



The Bird's Eye

The camp newsletter of Oglebay Institutes' Junior Nature Camp

Tuesday ~ July the 22rd 2008

Junior Nature Camp – Week 1

Welcome back campers!

The Bird's Eye Revival, started last year, continues on with this issue, the first for 2008.

Thanks to all the contributors who made this issue possible.

The Bird's Eye Staff:

Chris Slater Files, James Tiu, Mike Breiding

Camp bird list as of Tuesday morning

1. Turkey Vulture
2. Red-shouldered Hawk
3. Mourning Dove
4. Yellow-billed Cuckoo
5. Chimney Swift
6. Ruby-throated Hummingbird
7. Belted Kingfisher
8. Red-bellied Woodpecker
9. Downy Woodpecker
10. Northern Flicker
11. Eastern Wood-Pewee
12. Acadian Flycatcher
13. Eastern Phoebe
14. Blue Jay
15. American Crow
16. Carolina Chickadee
17. Tufted Titmouse
18. White-breasted Nuthatch
19. Carolina Wren
20. House Wren
21. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
22. Eastern Bluebird
23. Wood Thrush
24. American Robin
25. Gray Catbird
26. Cedar Waxwing
27. Yellow-throated Warbler
28. American Redstart
29. Common Yellowthroat
30. Yellow-throated Vireo
31. Red-eyed Vireo
32. Scarlet Tanager
33. Northern Cardinal
34. Rose-breasted Grosbeak
35. Indigo Bunting
36. Rufous-sided Towhee
37. Chipping Sparrow
38. Field Sparrow
39. Song Sparrow
40. Brown-headed Cowbird
41. Northern Oriole
42. American Goldfinch

Leftovers are for the Worms

Natasha Diamond ~ JNC Program Director

This year at Junior Nature Camp we are experimenting with some kitchen composting with a vermicomposting unit called the Can-O-Worms. This particular composting unit is made from 100% recycled plastic.

Vermiculture is the study of worms. There are two broad categories of worms – earthworkers and composters. Composters, like tiger, red and dendra worms, live and breed in an organic, rich environment or a heavily mulched garden where moisture is maintained. Earthworkers prefer to live in a less controlled environment and will not thrive in food waste but prefer soil and humus as their basic diet. We usually see earthworkers as much larger than composters, but composting worms do get larger with age. Composting worms are not likely to survive in a garden because they cannot survive in soil that has dried out.

In our Can-O-Worms, we have about three pounds of red worms. The worms have a base bedding of moistened coconut fibers and moistened, shredded newspapers. These worms eat kitchen waste equaling about one half their own body weight each day. That means when our worms really get to work that they can eat 1 ½ pounds of kitchen waste each day!

It is recommended that we keep no more than one inch of food over one half of the surface area of the tray. We can feed them items such as left over vegetable scraps, fruit and vegetable peelings, tea leaves and bags and coffee grounds, bread and crushed egg shells. They do not like food items such as meat and dairy products, citrus fruits, mayonnaise or vinegar.

Check your journals over the next few days for more information on how you might be able to compost your family's kitchen waste at home!

Colors of Nature

by Emma Piotrowski

Blue
Dark
as deep as the ocean
depressing
as a rainy day

Orange
happy
as a smiley face
bright
as the sun's rays.

Green
Envious
as is the ivy that climbs trees
Growing
like the world around us.
Natural
as the trees' leaves

Purple
mysterious
as the ocean floor

Revolution

By Olivia Hayes

In the year 2039, humans have begun genetic testing on a grand scale in a remote test facility know as 'The Forest'. Animals of many kinds have become sentient, and supposedly improved. Many creatures are hybrids, and mythical beasts like dragons and gryffins are all too real. However, seven years ago the test subjects revolted against their creators and waged war on them. This is the story of their revolution.

"Hurry up, Grey!" Terri yelled to the small raccoon lagging behind her.

"Are you sure we should be going to the edge of the forest like this?" Grey asked for the fifth time.

"Why not? It's our forest," the vixen replied.

Terri and Grey had been friends since birth. Thier former caretaker, an owl named Lita, passed away several years ago. Since then, the firey fox and cautious raccoon had been fending for themselves.

While Grey and Terri crested the top of the hill, they were taken aback at what they saw. A terrifying building surrounded by stark land and barbed wire loomed ahead. The only plant life in sight was located in the forest behind. Suddenly, a huge bird came screeching overhead and dropped something in the forest. Everything went white.

Their surroundings became a blur as something big grabbed them up in its jaws and whisked them out of sight. Both of the animals quickly blacked out.

"Hyu awake yet?" said a voice speaking in a Russian accent.

Grey opened his eyes to see that he had been taken into a small, bleak bunker. A terrifying moster loomed over him. He gasped in horror at what he saw.

It appeared to be a stocky white horse wearing a black helmet emblazoned with a red star. A sheet over its back also carried the same symbol. But what frightened Grey about the creature was that its head and tail were that of a wild boar. The creature followed his gaze and immediately began to explain himself.

"Do not be afraid uff me. I may not be like hyu, but please do not be alarmed. I vas an experiment made by a Russian scientist under Program Forest. I am a Horse-Pig and my nem iz Gustav. Pleased to meet hyu," said Gustav.

Grey merely stood in awe. As soon as he had the strength to speak, he asked the first question that came to mind.

"Where is Terri?"

Bird's Eye Perspective

by James Tiu

We've seen an increased attention to the color "green" in recent years. Communities that recycle and make intelligent use of resources are "green"; cars with better fuel milage, or that somehow capture or reduce emissions, are also "green"; walking or biking rather than driving is sometimes called "going green."

Tuesday afternoon I paid a visit to an area that was "green" long before "going green" was a consideration. I took a walk, on the Giscowheco campus behind the Shawnee Hilton, along a pathway guarded by hip-high wingstem, to an area that many new campers have never visited-- the "Green Cathedral."

Most campers won't discover the Cathedral until their third or fourth year of Junior Nature Camp; this isolated outdoor sanctuary is both beautiful and spiritual, and a testament to the truly "green" power of chlororphyll. The temperature in the Cathedral is, on a summery day, fifteen to twenty degrees cooler here than in the grassy meadow that surrounds the Winterized Lodge. The canopy of maple leaves fifty or sixty feet above the ground captures almost every ray of sunlight; ironically, there is virtually no vegetation on the floor of the Green Cathedral-- only moss and lichen thrive in the meager dappling of sunlight that reaches ground.

The power of chlorophyll, the true "green" that sustains life on Earth via the process of photosynthesis, is as evident here as anywhere on the Giscowheco campus. Plants use chlorophyll to turn sunlight and carbon dioxide into energy and plant matter; without that photosynthetic process, human life on earth would be much different, if it existed at all. We would be hard-pressed without plants to shelter ourselves, clothe ourselves, feed or fuel ourselves; indeed our very breath requires the oxygen that is a byproduct of photosynthesis.

I encourage newer campers to visit (with the help of a friendly counselor or a C.I.T.), the vestibule of Giscowheco's outdoor sanctuary, the "Green Cathedral," and take a few moments to reflect upon the awesome and essential power of the original "green" phenomenon-- chlorophyll and the process that it enables, photosynthesis. And after that moment has passed, just relax under the beauty of the green canopy and enjoy the cool breezes amid the mid-summer serenade of cicadas, far from the world where "going green" requires a conscious effort.

James Tiu attended Oglebay Junior Nature Camp in the late 1970's, and returned in the early 2000's as an adult volunteer.

Don't forget to check the camp website regularly

www.JuniorNatureCamp.org