



Earthfriend Discovery Programs

Earthfriend Discovery Day Camp is committed to nurturing the loving and magical connection the young naturally feel with their environment and all forms of life on this planet.



Offered in cooperation with
Vermont Wilderness School

Earthfriend Discovery Day Camp was started in Summer 2004 with seven campers. Over the years the camp has grown with many campers returning year after year. In 2007 and 2008, the camp had 20+ campers attending. Starting in 2010, the Manitou Project began partnering with Vermont Wilderness School where EFDDC director Amy Hyatt works year round. Vermont Wilderness School provides quality, experienced staff and a new level of professionalism to the camp experience while continuing to embody the Manitou Vision of the camps.

Camp Location:

The camp is based at the Hogan on the Manitou Land in Williamsville, VT (located on Sunset Lake Road approximately two miles from the Williamsville General Store). From the “base camp” at the Hogan, campers spend time exploring the 230 acres of diverse habitat including fens, streams, mixed hardwood forest, and hemlock-birch forest. The Manitou Land has several miles of marked trails with over 14 sacred sites including a 21-circuit Labyrinth which has been a popular site to visit in past years. Regular animal residents on the land include white-tail deer, moose, white-footed mice, woodland jumping mice, green frogs, woodfrogs, American toads, red efts, broad-winged hawks, ravens, wood thrushes, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, eastern cottontail rabbits and much more. Manitou also has many unique rock out-croppings that readily capture the imaginations of children inspiring names like Dragon’s Head, Ship Rock, and Castle Rock. The rocks and the land in general also produce worthy challenges for older children seeking to know themselves in relationship to the world. It is truly a magical place for children and teens to deepen their relationship with nature and become at home in the world.

Camp Activities & Curriculum:

Camp activities and curriculum fall under two general categories:

Naturalist and Sensory Awareness Skills

- sensory engagement games and activities,
- nature observation (including drawing and journaling as appropriate),
- learning to move quietly in the woods,
- sneaking games,
- noticing patterns such as tracks and asking what those patterns communicate to us,
- looking for natural treasures such as feathers, unique rocks, scat, owl pellets,
- moving like animals,
- engaging imagination and creative expression,
- aidless navigation (finding your way on the land without map and compass), and
- learning about the natural world through observation, experience and research.

Earth Living Craft Skills

- learning to make a fire pit,
- collecting different kinds of fire wood,
- fire making including fire by friction,
- coal-burning bowls and spoons,
- fire tending,
- making bark containers,
- shelter building with natural materials,
- finding and preparing wild edible plants or making teas,
- cooking over the fire,
- and a variety of other related skills.

Safety and caretaking the land, plants, trees and animals are all emphasized in these activities. We also have at our base camp a well-rounded Nature Library with a variety of field guides and a Nature Museum for campers to use in different activities learning about the natural world, especially at Manitou. The exact activities each week will vary depending upon the interests of the campers, the weather, what the natural world offers up, and what the particular mix of staff each week brings to the camp.

Instructor Bios:

Amy Hyatt is returning as lead instructor and field director for both weeks of camp this year. Amy has been exploring the woods locally with children since 2001 through various organizations including Vermont Wilderness School, the Community Wilderness Initiative and Deep Wilds as well as leading the youngest group of campers at Earthfriend camps since the beginning of the camp in 2004 to 2014. Amy is program director for Oyase Community School and Shambhala Warrior & Nature Camp. Amy has experience teaching both children and adults nature awareness skills, basic primitive living skills, and creative expression. Amy has certification in Wilderness First Aid and CPR/BLS.

If you have any questions, please contact Amy Hyatt at 802-257-1832 or EarthfriendDDC@gmail.com. You can also visit the Manitou website at www.ManitouProject.org to download forms.