



Conservationist for Kids

Supplement for Classroom Teachers – Fall 2008
“New York’s State Symbols”

Leave No Child Inside

One of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) priorities is to connect New Yorkers to nature. Research has demonstrated a spectrum of developmental, health, performance and social benefits of children’s experiences with nature. *Conservationist for Kids* has been created as one aspect of DEC’s *Leave No Child Inside* program. Our goal is to encourage children in New York State to go outdoors and explore natural areas and to develop an interest in environmental stewardship.

Using *Conservationist for Kids* in the Classroom

Conservationist for Kids, and an accompanying teacher supplement, is distributed to public school fourth grade classes three times each school year (fall, winter, spring). These materials are also available at www.dec.ny.gov in both HTML and PDF formats. Teachers and students may e-mail questions and suggestions to us at cforkids@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Information and activities in *Conservationist for Kids* encourage readers to explore outdoors. Read the magazine as a class exercise or have your students read independently. The activities in the magazine may be completed by your students at school or at home. Additional activities and resources can be found in this teacher supplement and on DEC’s website at www.dec.ny.gov (Look for *Conservationist for Kids* under the Education heading.) If you receive more copies of *Conservationist for Kids* than you require for your students, please share the extras with your school library, curriculum specialists and other teachers.

Please note that since this issue of *Conservationist for Kids* was printed in September, Cornell University’s Lost Ladybug Project has simplified its web address. It can now be found at www.lostladybug.org

MST Curriculum Connections

The activities in this issue of *Conservationist for Kids* have been correlated to the New York State Math, Science and Technology Learning Standards for fourth grade, below. Connections to other learning standards are also valid.

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| Build a Bluebird Nest Box: | MST2. <i>Engineering Design 1</i>
MST3. <i>Measurement 5</i>
MST4. <i>The Living Environment 4-7</i>
MST5. <i>Engineering Design 2, 6, 7</i> |
| Plant a Sugar Maple Tree: | MST4. <i>The Living Environment 1-7</i> |
| Look for Ladybugs: | MST2. <i>Information Systems 1, 2</i>
MST4. <i>The Living Environment 1-7</i> |

Supplemental Activities for the Classroom

Designate a Class or School Symbol

Review the full range of New York's state symbols with your students. (A list is available at www.statesymbolsusa.org, in addition to those described in *Conservationist for Kids*.) Consider why some of these symbols may have been designated and who may have suggested them. Ask your students to recommend a symbol for your class or school. Why do they recommend it? How does it represent the class or school? If more than one symbol is suggested, have a vote to determine which one is the favorite.

Information is available from a variety of sources describing the efforts of individuals, organizations and schoolchildren to have something designated a state symbol. Visit the FAQs section of the New York State Bluebird Society's website at www.nysbs.org for an explanation of how the eastern bluebird became our state bird.

State Symbols Concentration

This is a simple game of "concentration," focusing on the New York State symbols described in the fall 2008 issue of *Conservationist for Kids*. Go to the *Conservationist for Kids* section of DEC's website for downloadable "concentration" cards featuring New York's state symbols. Print sufficient cards for your class to play the game. Instructions for playing "concentration" are included with the game cards.

State Symbols Trivia

Review knowledge and understanding about New York's state symbols with this fun trivia game. Go to the *Conservationist for Kids* section of DEC's website for downloadable trivia clue cards and instructions for playing the game.

Teacher Workshops

For teachers who have participated in a Project Learning Tree or Project WILD workshop, the following activities complement the current issue of *Conservationist for Kids*.

Project Learning Tree Activities
Environmental Exchange Box
Poet-Tree

Project WILD Activities
Wildlife in National Symbols
Ethi-Thinking

For information about workshops and about how to obtain these curriculum and activity guides, visit www.dec.ny.gov/education/1913.html

More Great Stuff

Printable activity sheets and links to other resources can be found on our website, including instructions for building a bluebird nest box. Go to www.dec.ny.gov and look for *Conservationist for Kids* under the Education heading. You will also find back issues of *Conservationist for Kids* and the activity sheets and teacher supplements associated with them.

Recommended Resources (additional resources are listed in *Conservationist for Kids*):

State Names, Seals, Flags, and Symbols: A Historical Guide by Benjamin F. Shearer and Barbara S. Shearer (Greenwood Press, New York, 1987)

www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4791.html for PDFs of DEC brochures and posters of New York wildlife
www.dec.ny.gov/23.html for information and fact sheets about New York's wildlife and plants