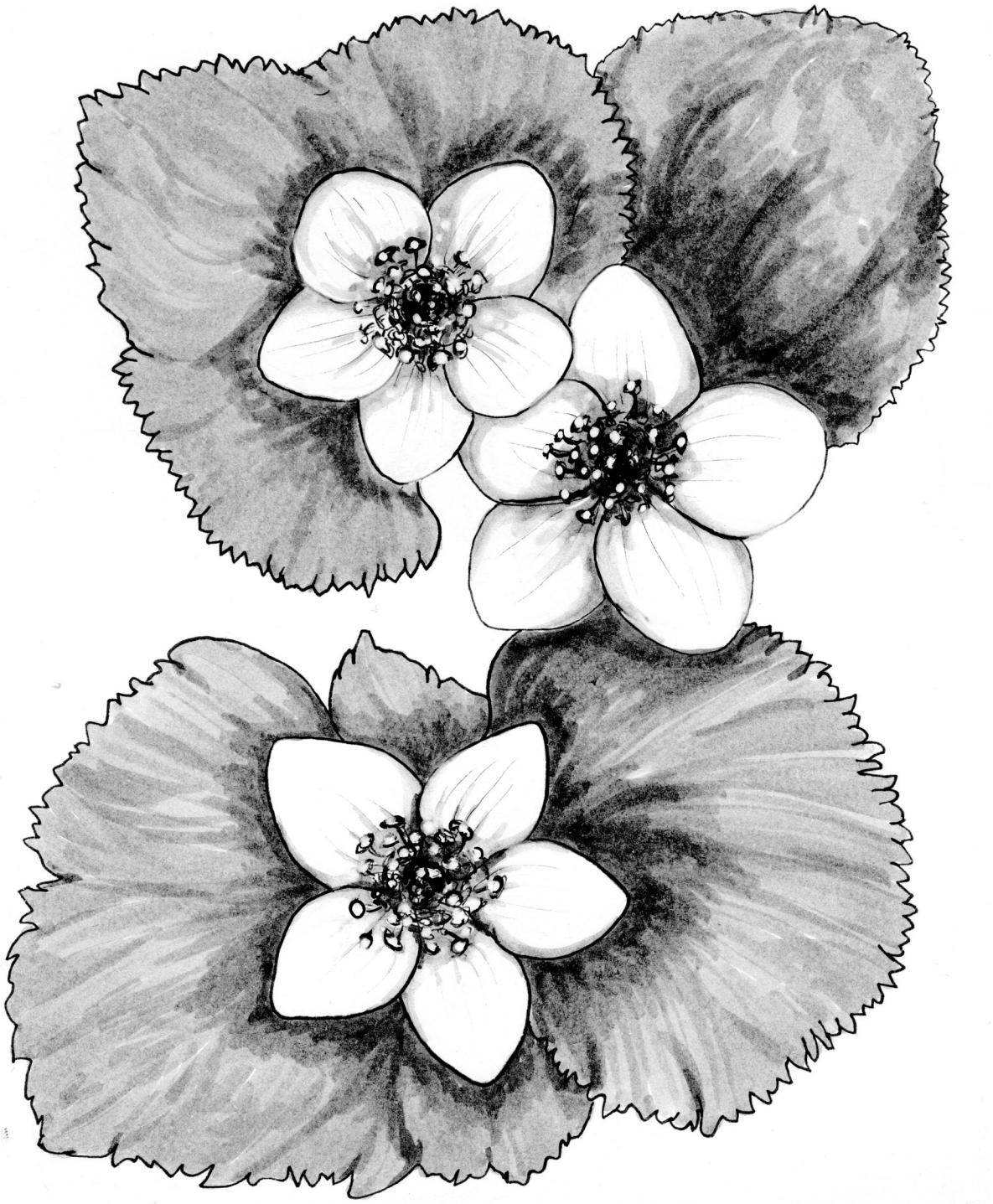
Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION
Fall 2020, 33(1)



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COEO

Formed in 1972, the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that promotes safe, quality outdoor education experiences for people of all ages. We achieve this by publishing the *Pathways* journal, running an annual conference and regional workshops, maintaining a website, and working with kindred organizations as well as government agencies. Members of COEO receive a subscription to *Pathways*, as well as admittance to workshops, courses and conferences. A membership application form is included on the inside back cover of this issue of *Pathways*.

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Pathways

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Pathways is always looking for contributions. Please contact the Chair for submission guidelines.

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Features

Columns

Editor's Log

On behalf of the *Pathways* Editorial Board, I would like to apologize to our subscribers for the delay in the publication and distribution of the journal during the second half of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we decided it was important to offer our contributing authors additional time to develop and submit their work. And as I write this, the pandemic is still ongoing, however, we do anticipate returning to our normal publication schedule in spring 2021.

Before I introduce this latest issue of *Pathways*, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Zabe MacEachren, Megan Tucker, and the dedicated group of Queen's University teacher candidates who put together the timely summer issue of *Pathways* that focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on climate change, the environment, and outdoor education. The *Pathways* Editorial Board greatly appreciates the initiative of this group of guest editors and applauds their effort and commitment to see this special theme issue through to fruition.

