

# THE LEARNING LANDSCAPE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FIELD TRIP AT ROGER WILLIAMS PARK BOTANICAL CENTER



## ECOSYSTEMS AND CLIMATE ZONES

The Roger Williams Park Botanical Center greenhouses and conservatory provide a perfect setting for exploring the concepts of ecosystem, climate zone, and adaptation. Students are invited to explore non-native plants while learning about the average temperatures and precipitation common to different regions of the earth. Their journey includes investigating cactus and succulents typical to desert biomes, as well as tropical and subtropical forest flora. Students even have a close encounter with a carnivorous plant bog. Have you ever fed a Venus Flytrap? Learning Landscape students have!



## NATIVE MAMMALS

Have you ever wondered what coyote fur feels like? Do you know which mammal is also the only native North American marsupial? What can teeth tell us about what an animal eats and how it lives? Discover the wild native mammals that make New England their home. Students are invited to participate in an up-close investigation of skins and skulls to answer these questions, and many more!



## NATIVE BIRDS

What makes birds unique in the animal kingdom? Why, feathers, of course! See how the structure of a feather helps to make flight possible. Students investigate wings, beaks, and feet to understand what various adaptations tell us about the birds in our own backyard. They also gain an appreciation for birds as architects by studying nest design and materials.



## RECYCLE, REUSE AND RENEW

Everyone knows that they should recycle, but do you know what happens to recycled materials after you put them in the bin? Did you know that the fleece sweatshirt in your closet may have fibers made from recycled plastic milk bottles? Or that glass must be sorted by color before it can be melted down for reuse? Students learn some fun recycling facts while making a project to take home that uses recyclable materials.



## SEED STARTING

Growing your own plants from seed can be fun and rewarding, and that's something that the students who visit the Learning Landscape understand first-hand. Using planters that they make themselves, students plant seeds to bring home. At the same time, they learn about what seeds need in order to germinate, and how to care for the plants that they grow themselves.



## SEED DIVERSITY

Do you know the difference between a monocot and a dicot, or which seed is the world's largest? Can you name ten seeds that you eat on a regular basis? Students learn the answers to these questions and more as they explore seeds of all sizes and shapes. Take a moment to consider that flour is made from wheat seeds, that the largest coconuts can weigh as much as forty pounds, or that tiny dandelion and milkweed seeds have their own "parachutes" to carry them on the wind. You're sure to agree that there is much to be learned from the diverse world of seeds.



## WORMS AND DECOMPOSERS

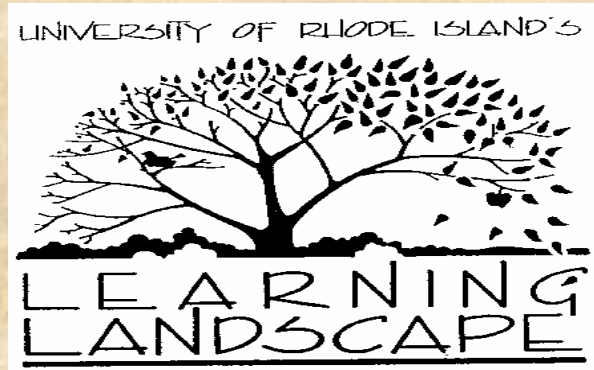


Did you know that there can be as many as a million earthworms living under an acre of undeveloped land? Worms and other decomposers are a critical link in the natural pyramid, returning nutrients to the soil, which in turn support plant growth. Students investigate a vermicomposting bin, and have the opportunity to study a population of Red Wiggler earthworms.



## THE LEARNING LANDSCAPE NATURE JOURNAL

Every student who visits the Learning Landscape is provided with a journaling tool that can be used either at school or at home to review and apply the concepts that they learned on their field trip. Students are encouraged to observe the natural world around them, and record what they see, both in pictures and words.



Call the URI CELS Outreach Center at 874-2900 for information.  
We hope to see *YOU* in the Learning Landscape!