Using trained 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.
- **Magnificent Mammals**: classroom discussions on the adaptations, behaviors, and ecology of mammals.
- **Creepy Crawlies**: an investigation into the lives of our six, eight, and multi-legged friends from the world of the insects, arachnids, and crustaceans.

**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*
- *Survival Priorities*
- *Foraging Skills (wild foods and medicines)*
- *Primitive Tool-making*
- *Maps and Compass*