This issue of *Pathways* begins with an article by Chloe Humphreys. COEO members might recognize this name, as Chloe was the author of COEO's 2018 publication, *Dynamic Horizons: A Research and Conceptual Summary of Outdoor Education*, which incidentally, is now available free to download from the COEO website. In this article, Humphreys describes the process involved in developing an outdoor place-based home school support program, as well as detailing the philosophy and research supporting this program, and how land, the teacher, parents, and various community members all contributed to its success. Next, Emma Carroll-Monteil asks the question, does solo place-based learning work in an urban setting, and can it promote environmental responsibility? To answer this question, the author of this article employs a phenomenological lens to evaluate place-based learning and her own experiences with the You Are Never Alone (YANA) task. Ben Blakey then shares the results of a research study wherein he examines the integration of nature-based learning at a school located in a large urban centre. This article is followed by the final contribution in a series by Chris Peters, exploring the concept of Hjemstedslaere, or Homestead Knowledge, its place in Newfoundland's educational history, and potential use in schooling today. Hollay Ghadery then relays the heartwarming story of her son's informal apprenticeship with a local Falconry expert, while John McKillop and Ruth Silver announce an exciting new initiative taken up by formal staff, students and friends of the Bronte Creek Project. This issue concludes with another thought provoking poem courtesy of Naomi McIlwraith, entitled *Tânitê ohci kiya – Where are you from?"*

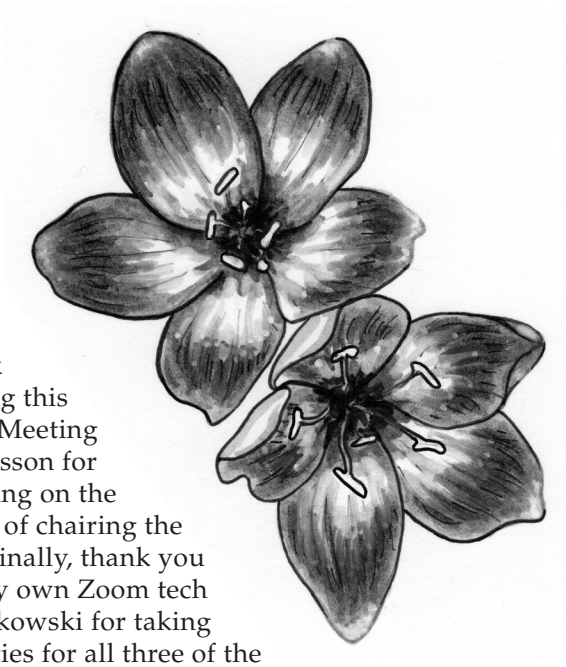
Kyle Clarke
Editor

Sketch Pad – The art for this issue of *Pathways* was generously contributed by Jazmine Yerbury. Jazmine is a multi-disciplinary artist, making 2D, 3D, digital, and hand-crafted art. Her practice includes interactive installations, such as the one for Nuit Blanche Toronto at Artscape Daniels, as well as political satire paintings, such as the one that can be found in the collection of fashion designer and art collector, Rad Hourani. The underlying commonality in her work is observation; observing the moments and objects of everyday life, the political climate that drives the media, or the way people engage with her interactive works. Her influences converge in her graphic design, where she makes websites and illustrations for people seeking an artistic aesthetic to their brand. Although a native Montrealer, Jazmine has been living and working in Toronto since 2015. Instagram: @turbo_soft, Website: jazmineyerbury.ca

President's View

We know that many of you are still struggling with precarious employment or unemployment; most outdoor centres continue to sit empty, businesses are struggling, and many of the folks who are working right now are dealing with anxiety about being back in the classroom or challenges around pivoting to virtual school. As we continue to adjust to these new realities, I want you to know that your COEO Board of Directors and fellow members are thinking of you. We have seen so much support amongst our membership as folks share new ideas, create resources, adapt classic OE activities to meet COVID safety guidelines, and find countless ways to support parents, educators, and families in getting outside. We are seeing the benefits of outdoor learning being recognized throughout our society, with many educators now looking to take their students outside for the first time. After seeing many questions from educators who were unsure about how to get started, this summer Deb Diebel organized a webinar panel for kindergarten teachers, "Taking Your Kindergarten Students Outside." The recording of this webinar is available to view on our YouTube channel, having now been watched hundreds of times! Over the summer COEO also created and shared an Outdoor Learning Tips document, with suggestions on everything from managing risk to activity suggestions to managing assessment. Thank you to Hil Coburn and Liz Kirk for putting this together. Please continue to share these resources with anyone who may find them beneficial.

