



NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

4-H Youth Development Programs

Revised December 2004

In 4-H, youth can explore the habitats and habits of birds, insects and other wild creatures and get engaged in volunteer projects to protect water and other natural resources. They can learn outdoor skills – backpacking, hunting, camping, canoeing, cycling and fishing.

4-H reaches out to other youth organizations and to school groups with a variety of environmental education programs at Upham Woods on the Wisconsin River and at the Wehr Nature Center in Milwaukee County.

Adventure trips -- rock climbing, backpacking and canoe trips -- are new focus of 4-H outdoor programs. One such trip in 2002, got about 250 youth and adults involved in a trip down the Wisconsin River from the headwaters in far northern Wisconsin to the Mississippi in celebration of 100 years of 4-H.

Natural Resource and Environmental Education Programs are good for kids and communities

Kids learn valuable lessons and skills when they explore the natural world. They come to understand and appreciate their own place in the ecosystem and their responsibilities for protecting and preserving natural resources. Youth in these programs also have opportunities for volunteer service through a variety of projects from safeguarding water quality to enhancing habitats for wildlife.

In outdoor adventures programs, kids learn self-confidence, self-reliance, teamwork and leadership. They gain an appreciation and understanding of the importance of protecting natural resources and the natural environment.

Kids involved in shooting sports, sport fishing and other outdoor activities learn to identify wildlife and to understand population dynamics and the impact of humans on animal populations as well as wildlife management and hunting and fishing laws. They also gain important skills such as problem solving, leadership, communications and “rising to a challenge.”

In 2004, Wisconsin youth participated in 22,000 4-H environmental education and earth science projects and programs.

About 6,700 kids visited Upham Woods and some 12,811 went to the Wehr Nature Center for field trips and nature education.



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