

CELT Education Volunteer Opportunities

Join CELT's Education Team!

CELT has a rich tradition of leading various education programs within our community. We are always looking for new leaders to join this effort: volunteers who are excited to work with people, enjoy exploring the outdoors, and want to give back to their community. You don't need to be a nature expert- we provide training! We have three areas of volunteer opportunities:

- Leading hands-on, experiential and fun field trips and programs for grades 1-4
- Leading monthly educational programs or outings for our local assisted living facility, Village Crossings
- Leading weekly walks in the summer for guests at the Inn by the Sea

Why be a walk leader?

1. Be present for amazing nature experiences: previous leaders have watched blue jay fights, found salamanders, snakes, and tracked foxes and weasels in the winter!
2. Find community- our leader training hikes and end-of-year party are great times to get to know neighbors who share your interests.
3. Hear the "oohs" and "whoas" and "that's so cool!" of kids, and know that you are facilitating those experiences.
4. Inspire the youth of today to love and respect the natural world by helping them have fun while exploring it.

School Field Trips

First Grade: One winter (generally February) and one spring (generally May) trip. An hour-long program at Great Pond. We meet at the beginning of the trail across from Kettle Cove Creamery, then walk out to Great Pond and back. There is one trip leader per class (18 students), as well as the teacher and one or two adult chaperones. With this grade, our focus each season is primarily sensory exploration of the habitat as we proceed along the trail.

Winter-specific objectives:

1. What resources all wildlife need to survive
2. The idea of adaptations as a physical or behavioral characteristic that helps an animal or plant thrive in its environment.
3. Particular adaptations that help Maine wildlife thrive in winter.

Spring-specific objectives:

1. Explore the parts of a plant
2. Find ways that young plants and baby animals are different from their parents
3. The many ways that animal parents take care of their young.

Second Grade: Teaching about plants and the experimental process over three weeks in April and May. Each program is about 40-45 minutes long. The first program is a visit to the classroom to introduce CELT, introduce the concept of an experiment, and explain the experimental set-up at CELT. The next two programs take place at the CELT office; on the

first one, students set up experiments where they remove light from plants. Two weeks later, they return to record their data. Timing is dependent on class schedules, but is generally mid-morning.

Objectives:

1. Discuss and become familiar with the vocabulary *hypothesis, control, independent variable* and *dependent variable*.
2. Carry out a light-removal experiment on plants at the CELT office.

Third Grade: One spring trip (generally early June). This is an hour and forty-five minute field trip in Robinson Woods (RW) II. We meet at the RW parking lot next to the Belfield Rd. outlet, then walk out down the Pond trail to the bridge and waterfall, and walk back. There is one trip leader per class (about 22 students), as well as the teacher and several adult chaperones.

Objectives:

1. Understand that all living things have a life cycle that consists of being born, growing, reproducing and dying.
2. Understand that all living things have unique physical or behavioral characteristics to help them survive in their habitat. These characteristics can be influenced by the environment.

We cover these two objectives through the two main activities of the field trip, which change in order depending on whether one or two classes is participating at a time. One main activity is using nets and tubs to catch aquatic life at the RW waterfall and pond area. The second main activity is a large game of tag, played in the RW fields, in which students act as producers and consumers over many different rounds to generate a model of population dynamics, which then serves as a basis for discussion and debriefing.

Fourth Grade: This is the most involved of the field trips we offer, and the longest-running; it was started in 2005 by enthusiastic and devoted Pond Cove parents. It consists of one fall (generally October), one winter (generally February) and one spring (generally May) trip, all along the same trail at Robinson Woods. The fall and spring trips are an hour and a half. The winter trip is an hour. We meet at the RW parking lot kiosk, and walk a loop of the Wildflower and Outer Loop trails. There are two trip leaders per class (so about 10 students per leader), as well as the teacher and one or two adult chaperones per class. The three overall goals of these field trips are to experience the seasonal changes along the same stretch of trail; explore the relevant adaptations of wildlife to those changes; and help the students gain the appreciation and understanding necessary to discuss the RW woodland ecosystem with familiarity.