I need to extend a huge thank you to everyone involved in our virtual fall conference events! Though the conference looked quite different this year I am happy to have had a chance to see many of you over Zoom, learn together, enjoy your music, laugh at your stories, and discuss important issues related to the future of COEO & outdoor education. Thank you to educators Anaya Lambert and Olivier Adrien for facilitating the learning on Anti-Racism & Outdoor Education, Shanshan Tian for MCing, and Karen O'Krafka for organizing this important workshop. Thank you to Ben Blakey for organizing our COEO's Got Talent open mic social, as well as to all those who shared their talents at this event. Thank you to Liz Kirk for coordinating this year's Annual Meeting and to Brian Lisson for once again taking on the important task of chairing the meeting. And finally, thank you to COEO's very own Zoom tech wizard Liz Jankowski for taking on the tech duties for all three of the virtual events.



I would also like to extend a huge amount of gratitude to the 2019/2020 Board of Directors. The year certainly did not turn out as any of us anticipated, but your hard work to support our members during this incredibly difficult time did not go unnoticed. I am thrilled that each of you chose to remain on the Board for another year and I look forward to all we will accomplish together in 2020/2021.

Typically I would end my fall letter with an invitation to join us in January at our annual Make Peace with Winter conference and to stay tuned about our spring Ontario Wilderness Leadership Symposium, but with current predictions about the ongoing pandemic, it is unlikely we will be able to host any in-person gatherings this year. We are planning to host more webinars and continue to share resources throughout the year, so please ensure you are reading through the e-newsletter and following us on social media to stay updated. We hope to be able to gather again in September, but until then stay safe and continue to get outside.

Natalie Kemp
COEO President

Starting Squamish Nature Learners: A Place-Based Education Program

By Chloe Humphreys

In the early spring of 2019, several parents came together, including the author of this paper, and applied for an all outdoor place-based home school support program in Squamish, BC. Months later, Island Discovery Learning Community and School District 47 accepted the proposal and by September of the same year the program began, with fourteen children and one certified teacher.

At the time of creating the project, we were unaware of any other all-outdoor public home school support programs like this. Inspired by the Maple Ridge Environmental School Project where the author did postdoctoral research, our program placed our children, from kindergarten to grade 4, on seventeen acres of rainforest, to learn three days a week.

The author had also completed a research summary for COEO on outdoor education in 2018; this summary, in part, was responsible for the groundwork and vision needed for this program's success. This paper weaves the steps taken to build this program using the research from the Dynamic Horizon Summary (2018), and beyond. The author's intention is not to provide a 'how to guide' for implementing an outdoor school nor is it to articulate best practices, but to share observations, key aspects of the program's development and implementation, and the struggles and challenges that reside therein.

This article describes the community, the teacher, the land, the support from the Indigenous community, and the devoted parents who were necessary for the success of this program. This paper combines an overview of the steps taken in developing this school and the philosophy and research behind the program.

> Observations on January 12th, 2020: When I arrived yesterday at the school, Jericho (age 7) ran up to me. "Come here," she said. "I want to show you something." I followed her to where she crouched down, pointing to the deer tracks in the frozen snow. "It's a deer track!" She told me. Deer (*sxway-chun*) is the animal name given to her by Tsawaysia Spukwus, one of the Indigenous Elders who mentor at our school. I think she was excited both because it was her animal name but also because we have yet to see a deer at the school. Today was my volunteer day at the school and it was cold for the coast, minus twelve. The sky was a soft blue and the sun hadn't risen above the mountains yet. The short January day made it feel like early dawn at 9 am. We had gathered to play a game of bear's den. The crunchy snow makes it difficult to be quiet in the woods.

The Teacher: Implicit and Explicit Teaching

The posting for a teacher for our program was offered internally by the school district in early July to a teacher who was starting her masters in place-based education. Given that it was an internal posting, the parents did not have input in the hiring process. Fortunately for us, the teacher was integral to our program's success.

A large body of research has shown that young children often learn through imitation rather than what is told to them (Tomasello, Kruger & Ratner 1993; Meltzoff & Moore, 1983; Steiner, 1996) and our teacher's implicit acts of teaching—her comfort level and way of being within the natural world, her level of attention, her sense of joy and wonder at the tiniest thing—soon became quite infectious with the students. We are fortunate because this teaching style can be difficult to foster if a teacher does not already demonstrate it. If the teacher sees the natural world as a

distraction to learning rather than where knowledge comes from, and if they don't understand that when they speak outside, they are speaking over other more-than-human conversations (Blenkinsop & Piersol, 2013), then this is what the children will also see and learn, more so than the explicit lesson at hand. (Steiner, 1996). We are deeply grateful for who she is and her relationship with the natural world.

As I observed, it was also important to not miss the learning opportunities that might arise with the observation and immersion in the land and be able to make a lesson plan out of a single encounter with nature. These encounters in nature can be delightful learning opportunities for the children, but they can also turn 'miseducative' if not mentored properly. Upon finding wooly-bear caterpillars nesting in the alder trees, will the children toss them at each other, stuff them into boxes and otherwise harm them? Or conversely, will the educator use this as an opportunity, an opening, to demonstrate respect and compassion? Multiple learning opportunities can emerge from these encounters.

