

The **OUTSIDE** Page

Ideas for Exploring Your Environment



For a real outdoor adventure

you don't have to go far. Camping overnight in your own yard is a great way to get started, whether you're sleeping in a tent or out in the open under the stars. Once you're comfortable camping, try going to a campground or even on an overnight backpack or canoe trip. Learn more about DEC's campgrounds at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/camping.html.

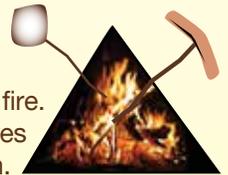
National Wildlife Federation's **Great American Backyard Campout**

is always on the last Saturday in June.

Go to www.nwf.org/great-american-backyard-campout.aspx to learn more.



Make a meal over an open fire. Hot dogs on a stick and s'mores for dessert are easy and fun.



Summer Camps

Both overnight and day camps are great places for kids to spend time in nature and explore their world. Scouts, 4H groups and municipal recreation departments offer choices for campers of all ages. Many summer camps have special weekends for family camping.



DEC summer camps offer kids between 11 and 17 years old a unique week-long residential outdoor environmental education experience at four different summer camps across the state.

Find DEC summer camps on-line (with permission)
www.dec.ny.gov/education/29.html
www.facebook.com/NYSDECsummercamps



Daniel Avila

If you live in **New York City,**

check out the Urban Park Rangers' family camping program. It's so popular there's a lottery to ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to participate.
www.nycgovparks.org/programs/rangers

For more information:

www.dec.ny.gov/23.html DEC's Animals, Plants, Aquatic Life webpage

www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/78429.html *Discover... Citizen Science* (from the December 2011 *Conservationist*)

www.biokids.umich.edu University of Michigan – BioKIDS – Kids' Inquiry of Diverse Species

www.natureexplore.org Nature Explore – Connecting Children with Nature

www.naturerocks.org The Nature Conservancy – Nature Rocks – Let's Go Explore

Bateman's Backyard Birds by Robert Bateman (Barrons Educational Series, Inc., Hauppauge, NY, 2005)

Field Trips: Bug Hunting, Animal Tracking, Bird-watching, Shore Walking by Jim Arnosky (Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 2002)

Nature in Your Backyard: Simple Activities for Children by Susan Lang (Millbrook Press, Brookfield, CT, 1995)

My Nature Book: A Journal and Activity Book for Kids, 2nd Edition by Linda Kranz (Taylor Trade Publishing, Boulder, CO, 2013)

Pond Life by George Reid (Golden Guides from St. Martin's Press, New York, 2001)

Watching Nature: A Beginner's Field Guide by Monica Russo (Sterling Pub. Co., New York, 1998)

Clair Walker Leslie has written several books about nature exploration and nature journaling.

Check your local library or search online for them.

Special thanks to the NYS DEC Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources.



New York State **CONSERVATIONIST FOR KIDS** Volume 7, Number 3, Spring 2014

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