Fall specific objective:

1. Students will be able to identify and discuss at least one complete food chain and one complete natural cycle

Winter specific objective:

1. To gain a better understanding of the various adaptations plants and animals have to thrive in winter.

Spring specific objectives:

1. Understand the adaptations necessary to breed and grow in a vernal pool.
2. Understand the lifecycles of spring wildflowers.

We cover these objectives through various activities each field trip, which change in order depending on whether one or two classes is participating at a time. During the fall trip, our main activities are creating a food web using a ball of yarn and doing a scavenger hunt of human-made items to discuss camouflage. During the winter our main activities are searching for evidence of animal activity; comparing the insulative properties of snow, fat and fur through an experiment; and playing a game of hide-and-seek to demonstrate winter camouflage. During the spring our main activities are searching for wildflowers and finding egg masses in the vernal pools.

In the works for 2017-2018 school year: An on-site program with the 5th grade about water on Earth (involving games and graphs, likely in mid-April 2018).

Village Crossings Programs

We are starting a new partnership with Village Crossings: offering monthly educational presentations or outings depending on the time of year. November-March we will offer a presentation; April-October will be outings or other programs. Previous presentations have covered vernal pools and winter tracking; outings or other programs are tailored to folks with limited mobility, such as an evening van trip to listen at a vernal pool. The timing of these is flexible.

Inn by the Sea Walks

These walks take place Wednesday mornings from 10:30-12pm, from mid-June through the end of August, at the Inn by the Sea. We meet guests on the lawn and walk out to the beach. This is an all-ages walk that draws a varied crowd; there is only a recommended curriculum, so volunteers can expand on their own passions. Depending on the tides and the attendees, we do different things. On a day with a lot of families and a low tide, walking to Kettle Cove and tidepooling would be a good choice. On a day with folks who like birds, the leader may choose to spend more time in the wetland and beach forest between the Inn and the beach, where there is great birding. On a day with high tides, walking the beach stream and searching for fish is an option. We routinely see Piping Plovers, Common Yellowthroats, hermit crabs, green crabs, sandpipers, and beautiful beach stones and shells.

Time Commitment

School Programs

We ask that school program volunteers commit to an academic year of time (September to May), but are always willing to work with individuals to help them get the volunteer experience that fits their time and needs. Broken down, the time commitment looks like:

- Fill out a background check and CELT volunteer contact information form.
- A pre-trip leader hike that lasts 1.5-2 hours, scheduled the week before the field trips take place. For example, for field trips taking place the third week of October, the leader training hikes would take place the second week of October.

- Ideally leading two trips per grade, per season. For example, if you were only leading first grade trips, this would mean two trips in winter and two trips in the spring. If you also shadowed an experienced leader each time, this would mean about 8 hours of field trip time throughout the year, including the leader training.
- Each field trip has a pre-planned make-up day. Volunteers are responsible for holding that make-up day slot available, and leading their trip on that day if a postponement happens. (Volunteers may communicate with each other to switch days/dates if necessary.)
- Communicating with other leaders via email or phone as schedules change
- Post walk recap/debrief with CELT staff and/or Committee Chair, either through email or group Google doc.

The typical time commitment for a volunteer who only leads 4th grade walks is about 15-20 hours between September and May.

Village Crossings

Several hours of pre-program communication and prep each month. Programs themselves last 1 hour.

Inn by the Sea Walks

One 2-hour leader training hike in early June. Programs themselves last 1.5 hours but usually take up 2 hours of total time.

Resources for volunteers:

- Volunteer training provided by CELT, covering effective outdoor teaching styles and student management as well as thorough grounding in the ecological concepts covered by the trips.
- Curriculums for each field trip that detail what concepts you should expect to cover and how.
- Opportunities to shadow experienced trip leaders before leading your own field trips.

Interested? Contact Linden Rayton, Education Coordinator at linden@capelandtrust.org or by calling the CELT office at 767-6054.

Previous volunteers say...

“It is so rewarding to see a kids eyes open wide when they see a snake or salamander for the first time or hold frog eggs and better understand the relationships that connect us all.”
–Lisa Gent, 10+ year volunteer

“I get so much pleasure out of the children discovering something special in the woods, and then sharing it with their classmates. The wonder and excitement that you as a leader/teacher in the woods is infectious...the kids get so excited to see what we as adults often consider ‘ordinary.’” –Suzanne McGinn, 10+ year volunteer