In their article 'A Surprising Discovery', Blenkinsop et al. (2016) write, "many outdoor educators focused on environmental learning are intimately familiar with the context and place in which she/he works and are therefore able to recognize and maximize the educational potential of a learning moment when it arises" (p. 352). There are myriad possibilities that are afforded by any natural setting, and it is important that effective outdoor educators respond to the immediate while also continually noting the possibilities that might blossom at a later date (Humphreys and Blenkinsop, 2018). In this instance, there are not only many lessons that can connect the children's interest in the caterpillars to the curriculum, but care should be taken to revisit the area now called 'caterpillar hotel' and encourage the questions that might arise: did the caterpillars move? Change? Balancing the curriculum goals, while maintaining a sense of wonder at the mysteries of caterpillars are key components for an outdoor educator especially when teaching in a multi-grade classroom setting.

I have also found that an effective outdoor teacher needs to find a balance between allowing children to learn through doing and on the other hand observing beings without interfering. Early childhood environmental educator Ruth Wilson explains that learning by doing is a fundamental part of experience-based learning and an essential part of the curriculum for early childhood educators. She writes:

> The natural world for children is not just a scene or backdrop—it's something to be interacted with. Young children want to do more than look. They want to be busy doing something and it is through such busyness that they learn about the natural world and about themselves (Wilson, 2012, p.13).

Further, preschool educators have long recognized problems of too much 'academics' in a natural encounter, even to the point of labeling such an approach as 'miseducative'.

On the other hand an educator also needs to consider the needs of the caterpillar, in this example, and how to invoke the children's curiosity to consider these needs. Looking at the needs of other species is a concept explored by Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw (2015). They use encounters between small children and ants, slugs, and worms to illustrate how paying close attention to our relations with other species can help us to rethink our place in the world (2015, p.507). They attempt to move beyond education's traditional focus on child learning within an exclusively human context and re-position children within the interdependent multispecies worlds in which they live. They challenge human-centric assumptions including the assumption that only humans have the capacity to exercise agency (Plumwood,

2002) and to learn in these interspecies encounters. In lieu of singling out children as the sole learning subjects and regarding their actions upon the world as the sole locus of agency, they write "we are interested in tapping into the relational and co-shaping learning that occurs when children and animals physically encounter each other in their common worlds'' (Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015, p. 508).

Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw articulate a profound shift within early childhood environmental education. They challenge the notion of human exceptionalism, in which children are the only ones with the capacity to exercise agency. They believe that by looking at 'multispecies vulnerability' educators can tackle the problem of human-centred learning. They believe that this anthropocentric view of the world fosters our current human-driven environmental crisis.

With their research in mind and using the caterpillar example, educators have an opportunity to encourage children to acknowledge the life and feelings of the caterpillar and see the caterpillar as having its own agency. However, directly telling children to consider the needs and agency of a caterpillar can sometimes invoke the opposite of the desired response. At this suggestion, the child, instead of showing compassion by softly returning the caterpillar to a leaf, may be tempted to stomp on it or throw it; especially if the child feels they have been stigmatized as the bully or the villain in this situation. Ethics philosopher Martin Buber (1951) warned us about this in his often quoted statement: "I have made the fatal mistake of giving instructions in ethics." Similar to Buber, education philosopher Rudulf Steiner (1996), also recognized the problems associated with the instructive approach in ethics and encouraged teachers to use stories rather than direct lessons. In this example, a story about the life of caterpillar (giving it an age, a name, feelings, desires, and a direction) can help the young child understand the agency of the caterpillar.

The Land and Elders: Asking Permission

Finding the right land for our children to learn and play on was as important to us as the right (human) teacher. And in Squamish, a town that is under massive developmental changes and increasing population, undeveloped land is becoming harder to find. One of the mothers knew of 17 acres of lush rain forest near the heart of Squamish. The land was made a municipal park for the 2010 Olympics as a biathlon training area. The place has sun in the winter—essential in a mountainous town like Squamish; it was close to town; contained a walking trail to a large salmon spawning river, a climbing crag, and wildlife such as screech owls, and deer. It was a place where maple trees, cottonwoods, cedar trees, sword ferns, licorice root, stinging nettle, black berries, snow berries grew freely. After several visits to the land we knew it was where we wanted our children's school to be. In our favour, the president of the board running the land was a retired outdoor school principal. He was supportive and enthusiastic about our project and leased us the land.

It was important for us to ask for permission to use this land, not just from the board of directors running it, but also from the Squamish Nation's Elders whose families have used the land for many generations. So in early August, we presented the idea to the Squamish Nation Elders at Totem Hall. We explained our school to them—it was an outdoor school, where children learned from the land, from a certified teacher, and from Squamish Nation mentors. Our hope was that children would not only learn curriculum from the land but also develop an emotional attachment to it and, in turn, develop a land ethic. The belief that a child's connection to the land is enhanced by the local Indigenous communities' symbiotic connection to that specific area is supported by many education researchers (Lowan, 2009; Simpson 2002; Battiste, 1998, 2005; Graveline, 1998). When designing this program we needed to consider the

local Indigenous history and connection to the land.

After many questions, the Elders gave us their blessing and asked to visit our school. Their tone became serious as they talked about their own schooling options for their children being limited. They spoke of the devastating effects of residential schools and the subsequent loss of their language. They told us it may take seven generations for this trauma to pass and we are now in the seventh generation since the *Indian Act* (Borrows, 2008).

