

NJ Naturalist IP

NJ Naturalist The NJ Naturalist IP is an interest project from the Girl Scouts of Rolling Hills Council.



Skill Builders

1. Visit 3 different habitats such as swamp, salt marsh, estuary, forest, shore. Learn what makes each habitat significant. What kinds of plants and animals live in those habitats? What kind of adaptations do they have to increase their success in those ecosystems?
2. What geological province and watershed do you live in? What is a watershed and why is it important? What steps can you put into action to protect your watershed?
3. Conduct a stream study. List what flora and fauna are in the stream. Determine the water quality of the area based in the animals that you find.
4. New Jersey is a famous birding location and is also famous as a migratory route. Why is New Jersey so important for migrating birds? Why do these birds migrate such large distances? What factors trigger migration? Visit Hawk Mountain, Chimney Rock, Sandy Hook, Cape May, Montclair Hawk Watch in the and witness hawk migration in the fall; or go bird watching and use your field guide to determine if the birds you see are year round residents or migrants Don't forget your binoculars.
5. Learn to use a Field Guide. Take a nature walk and identify ten new plants, trees or wildflowers that are indigenous to New Jersey.
6. Exotic plant and animal species can quickly become invasive. They have detrimental effects on an ecosystem and native populations of plants and animals. Learn about three invasive species that are problematic in New Jersey.
7. Outdoor cats, both feral or pets are a danger to themselves and to indigenous wildlife. Learn about the effects of cats outdoor and what pet owners can do to ensure the safety of their pets and wildlife. Learn about the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Campaign at <http://www.njaudubon.org/Conservation/CatsIndoors/>.



Technology

1. The Pine Barrens needs fire to be maintained. How is fire used as a tool? Learn about the technology used in wildland firefighting and prescribed burns. Visit a fire tower, the Pine Barrens or an area that uses fire as management tool and if possible, get a tour with a park naturalist; or learn about the differences between wildland and structural firefighting equipment and gear.
2. Investigate the technology used to study migrating birds. What kind of technology is used to study the migration of butterflies?
3. Wildlife Biologists use technology to minimize damage from nuisance wildlife species such but not limited to Canada Geese, Beaver and Black Bear. Learn about some of the techniques and tools used to manage three wildlife species.

4. New Jersey has the most superfund sites of any state in the country. Learn what a superfund site is, where the nearest one to your home is located and how superfund sites are remediated.
5. New Jersey is the Garden State and well known for its produce. Learn about the techniques and technology used in organic farming.

Service Projects

1. Participate in a Cornell Ornithology Lab citizen science project such as the Great Backyard Bird Count. Information can be found at <http://www.birdsource.org>. 
2. Enhance your environment by planting native plants that provide food and cover for wildlife, setting up a bird feeding station or constructing bird nesting or bat box.
3. Teach a younger troop or group about the wildlife indigenous to New Jersey or design your own project.
4. Determine a service that a local park, non-government organization or nature center needs. Contact the staff and design a project. Examples may be organizing a birdseed drive, assisting with a visitors group or publicizing events.
5. Composting is way to decrease your household garbage and put nutrients back into the soil. Learn what wastes can be composted and create a compost pile using your household waste.

Career Exploration

1. Investigate 3 environmental careers, education required, job description and salary.
2. Visit a park or wildlife sanctuary with a naturalist or interpreter on staff. Participate in a program or take a guided walk. Find out what interpreters do and why they decided to enter this field
3. Find at least 3 colleges in New Jersey that have environmental major programs such as natural resource management, environmental science, plant science, etc. What classes must be completed for these majors? How are these majors different?

See also

[List of Council's Own Interest Projects](#)

External Links

[Rolling Hill's Council's Own Recognition Requirements](#)
[NJ Naturalist Interest Project Award](#)

