

INTO THE FOREST

SUMMARY

Explore the deciduous forest on a hike with our woodland experts. Examine unique seasonal plants and how they fit into the forest.

GRADE LEVEL: 3-6

ACTIVITY DURATION: 1 hour

SETTING: Outdoors, along the trail system.

SUBJECT AREAS: Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity, Hereditary: Inheritance and Variation of Traits, Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

NGSS: 3-LS-2, 3-LS4-2, 3-LS4-3, 4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 5-LS1-1, MS-LS1-4, MS-LS1-5

OBJECTIVES: This program is designed to introduce students to seasonal native plants and show them unique features of each species introduced and how these features have helped plants adapt to the Eastern United States Deciduous Forest Ecosystem. By the end of the program, students will be able to:

- Define what a Deciduous Forest is
- Distinguish unique ways plants attract pollinators and encourage pollination
- Give examples of adaptations in plants as a result of their environment
- Give examples of adaptations developed by plants to avoid predation

COOPERATIVE APPROACH: This program works well with *Woodland Wildlife*. Students will learn the adaptations of the wildlife and the plant life of the Eastern United States Deciduous Forest.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: Many students are aware that they live in the deciduous forest, but they may not know what it entails. Plant life in the eastern deciduous forest is adapted for the climate, soil, and wildlife that reside there. This ecosystem is unique and has many species with inventive adaptations that go unnoticed by the casual passerby. This program will help kindle an appreciation for our nature that is right outside and not a world away.

ALTERATIONS:

Grades K-3

Without changes, this program may be too intense for a K-2 audience. Therefore, to provide a K-2 group with the program several alterations would be required. Changes would include:

- Shortening the tour to only 30 minutes by reducing interpretive stops (seasonally variable)
- Altering the content of the discussion appeal to the K-2 knowledge base.

Grades 7-12

Without changes, this program may not reach the expectations of the 7-12 knowledge base. Therefore, to provide grades 7-12 with the *Woodland Wildlife* program, guides will incorporate more in depth information pertaining to ecology and biology. It is recommended that one of the STEM extensions also be applied.

EXTENSION:

STEM

The Into the Forest program can be extended into a longer program in which principles of STEM, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math are applied. Such extensions can include:

Habitat comparison - visiting other habitats on the park such as the Prairie or Wetland. Additionally this program would pair well with the *Dominance in the Forest* program.

VOCABULARY: Striation, Ephemeral, Corm, Tuber, Ethnobotany