We now have regular Squamish Nations Elders visiting every Thursday to teach language, art, land ethic, history, and culture to our children. Many scholars (e.g. Simpson 2002; Battiste, 1998, 2005; Graveline, 1998) emphasize the value of including Elders in education programs. They describe how important it is that Elders are regularly included in program offerings, and that this continuity of presence encourages the Elders to teach in a more relaxed and traditional way (Lowan, 2009).

We also needed to ask permission from the land itself. As this is an important practice within the Squamish Nation's culture, one of the Indigenous mentors initiated this process for us. While it is still essential for us that a formal ceremony is performed by one of the Elders, we had an informal ceremony and offering to the creator from one of the Indigenous mentors (*Cee-appl-ton)*. He also showed the children how to ask permission for harvesting a shelf fungus. He told us to face east as this is where the creator is and to leave a small food offering.

Seeking permission before harvesting is common to other Indigenous practices as well. Robin Wall Kimmerer, scientist, professor, author, and Citizen Potawatomi Nation, explains that it is not only important to ask permission but to also listen to the answer. The children at the school often ask permission but then become confused because they don't know what the tree or plant says. Kimmerer (2013) hints that it is important to see the answer beyond human language. She uses the example of harvesting spring onions and indicates that the answer may be in how difficult the onion makes it for her to harvest.

Listening to the land is an important practice within Squamish Nation's culture. And from conversations I have had with the Elders there is an undeniable spiritual connection that occurs during listening. This wisdom is better spoken from an Elder than translated into written words here. However, they did emphasize the need to listen.

In my own example:

My son Julian, after prompting, asked a tree if he could climb it.

"How will I know if the tree says yes or no?' He asks.

He attempts to climb the tree but there are many factors prohibiting an easy ascent: the branches were too weak and kept breaking; there were sharp spikes on the tree; the branches were crowded and he couldn't find space for himself; a spider was in her web right where he was about

to put his hand. He eventually decides he doesn't want to wreck the spider's web and he gives up. We both sense that the tree and the spider said 'no'.

Looking beyond verbal cues are perhaps ways those with an-other-than Indigenous identity can begin the process of asking permission and listening for answers. In a chapter on interspecies ethics, environmental philosopher, Val Plumwood writes, "the real communication challenge at this level of interspecies communication is for we humans to learn to communicate with other species on their terms, in their own languages, or in common terms, if there are any" (2002, p.189).

The Name: Squamish Nature Learners

Deciding on a name for the school was difficult for us. When we use the word 'nature' we mean a place with limited impact from human development. We chose a place with the hope that our children would have ample opportunities to encounter 'nature on-its-own-terms' (Sitka-Sage et al. 2017, p. 25) with all the affordances and possible dangers residing therein. By 'nature' we do not mean a neutral or 'pure wild' space. The cult of wilderness is questionable from both feminist and Indigenous perspectives (Mathews, 2001). We recognise that this place was inhabited by Squamish Indigenous people and has deep spiritual and political history and significance and has been tended and altered by them for generations. We do not understand nature in a romantic sense of it being pristine. The place has had much human impact: second growth trees, trails, ski jump, roads, sounds of the nearby gun range etc . While we aimed for a place that had minimal industrial development, we also understood that the human alterations provide historical proof that places are not wild empty spaces separate from people, but places shape people and people shape places (Greenwood, 2009). This concept has important implications for outdoor education's curriculum: recognizing that people and cultures are place-makers means developing curricular connections with diverse places that allow students to learn from them (Greenwood, 2009). Spending time in places, studying and becoming acquainted with places, using the outdoors as a 'text' of cultural history, becomes an important pathway in understanding culture as rooted in place (Greenwood, 2009). This place is also inhabited by countless other-than-human beings and we recognise that by generalising the multiplicities of beings in a particular place within the term 'nature', this can 'other' it and thereby reinforce the western distinction between self and world (Beery & Wolf-Watz, 2014).

The school's curriculum is experience-based. And by being experiential the aim is to undo the modern binary between self and nature. The importance of experiential learning and sensory experience, particularly in early childhood education is richly documented. (Carson, 1998; Honig, 2015; Kupetz & Twiest, 2000, 2012; Pelo, 2013; Wilson, 1993). Through immersion and 'embodied experiential learning' a child can develop an understanding that they exist in relation to the natural world and the environment is not a separate entity from them (Carson, 1998; Wilson, 2012).

The philosophy of lived experience developed as a response to the traditional western scientific view that characterizes the world in terms of oppositions: mind/body, matter/spirit, subject/object, human/nature, culture/nature, reason/emotion, science/superstition, colonizer/colonized (Haraway, 1991; Bennett, 2010; Mathews, 2001; Plumwood, 2002) and so on. Instead of viewing the world as separate from the self, or knowledge as separate from experience, the phenomenologists (or those who embrace a philosophy of lived experience) understand that knowledge and our existence are dependent upon sensory experiences (Husserl, 1958; Abram, 1996). Further, feminists critique these dichotomies from the standpoint that the terms on the left hand side are systematically ranked above the terms on the right (Mathews, 2001). And the terms on the left are associated

with, in western thought, masculinity or masculine ideals, and the terms on the right with femininity or feminine ideals. The entire conceptual system is gendered and oppressive (Mathews, 2001).

