

AUGUST 2023

CLUB DE EXPLORADORES

Fourth adventure - Stream Investigation, Beach, and S'mores



Club de Exploradores joins the NC Arboretum Education Team

Club de Exploradores ventured out into Asheville to explore a very different side of the Pisgah National Forest in the Bent Creek area. We started our day meeting our wonderful hosts, Joanna and Josh from the NC Arboretum, who gave us a warm welcome, told us about themselves and their jobs, and gave us an overview of the day ahead. It was exciting for the Exploradores to meet Joanna, who talked to them in Spanish and shared a bit about her background and connection to Mexico.



We had a circle to share names, grade, and favorite things to do outside.

Table of Contents

Fourth Adventure

Leave No Trace
PRINCIPLES 3 AND 6

Outdoors vs Indoors

Map and Special Thanks



LET'S GO EXPLORE!

FIND OUTDOORS



Stream Investigation, Beach time, and S'mores!

Joanna and Josh led us on a hike to a beautiful stream where, set up with nets, buckets, and a dichotomous key to identify aquatic invertebrates, the Exploradores searched for life in the river and identified a healthy variety of trout's favorite foods.



The Exploradores found and, using the dichotomous key, identified dragonfly nymphs, stone-fly and mayfly nymphs, snails, crawdads, and hellgrammites, the aquatic larval stage of dobsonflies. What a relaxing and entertaining activity. We even saw a couple salamanders but they were too fast for our nets!



When we were done with our critter search, we hiked to Lake Powhatan where we had lunch and enjoyed a hot and very sunny time at the beach. The Exploradores played frisbee, engaged in meaningful conversations, and swam around. What a beautiful spot.

Perfect s'mores were the perfect reward after a day full of discovery and water adventures.



For this adventure, a log cabin style fire was built and the Exploradores made sure to have water handy because it was a very hot day.

Besides being a food source, aquatic insects provide a valuable habitat service by eating dead or decaying bacteria, plants and animals while recycling important nutrients back into the water. They are very good indicators of water quality because they are easily affected by the chemical, physical and biological conditions of the water they live in.



Being able to identify aquatic insects by looking under rocks in the shallow parts of a mountain stream, river, pond or lake can help you determine what the fish are feeding on and depending on the insects you find determine the cleanliness of the water.



#3 Dispose of Waste Properly



The Basics:

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled food. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Burning trash is never recommended.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6-8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Bury toilet paper deep in a cathole or pack the toilet paper out along with hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.



“Pack it in, Pack it out” is a familiar mantra. Trash items can take significant time to break down, are incredibly harmful to wildlife, and are unsightly to other visitors. Any user of natural spaces is responsible for cleaning up before they leave. Inspect your area for trash or spilled food. Pack out all trash and garbage.

#6 Respect Wildlife

Whenever you are in an outdoor space, you are in the natural habitat of many wild animals and should work to minimize your impact on them. Human impacts on wildlife can result in negative human-wildlife interactions, aggressive animals, a decline in the ecosystem’s health, and relocated or euthanized animals. All these impacts can be avoided if visitors respect wildlife on all outdoor trips.

On this adventure we learned:

- Bear encounters: Give them plenty of space. DO NOT RUN. Make yourself bigger and loud if a bear approaches you.
- Yellow jackets: Leave alone. DO RUN far away from the nest if attacked.
- In creeks, streams, and rivers: Don't move the rocks and be very careful not to destroy habitats.





Outdoors vs. Indoors

Reflection Time

by Ariana McGuire (co-leader)

The forest offers me a place where my mind and body can rest and reset. Opposite to that, the forest provides a place to challenge myself, my fears, and my outdoor pursuits. The forest provides a place to learn, to play, to explore, to teach, to protect, and to cherish.

I connect with nature by being immersed in nature, learning about nature, and educating about nature. Any and every opportunity spent, whether it is with one individual or a group of 20 kids, is time well spent because it is an opportunity to learn and educate about this incredible place around us. I connect with the community by sharing and reciprocating the love, passion, and overall inspiration of the outdoors.



ADVENTURE JOURNAL

"I am enjoying this program more than I thought I was going to. I am glad that I have made some new friends. For me personally, I think nature is healing my soul. It makes me think about how god make the earth. Hearing the birds is so peaceful. Also hearing the prople laughing in the background gives me a sense of hope for this world. We can all have differences but when it comes to spending time in nature, I think that we can all enjoy it. Nature unites people in many ways. I think that everyone needs to just go outside and spend some time in the beauiul world that the lord made for us". - S

"I like being outside, in the forest. The trees that give us oxygen, the birds beacuse they are the music of nature, the wind becasue it is the refreshment. I like everyhting about the forest because i is the second place of peace and calmness. I like to also learn the history behind i and learn about it. Nature is just true, like it shows us everything!" - D

"Inside I can be on my phone and that makes me happy but I also like being outdoors because it is fun! - C



Where we went...

After the Arboretum, we hiked to Lake Powhatan Recreation Area which is located adjacent to Bent Creek and the Arboretum. This is a heavily-wooded area on the banks of a small lake. It's also a campground but if you don't camp, you can still enjoy the area with a small fee day visit for a picnic or an easy one-mile hike around the lake. There's a beach for swimming and a pier for fishing in the trout-stocked lake. Changing rooms and restrooms are located near the beach. We all had a wonderful time and highly recommend this spot to visit with family and friends.



SPECIAL THANKS

Club de Exploradores is immensely grateful to our sponsors and collaborators who make this program possible. By contributing funds, discounts, transportation, services, and more, they help us provide unforgettable experiences to this group of enthusiasts in this beloved forest of ours.

Special thanks to the education team at the NC Arboretum for such a fantastic time sparking our curiosity and teaching us so many cool facts!

For more than 30 years, The North Carolina Arboretum has cultivated connections between people and plants in their 434-acre property.



The North Carolina Arboretum is located within the Bent Creek Experimental Forest just south of Asheville and adjacent to the Blue Ridge Parkway at Milepost 393. Surrounded and crisscrossed by forested coves and meandering creeks in the botanically diverse Southern Appalachian Mountains, The North Carolina Arboretum is set in one of the most beautiful natural settings in America.

