



BC Nature 'Naturalist Mentor' Program – Toolkit

What a BC Nature approved Naturalist Mentor Toolbox should have.

- 1) Checklists/Guidelines for leading outdoor education excursions.
- 2) Suggestions of Resources a Naturalist Mentor can provide to community and school groups:
 - Field guides of relevant species,
 - Species checklists,
 - If birding, bird calls of local birds,
 - Hands on, touch and feel samples,
 - Prepare a resource kit of information, samples, field guides, stories, etc., that the teacher can use for a set period of time.
 - Provide indexes of great resource programs for lessons in the outdoors: Sources include: Project Wild, Nature Kids (Young Naturalists) guides, Chickadee Magazine, and Chirp Magazine, Wild B.C. Materials, BC Green Games Galleries, Habitat Conservation Trust Materials, government brochures and booklets, and Stewards of the Future, Educator Tool Kit draft materials.
 - Provide or be a speaker for relevant nature subjects
- 3) Suggestions regarding both community and - primary, intermediate, and secondary class presentations:
 - Suggested time limits, too long and will lose them,
 - Keep it fun,
 - Offer a power point presentation with close up views of subject,
 - Pass around samples such as feathers, dragonfly, bat skeleton, shell, parts of a plant, etc.
- 4) Suggested subjects for presentations – relevancy is important to the teachers and students and community group leaders:
 - Local birds that students will likely see in their neighbourhood,
 - Bats and their habitat, importance,
 - Insects – Bees, Dragonflies, Butterflies, Pollinators, Spiders, etc.,
 - Freshwater / wetland discovery (water samples, microscope, invertebrate ID etc),
 - Other invertebrates such as snails, slugs etc., in the forest,
 - Amphibians and/or reptiles, keep it local,
 - Marine intertidal discovery,
 - Native plants found locally and their historical use,
 - Mammals found locally, find tracks or trails and discuss habitat,

- 5) Suggested Field Trips and/or projects for community and students, keep relevant to age group; use the field trip as an opportunity to discuss etiquette/behaviour in nature:
- Explore a nearby nature area- a forest, beach, lake, old field, etc., and look for the relevant focus species,
 - See what you can find together in a nearby park, can be a surprise,
 - Create a story telling opportunity about what in nature you see, hear and touch together, can be imaginative and taking turns to add to the story,
 - After visiting a wetland, pond or river, collect some water for a microscope invertebrate study, can develop this theme to look for fish, frogs, eggs, other species such as mussels or crayfish and keep data on the species,
 - Go birdwatching, supply binoculars to demonstrate how to use, notate birds seen, students can collect sightings and do a survey on a regular basis,
 - Visit an area with native plants, possibly collect bark or berries and do a project referring to First Nation use of that plant.
 - Remove invasive plants and see if it is a good plant to mash up, sieve and dry for paper making,
 - Plan a planting project for a species and do it together,
 - Clean up a shoreline or forest trail and talk about litter, our garbage dumps and plastic islands in the ocean,
 - Plan and place spawning gravel for fish and talk about the species of fish such as salmon or marine fish such as surf smelt or sand lance,
- 6) Roles that a Naturalist Mentor could fill at community events, festivals, with community or student groups:
- Operate a scope at a bird viewing area,
 - Provide binoculars, guide books, iPod for bird calls on a nature walk,
 - Help set up a student bird count at Christmas or for Project Feeder Watch in February etc.,
 - Help to choose the right feeder for the classroom window.
 - Help with astronomy night presentations,
 - Lead some creative activities outlined in Chickadee, Chirp, Owl, Project Wild, and Nature Kids (Young Naturalists') publications,
 - Help with plant/invasive species surveys,
 - Help the students to get their volunteer hours for senior secondary grades by inviting them to volunteer with your club project or specifically planning an invasive pull or planting project with them,
 - Help with the Salmonid in the Classroom program with the local fish hatchery and the fish release and riparian field trips,
 - Assist with or offer the Streamkeeper (riparian, invertebrate, water quality focus) programs with an interested teacher or senior science teacher,
 - Offer to provide guidance to students engaged in Science/Biology projects or research on Natural History like birds, plants etc., could be a Science Fair project,
 - Offer to provide expertise and knowledge for nature badge requirements with the Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Scouts etc.,

- Provide mentorship to the Nature Kids (YNC) club with presentations and exploration outings,
- Encourage and participate with students to attend public events of natural history interest to engage them in a specific way such as a fungus show, bird festival, bio blitz, etc.,
- Participate in local stewardship events and projects (such as eelgrass monitoring, invertebrate surveys, plantings, cleanups etc.) to gain experience and expertise to invite and assist students and youth to participate too.
- Offer to speak on a particular nature subject or arrange for a speaker.