A common critique in the current literature about outdoor education is that programs can omit the environment from the experience in favour of personal development goals through adventurous activities (Wattchow and Brown, 2011; Nicol, 2014; Mikaels & Asfeldt, 2016; Lowan, 2009, Grimwood, 2016; Cosgriff et al., 2009 and more). Further, Cosgriff et al. (2009) argue that "outdoor programs have historically been built around masculine competition where goal-oriented heroic quests against nature are the norm" (p. 19). At this school we are careful to teach that the world is not separate from the self, but our bodies, our senses, and our existence are primarily connected and dependent upon the outside world (Plumwood, 2002). Our cultural and educationally imposed separation of humans and nature can contribute to a general ignorance about the importance of the natural world for human existence thus, fostering a disregard for the environment (Beery and Wolf-Watz, 2014; Bai, 2009; Hung, 2008, Bonnett, 2003, Kurth-Schai, 1992, Clarke, 2014). There is an explicit philosophy within our curriculum to develop an intimate relationship with specific beings, trees, salmon, and the river at the school.

Place and Home

Our program is not only working towards undoing institutionally imposed boundaries between nature and humans but also between home and education (Illich, 2002). I observe how the children develop a sense of home and place at the school. Returning to the same land throughout the year, playing on this land, watching the changes in the river, the movement and cycles of the salmon, the freezing and thawing of water falls, the outside embodied experience of the land are ways that the children begin to feel a sense of home there.
A sense of home at the school is also encouraged through parent involvement. The teacher, whose teaching philosophy is grounded in attachment parenting, wisely told us that the children will feel at home in a school if their parents are involved in building it.

Quite literally the parents were involved in building the school with the construction of the platform and the yurt—used as a warming hut on the cold and rainy days—as well as installing heat and laying the floor. The children participated and observed. When winter fell and it grew cold at the school, the children asked: What type of heating is there? Where does heat come from? How do we create it? The children became intimately connected both with the falling of winter but also with the process of building a warm shelter.

At one stage in late October before the heat was installed, a parent commented that the children were 'too cold to colour.' Much of our everyday lives and educational institutions involve separation of means and ends. But at our school, the natural world had a chance to make itself known to the children in ways that are often severely limited in climate-controlled, health and safety inspected, indoor classrooms (Humphreys & Blenkinsop, 2018). The building of the yurt at the school left some space for the other-than human educator to 'jut' (Joldersma, 2018) into the scene; it allowed students an opportunity to question where heat and shelter come from. A type of 'landfullness' (the opposite of 'landlessness') is created in the students by re-establishing this vital relationship between students and land and between means and ends (Asfeldt et al. 2009). Allowing for more direct living and an acknowledgement of our dependence on the natural environment for sustaining our lives can create a respect for the land around us (Asfeldt et al. 2009). A 'landfullness' or connection to the land will enable the students to more fully appreciate the cyclical nature of life (Asfeldt et al. 2009). The yurt building and heat installation event moved beyond the severing of means and ends that often happen at an indoor pre-established

institution, and in turn enhanced the connection between humans and place (Asfeldt et al. 2009).By the time the yurt was constructed, the heat put in, and the hardwood floor installed each student had a sense of home in the yurt. It was an architectural undoing of boundaries between home and education.

Further, when exploring Indigenous relationships to specific places, Lowan (2009) found that outdoor programs should foster a sense of place—helping students to feel at home in— rather than separate from or challenged by—their natural surroundings. Additional research suggests that it is the positive attachment to a place that may be the link to pro-environmental behaviours and protection of that place. Recent research tells us that as individuals build increased awareness, understandings, and attachments to nature-based contexts their attachment to natural settings may convert to a commitment to the environment in general (Halpenny, 2010).

Research has also found that the parent or caretaker plays a fundamental role in increasing a child's care for the natural world. Rachel Carson (1998) speaks of a child's 'inborn sense of wonder' and tells us that if the child is to keep this magic alive he or she 'needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it' (p. 45). The role of the caretaker in our current culture is essential for keeping this sense of wonder alive. Wilson (1993) writes that 'in a society as we know it today, children do not automatically develop an awareness and appreciation of the natural world. There are, in fact, many forces which tend to foster prejudice against nature rather than appreciation for it' (p. xi). It is important that parents maintain connection to this program, both through their work at the school and their presence. Each parent is required to volunteer one day a month. The reasons are both for safety and we want to keep parents involved in their child's formal education because we recognize the immense value of family involvement in student learning and fostering the child's appreciation for the natural world (Humphreys & Blenkinsop, 2018). Chawla (2015) writes: 'Up to this point, research is largely silent regarding the influence of nature contact on family systems... Future research should address how nature affects children and their caretakers together, and how each side may mediate the nature experience of the other' (p. 446). With Chawla's research in mind, our school encourages an attachment parenting style parenting both to children and to the natural world.

