



Northeastern CREEC

www/creec.org/region2

Linking Teachers with Environmental Education

SERVING BUTTE, GLENN, LASSEN, MODOC, PLUMAS, SHASTA, SISKIYOU, TEHAMA, & TRINITY COUNTIES

DECEMBER 2007

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Have a newsletter submission?

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Northeastern CREEC
Newsletter Distribution

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No Time To Read?

At least read this commentary on Richard Louv's book, *Last Child In the Woods*. Reprinted from the San Francisco Chronicle, the article provides numerous reasons for Environmental Education.

"Environmental Education gives teachers the opportunity to provide real life applicability to the Science and History/Social Science standards. But beyond standards, Environmental Education provides an opportunity to guide students to a more satisfying life and understand the impacts of their actions on our dwindling natural resources".



Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle
Tuesday, October 23, 2007

Yosemite National Park may be nice and all, but Tommy Nguyen of San Francisco would much prefer spending his day in front of a new video game or strolling around the mall with his buddies.

What, after all, is a 15-year-old supposed to do in what John Muir called "the grandest of all special temples of nature" without cell phone service?

"I'd rather be at the mall because you can enjoy yourself walking around looking at stuff as opposed to the woods," Nguyen said.

In Yosemite and other parks, he said, frowning his brow to emphasize the absurdly lopsided comparison, "the only thing you look at is the trees, grass and sky."

The notion of going on a hike, camping, fishing or backpacking is foreign to a growing number of young people in cities and suburbs around the nation, according to several polls and studies.

State and national parks, it seems, are good places for old folks to go, but the consensus among the younger set is that hiking boots aren't cool. Besides, images of nature can be downloaded these days.

It isn't just national forests and wilderness areas that young people are avoiding, according to the experts. Kids these days aren't digging holes, building tree houses, catching frogs or lizards, frolicking by the creek or even throwing dirt clods.



"Nature is increasingly an abstraction you watch on a nature channel," said Richard Louv, the author of the book "Last Child in the Woods," an account of how children are slowly disconnecting from the natural world.

A lot of it has to do with where people live -- 80 percent of the U.S. population lives in urban areas, where the opportunities for outdoor activity apart from supervised playgrounds and playing fields are limited.

But Louv said the problem runs deeper. Wealthy suburban white youngsters are also succumbing to what he calls "nature deficit disorder."

"Anywhere, even in Colorado, the standard answer you get when you ask a kid the last time he was in the mountains is 'I've never been to the mountains,'" Louv said. "And this is in a place where they can see the mountains outside their windows."

National polls indicate that children and teenagers play outdoors less than young people did in the past. Between 1997 and 2003, the proportion of children ages 9 to 12 who spent time hiking, walking, fishing, playing on the beach or gardening declined 50 percent, according to a University of Maryland study.

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The lack of outdoor activity is more pronounced in minority and lower-income communities. Latino parents, for example, were twice as likely as white parents to say their child never participated in an outdoor nature activity and three times more likely to say their child did not go to a park, playground or beach this past summer, according to the Public Policy Institute poll.

Video games, television and electronic entertainment are undoubtedly part of the problem. Nguyen, a high school sophomore, is part of a generation of teenage technophiles who always have a cell phone or iPod in their ear.

Nguyen said he plays video games two hours a day on average, but has been known to spend the whole day in front of a new game. He doesn't know anybody who camps, backpacks or who has ever built a tree fort.

Children between the ages of 8 and 18 spend an average of 6 1/2 hours a day with electronic media, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. The trend starts early. A 2002 study found that 8-year-olds could identify 25 percent more Pokemon characters than wildlife species.

Louv does not believe technology is the only reason for the lack of exposure to the outdoors. He said sensationalistic reporting of rare occurrences is a big reason why parents are reluctant to let their children out of the house, let alone wander through the woods or down by the creek.

Entrance fees at state and national parks also serve as barriers, Louv said. In the inner city, lack of maintenance and violence in the parks deter visitation. In the suburbs, neighborhood regulations discourage young people from using open space, Louv said.

