



Natural Literacy Program Winter 2019

Winter Break Day Camp

We offered Day Camp to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders for the five days of school break on a different Coastal Mountains Land Trust preserve each day. Ten children and several parents perfected the knack of snowshoeing. Each day Jenni taught facts and anecdotes about animals in winter through interactive songs, games, and dances.



Climbing down tree at Long Cove Headwaters Preserve



We enacted the lives of Snowshoe Hares at Long Cove Headwaters Preserve in Searsport, and we were Beavers at Meadow Brook Preserve in Swanville. The day we were Coyotes at Head of Tide Preserve in Belfast, we became three territorial Coyote families. Our last day at St. Clair Preserve, Knights Pond, Northport, we were Humans Enjoying Winter, playing games on the sunny frozen pond, and roasting hotdogs and marshmallows over a campfire.

Coyote circle at Head of Tide Preserve

Parents who were involved are now organizing an adventure club open to anyone with children. A Saturday hike has been scheduled each week for the next 3 months.



Campfire and cookout at Knights Pond, St. Clair Preserve



tracks, with indoor hands-on

Outdoor Leadership at Waldo County Tech Center

Twice a month we work with two high school classes at WCTC, teaching seasonal naturalist topics to broaden their outdoor skills. Winter has included non-migratory birds, mammal skulls, bones, specimens and identification

Ornithologist Mike Shannon teaching about birds at Waldo County Tech Center

keys, and outdoor practical experience tracking prints, browse, scat, and other sign. The high school students are sharing their nature learning with elementary and middle school students.

Drinkwater School

The 5th grade at Drinkwater asked for expertise in renewable energy, sustainability, and what can be done to help the world. We developed the “Great Energy Debate,” followed by calculating our Ecological Footprint (our impact on Earth’s resources), and developing strategies for saving energy and resources. To follow up in March, we’ll be making and testing the effectiveness of various designs of solar ovens.



Captain Albert Stevens School

Making Friends with Nature in the Elementary Schools was a hoot beginning the new year with owls. We researched their sizes and the many adaptations of this nocturnal predator from feathers to facial discs. We dissected owl pellets, thanks to Avian Haven and glued mouse bone displays.

Journaling is a big part of our learning. We got our hands into decorating the covers with shaving cream and food coloring. The result was uniquely marble-ous!

Searsport Elementary School

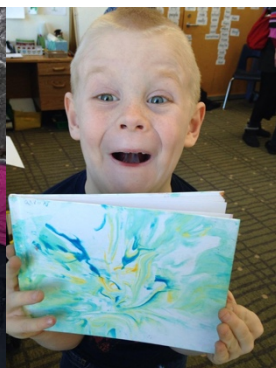
Winter Kids challenges folks to gear up and get outside. With some dedicated volunteers and teachers, Searsport Elementary students played games teaching animal adaptations and survival. On another day we explored tracks and shared a cup of Arborvitae (White Cedar) tea. We rallied with songs and in the end earned the Gold Award.



The Great Energy Debate at Drinkwater School



Getting outside and finding fun



Nature Journal cover design



Owl masks



Dissecting owl pellets, reconstructing the prey

Family Math Night at CASS



We filled Capt. Albert Stevens School lunchroom and the library with buzzing K-5 students and parents. Math games included shopping for groceries; laying out a house foundation; playing Mancala; tossing bean bags and keeping score; card, dice, and board games; counting games for the youngest; telling time and temperature;



math stories about fractions, decimals, and other functions; brain teasers; statistics taught with ball tossing and spinners; beehive geometry; Tangram puzzles, and more. Family Math Night brought in 39 children, 30 parents, and was put on by our 19 volunteers and principal Glen Widmer, for a total of 89 people working together and having fun.



One result has been the creation of a weekly Puzzle Club with online brain teasers and problem-solving for participants to collaborate on. Problem solving and collaboration improve science and literacy, as does Family Math Night.



Bottom line: In January and February 2019, we worked with 631 students for 75 program hours, giving a total of 1,203 student contact hours, with the help of 25 volunteers.