Part of the process in making this program a success is selecting parents who have the desire to be involved in their child's education and assessing whether they value keeping their children close. We also have the task of finding parents who understand the importance of being outside and learning in nature. This is usually done through multiple conversations and a visit to the school. At Squamish Nature Learners, both the parents and the teacher become intimately connected in their child's education

and the boundaries between home and education become more fluid.

Finding a Balance: Free Play, Risky Play, and Letting Things Be

At Squamish Nature Learners, all of us parents are sometimes in awe of the beauty and magic that unfolds there. Witnessing and being involved in the beauty at the school keeps us inspired to work together and make the program successful. However, the school does not go without its challenges.

One of the main challenges is finding a balance between unstructured free play and project-based learning. Some of the parents joined the school as wild unschoolers, resistant to structure and lesson plans, but it became apparent quickly that too much freedom was not wise and that children can play in 'mis-educational' and disrespectful ways. We handled this challenge in three ways. First, by making sure all free play was mentor monitored and redirected when it became miseducative or disrespectful to the land, the teacher or other students. We are working towards finding a better balance between teacher-led and child-directed activities. We found that not all activities need to be child-led and not all free play is educational.

Second, we increased our adult to student ratio. Given that this is a public program, we are given a teacher for every 14 children; for us this ratio was not low enough. We also have one parent volunteer that reduces the ratio to 1 to 7. We reduced the ratio even further by collaborating with Quest University and implemented an Experiential Learning block for motivated students to assist in teaching. We found students whose interests reside in the areas of place-based education, philosophy of education, and homeschooling. It is an enriching learning experience for the university students, and our children have become attached to them. Further, our student body is diverse in backgrounds so having a diverse range of mentors at the school also has a positive impact on educating our children.

Our third approach is to work to limit items and conversations that are not educational and nature-based. Part of our philosophy is to keep the love of learning alive and to let the child direct their own learning through their passions. We decided that toys and pop culture conversations are to be discouraged at the school, in an attempt to both preserve the innocence of the younger in a multi-age setting but also to remove all that is not educational based. The idea that removing things that are not educational allows for child directed activities to be educational is a common practice at Montessori Schools (Lillard, 2005).

Another challenge is finding the balance within risky play. Recent research supports the promotion of risky outdoor play for healthy child development (Brussoni et al., 2015). Risky play is often defined as a situation whereby "the child can recognize and evaluate the challenge and decide on a course of action" (Brussoni, 2015, p. 6425) or as thrilling and exciting play that can include the possibility of physical injury (Sandseter & Kennair, 2011). Types of risky play might include play at height, speed, play near possibly dangerous elements or tools, rough-and-tumble play, or play where there is the potential for disappearing or getting lost. One study found that children in an experimental group exposed to a 14-week risky play intervention improved their risk detection and competence, increased self-esteem and decreased conflict sensitivity (Lavrysen et al., 2015). Their study showed that with ready access to unsupervised outdoor play opportunities, children developed increased motor skills, social behaviour, independence and conflict resolution (Brussoni et al., 2015). Furthermore, Bussoni et al. (2015) tell us that, "experience with risks during childhood is believed to assist with developing risk management strategies, and the ability to negotiate decisions about substance use, relationships and sexual behaviour

during adolescence" (p. 6426). Moreover, research found that play environments where children could take risks promoted social interactions, creativity and resilience (Came, 2015). According to Brussoni's research, playgrounds that offer natural elements such as trees and plants, changes in height, and freedom for children to engage in activities of their own choosing, have positive impacts on health, behaviour and social development (2015). Brussoni concludes that "there is overall positive effects of risky outdoor play on a variety of health indicators and behaviours in children aged 3-12 years" (2015, p. 6447).

Our group of children and parents are not risk averse. As many parents are avid climbers, skiers, and surfers, the children are often exposed to high risk activities on their homeschool days. While recognizing the benefit of risky play at school there are also many opportunities for serious harm or even death, especially when we play near fast moving rivers and large cliffs. Some of the parents made a safety handbook with rules that addressed the elements of danger at our school. At our school, we are finding a balance between the importance of risky play and a need to keep them safe by respecting and enforcing strict rules around safety and identifying and documenting these rules.

Further, the cotton woods that populate our school are a hazard on windy days. The children are also learning to identify hazardous trees and branches. We took the precaution of having a dangerous tree assessment, but the wind and trees are still unpredictable.

Further challenges include finding a balance between learning by doing and letting the place be. Our beautiful salmon spawning river is also an important feeding place for the black bears. And while the children are fascinated with the sighting of the bears and love the spawning salmon—the education is undeniable—we need to be careful to both protect the children from dangerous encounters but also to not prevent the bears from getting to their feeding ground and disrupt the cycle of growth that results from the nutrient-rich salmon carcasses hauled to the land by the bear. Understanding this also lets children know that learning is not human centered or child centered but a part of a massive system much larger than humans, and we are not the only ones learning in this place.