"Just try to put up a basketball court in one of these gated communities, let alone build a tree house," Louv said.

The situation has caused great concern among parents, educators and physicians, many of whom believe the epidemic of childhood obesity in America is a direct result of the lack of outdoor activity.



Whiskeytown Falls, Whiskeytown NRA

FIELD TRIPS

Waterfall Week - Whiskeytown National Recreation Area

Who: K-12

When: May, 2008.

Where: Whiskeytown National Recreation Area

Cost: Free

Contact: Ranger Clinton Kane, 530.242.3451

Guided hikes to select waterfalls emphasizing both physical activity and science concepts will be provided to school groups. Contact the ranger to reserve a date and time.

To view park trails and maps: <http://www.nps.gov/whis/planyourvisit/hiking.htm>

LESSON PLAN IDEAS

Plastics: Deeper Consequences for our Environment

Now you can do something about the plastics littering our environment and teach science standards at the same time. Show your students the Wired Science Documentary, Earth: Flotsam Found recently aired on KIXE. The film covers the impact of plastics on our oceans and terrestrial habitats. The film is especially effective in demonstrating that plastic impacts exist in ocean habits and affect humans as plastics travel up the food chain. Beef up your instruction with real life lessons in the food chain, weather and oceanic systems.

Concepts: Weather, climate, oceans systems and food chain.

Suggested Grades:

4th: Life Science

5th: Earth Science

9th – 12th: Biology/Life Science (Ecology) and Earth Science (Energy in the Earth System)

Website: <http://www.pbs.org/kcet/wiredscience/episode>

Episode 102 (Earth: Flotsam Found)

Time: 15 minutes, watch it online.

GRANTS AND CONTESTS

WAL-MART Kids Recycling Challenge

Who: K-6 elementary schools

Deadline: Enrollment closes August 2, 2008

Contact: <http://www.kidsrecyclingchallenge.com/>

The Wal-Mart Kids Recycling Challenge is a fun and educational program that teaches students about recycling plastic bags while earning money for their schools. Participating schools earn \$5.00 for every 60 gallon collection bag they fill with plastic grocery bags and bring to a local Wal-Mart store for recycling by March 31, 2008. This annual contest has early sign up dates, usually by August 1st of each academic year. In addition to earning money, the top three schools earn prizes ranging from \$3,000 to \$1,000.

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DISNEY'S ENVIRONMENTALITY™ CHALLENGE

Who: Grades 3-4
ENROLL BY DECEMBER 14, 2007
Website: <http://disney.go.com/environmentality/dec/california.html>

The purpose of the DEC program is to encourage students to think and act environmentally at school, at home, and in their communities. The program is available to you as a result of a unique partnership between The Walt Disney Company, CEEIN, US EPA, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

2008 Arbor Day Poster Contest

Who: 5th Grade
Deadline: March 3, 2008
Contact: <http://www.arborday.org/kids/requestfreematerials/request.cfm>
Call: Kay Antunez, 916.653.7958

You and your students are invited to participate in the annual Arbor Day National Poster Contest sponsored by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (**CAL FIRE**) and the California Community Forests Foundation. Posters must depict the theme, "Trees are Terrific..... inside and out!"

Mail entries to:
2008 Arbor Day Poster Contest
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Shasta Regional Community Foundation-Scholarships

1355 Arboretum Drive, Suite B
Redding, CA 96003
530.244.1219
Contact: <http://www.shastarcf.org/applicationsdeadlines.cfm>

Who: Scholarships for high school seniors, numerous qualify criteria, but some are for science and education majors. Check website for deadlines and applications.

Young Naturalist Awards

Who: 7-12th grade students
Contest Deadline: March 1, 2008
Contact: <http://www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/youngnaturalistawards/>

The Young Naturalist Awards, a program from the American Museum of Natural History, is a research based essay contest to promote participation and communication in science. All entrants will receive a personalized letter from the judges. Contest winners, two from each grade, win cash scholarships awards from \$500 to \$2,500 and an all expense paid trip to the award ceremony in New York City. Winners essays' are published on the Museum's web site.

