

University of Rhode Island W. Alton Jones Campus

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Natural Science

Forest Ecology Learn the basic components of forest ecosystems through exploration of plants, insects, and wildlife. Concepts include trophic levels, succession, diversity, adaptation, and interdependence.

Wetland Ecology Investigate the role and importance of wetlands and visit a pond for hands-on sampling of aquatic organisms and water testing. Concepts include wetland, watershed, biotic index, water quality testing, and human impact.

Wildlife Ecology Explore local wildlife species and how they interact with their natural surroundings. Includes explorations of different local communities. Concepts include niches, limiting factors, and habitat.

Geology Explore the landscape and learn about the forces that shaped New England. Students will visit sites that show evidence of glacial geology. Concepts include glaciation, soil profile, bedrock, and ice age.

Winter Ecology* Learn how plants and animals adapt to survive the cold winter months. Students explore animal tracks, birds, plants, and aquatic life under the icy ponds. Concepts include migration, adaptation, and hibernation. *Seasonal: Available January, February, and March.*

Predator Prey* Role-play organisms in a food web to learn about the complex movement of energy through an ecosystem. This active game includes the concepts of food web, bio-magnification, and predator/prey relationships. *Seasonal: Available fall and spring.*

Social Science

Living History Experience history while traveling through a rural Rhode Island community in the 1830s. Along the way you will meet a variety of characters such as a farmer, housewife, schoolteacher, child, and tavern keeper. Concepts include colonial history, New England agricultural community, and early American way of life. *This program requires that a visiting schoolteacher or parent accompany each field group.*

Early American History Investigate foundations, stonewalls, cemeteries, and historic buildings to gain an understanding of life in early America. Concepts include pioneer, folklore, human impact, and succession.

Archaeology* Learn the basic principles of archaeology through hands-on discovery as they participate in the excavation of a historic site on the campus. Concepts include feature, artifact, and culture. *Seasonal: Available fall and spring.*

Farm Life* Visit the Woodvale Farm and learn about farming, animal husbandry and organic gardening. Concepts include agriculture, composting, land use, and sustainable methods. *Seasonal: Available April, May, and June.*

Adventure

Group Building Through problem solving activities that stress cooperation, students develop leadership, communication, planning skills, and build trust with one another. Concepts include teamwork, communication, cooperation, community, and trust. *This can be further enhanced by a trip to the challenge course.*

Challenge Course Continue developing group-building skills at a challenge course, including permanent cooperative elements nestled in the forest. Concepts include teamwork, trust, focus, listening skills, and communication.

Orienteering Learn to use a map and compass to pinpoint your location and find your way through the forest. Concepts include topographic, magnetic north, true north, and navigation.

Outdoor Skills Learn basic outdoor wilderness skills that can be applied to a day hike or an overnight trip. Concepts include leave-no-trace, preparation, planning, and wilderness.

Evening Programs

Night/Dusk Hike Explore the natural world at night while learning about nocturnal animals and their adaptations. Concepts include nocturnal, diurnal, crepuscular, photoreceptors, and bioluminescence. *Night Hike may be scheduled as a half or full evening program. After May 10th, due to late sunsets evening hikes take place mainly in twilight conditions.*

Campfire Build community through singing, telling stories, and acting in skits keeps everyone entertained around the fire. Concepts include community, old-fashioned entertainment, and fun.

Town Meeting/Development Skit Role-play the participants of a town meeting to explore and discuss environmental issues. Concepts include development, decision-making, and natural resources.

Complement Adventure Programs:

New Games Participate in cooperative, inclusive, outdoor games. Concepts include fair play, cooperation, and safety.

Egg Drop Work together to create a protective shell for an egg using natural materials. Once completed, dropping them from various heights tests the constructions. Concepts include teamwork and planning.

The Mysterious Thing A hidden object can only be viewed by a few people. Their job is to describe it through a line of communication to their team as they try to create an exact replica. Concepts include communication and teamwork.

Complement Natural Science Programs:

Nature Quiz Show Participate in various quiz show games to illustrate and reinforce concepts covered during the Alton Jones program.

Night Sky Learn about stars, planets, moon phases and seasonal constellations. Concepts include constellations, star myths, circumpolar and astronomy. *Does not require a clear night.*

Paper Bag Skits Students are given several props, and environmental question and time to create a skit to perform for the other students. Concepts include myths, teamwork, and fun.

Complement Social Science Programs:

Underground Railroad* In this simulation activity, students role-play as slaves and travel a route to “freedom.” On the way they encounter safe houses, conductors, and bounty hunters. Concepts include slave trade, abolitionist, conductor, and bounty hunter. *This program requires that a visiting schoolteacher or parent accompany each field group. Seasonal: Available September through early April.*

* Indicates a seasonal program.