Brower Youth Awards

Who: Youth, ages 12 to 22 as of July 1, 2008
Applications for the **2008** Brower Youth Awards available to download by **December 1, 2007**
Residence: North America
Contact: 415.788.3666 x 144
bya@earthisland.org
<http://www.broweryouthawards.org>

An annual national award recognizing six young people for outstanding leadership and achievements in the fields of environmental and social justice. Winners receive a \$3,000 cash prize, a trip to California and a wilderness camping trip. Winners have the opportunity to develop deeper skills in leadership as well as ecosystem conservation, preservation and restoration work at the Earth Island Institute.

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes

Who: Youth, ages 8 to 18 as of April 30, 2008
Deadline: April 30, 2008
Contact: Barbara Anne Richman,
ba_richman@barronprize.org
Website: <http://www.barronprize.org/index.html>

An annual award honoring outstanding young leaders who have made a difference to people and our planet. Ten winners are selected nationwide. Half of the winners have focused on helping their communities and fellow humans. The second half have focused on protecting the health and sustainability of the environment. The prize places great emphasis on service above self. Winners receive \$2,000 to be applied towards higher education.

UPCOMING EVENTS

9th Annual Snow Goose Festival

P.O. Box 1063
Chico, CA 95927
When: January 25-27, 2008
Phone: 530. 345-1865 or 1 800. 852-8570 # 313
Website: <http://www.snowgoosefestival.org/>

The Snow Goose Festival's mission is to increase public awareness, understanding, appreciation and conservation of the diverse wildlife and unique habitats of the northern Sacramento Valley. Enjoy field trips to see the geese and participate in workshops, special events, a banquet and art show.

Northern California Mushrooms – Redding

When: February 10 (Sunday) 11 a.m.
Join Susan Libonati to learn about the fascinating habits of northern California mushrooms. Susan has a Ph.D. in Botany and teaches at Shasta College. She will bring specimens of different mushrooms and discuss the safety of eating wild mushrooms.

Directions: Meet at the HCCP parking lot (orange pipe gate), on Clear Creek road, about 7 miles west of highway 273, just west of the Clear Creek Bridge. 241.2026 for info.

Winter Wings Bald Eagle Festival

Klamath Falls, Oregon

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NORTHEASTERN CREEC
Shasta County Office of Education
1644 Magnolia Avenue
Redding, CA 96001



(Upcoming Events continued from page 3)

When: February 14-17, 2008

Contact: Anne Wenner

Phone: 541-882-1219, E-Mail: karlw12733@aol.com

Website: <http://www.winterwingsfest.org/> general information

<http://www.winterwingsfest.org/workshops/flyouts.shtml> eagle-bird refuge tours

After 25 years as the Klamath Basin Bald Eagle Conference, this event has become the Klamath Basin Winter Wings Festival, a four-day event that occurs every President's Weekend at Oregon Institute of Technology. The festival features workshops and guided tours on the Tule Lake Wildlife refuge. The event opens Thursday evening in downtown Klamath Falls with arts, food, music, vendors, and store specials will give families and tourists the opportunity to enjoy Downtown as part of the Winter Wings.

SUN-EARTH DAY: 2008

This year's main event will be on **March 20, 2008.**

Website: http://sunearthday.nasa.gov/2008/materials/SED2008_flier.pdf

Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT)

Summer 2008



Work with professional forest managers and environmental education specialists to learn about the relationship between forest ecology and forest management. Participants receive copies of Project Wild, Project Aquatic and Project Learning Tree curriculum and use them to develop a standards correlated environmental education unit for their classroom. Week long summer sessions take place in Shasta County, Plumas County, Humboldt County and Tuolumne County. Receive a \$200 stipend plus housing, meals and curriculum, free of cost. University and Professional Growth Units are available.

Deadline: Apply by March 14, 2008. Call 800.738.8733 for more information

or check online: <http://www.forestryinstitute.org/> Applicants may also register online.