Learning what education looks like in an outdoor setting has also been an interesting aspect to this program. While some parents are interested in more traditional schooling of pen to paper and worksheets, other parents do not want their child doing anything they don't want to do. An attempt to be more academic resulted in the habitual movement to more inside time in the yurt with teacher led lessons and children sitting at a table on log stumps. However, the research is rich showing that movement enables learning (Griffin, 1995; Levin, Siegler& Druyan). So re-educating and deschooling parents and teachers can be a challenge for both our program and other outdoor schools as well. While the vast majority of play-based learning occurs outside in nature there is still a persistent conception that academic learning occurs only if students sit, listen, and write. The idea that academics happen inside is an inherently anthropocentric understanding of how knowledge occurs and where knowledge resides.

Given that outdoor schools are on the rise, more programs that prepare teachers for an emergent curriculum would be helpful. Allowing the weather and the environment to dictate the learning, rather than shutting it out, or seeing it as a distraction to academics and building knowledge and confidence around math and literacy in the natural world should all be essential components of a teacher training program. At Squamish Nature Learners, we are beginning to understand that it is a long process of deschooling, decolonizing, and reinhabiting ourselves with lessons from the land.

Conclusion

At the start of the school year, and the start of the program, the pink salmon were spawning up the river. So we began the educational project with daily trips to the river to watch the salmon spawn. Now, five months later, the children are finding the baby salmon (the fry) and are digging passageways for them so they don't dry up in the sand. The lessons that can be derived from these encounters are multiple if not infinite: salmon identification, the life cycle of a salmon, the cycle of nature, lessons on death and dying, spawning, impact of the environment, ethics, empathy, risk assessment, salmon counting, positive human/salmon interactions etc… What we are hoping to accomplish at this school is not just meeting curriculum goals, although important, but an attachment to place. If climate scientists are right and we are entering into the 6th stage of mass extinction and we have a 12 year turn-around time, we hope that we are educating our children in a way that enables them to help with this turn. But if other scholars are right and we are too late and are now just 'learning to die' in the age of Anthropocene (Bringhurst & Zwicky, 2018), perhaps our children can be comforted from lessons in nature not only on death and dying but the joys and wonderment of life.

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Solo Place-Based Learning: Does it Work in the City, and Could it Promote Environmental Responsibility?

By Emma Carroll-Monteil

As the planet continues to experience growth in cities and urbanisation, for many, it seems like local 'green spaces' are becoming smaller and that areas of 'wilderness' are further away. For some outdoor educators, it may feel like the ideal outdoor classroom is increasingly unattainable. However, learning outside the classroom can still be done, as long as we continue to adapt and embrace our relationship with the environment around us. I believe Nicol and Sangster's (2019) lesson structure—the *You Are Never Alone* task (YANA)—exemplifies that place-based learning can easily and meaningfully occur within an urban setting. To evaluate this, I will synthesise my understanding of phenomenology, place-based learning, my experience of the YANA task, and its relevance for environmental education.

Solos have been considered valuable experiences for outdoor learning, where they provide "experiential opportunity for individuals to build theory based on their own responses to place" (p. 1372, Nicol & Sangster, 2019) and can promote a sense of attachment and responsibility to the location they are in. Nicol and Sangster piloted this style of lesson in Edinburgh as part of a university course. Nicol and Sangster's YANA task instructs the following: by yourself, find an urban place that is local to you which you can return to later in the week. Next, during the week, return to this place. Be stationary in this location for at least an hour. Lastly, whilst you are in this location, consider: people (e.g. who was around us, and what they were doing), place (e.g. the physical characteristics of where we were), and you (e.g. your feelings during the solo).

During the pilot study, Nicol and Sangster interviewed their participants and concluded that regarding phenomenology, urban solos were equally valuable as solos in wilderness places. They explained that this is because solos can provide profound learning experiences that can be valuable for transformative learning. On a characteristically cold and rainy day in Edinburgh, I completed this task myself in 2019, as part of a Master's course in Outdoor Environmental and Sustainability Education.

Phenomenology is particularly valuable in outdoor education, as it posits that people and the worlds they inhabit are interconnected, thus encouraging learning about and in the world to be both experiential and experimental (Nicol, 2013). To me, presence refers to the state of *being* within these experiences, where you are aware of your surroundings in the here and now. According to Seamon (2014), in context of phenomenology, *place* is not limited to the physical surroundings but also encompasses "any environmental locus in and through which individual or group actions, experiences, intentions, and meanings are drawn together spatially" (p.11).

It, therefore, is understandable that during the YANA task, we were prompted to consider not only 'you', but also to extend beyond the self, and think about 'place' and 'people'. Further, Seamon argues that our experiences and attachments to places are significant because it allows us to better understand the experiences of the lifeworld, which he defines as "the everyday world of taken-for-grantedness normally unnoticed and thus concealed as a phenomenon" (p. 12). I believe this significantly links to the notion of presence, where often we are not fully present and aware of our surroundings. Nicol (2013) offers that we may struggle with being present because our attention is often occupied with human concerns, such as our relationships and our jobs, and thus

we are less able to be attuned to what is going on around us. Particularly in solos, it has been theorised that being at a place and experiencing solitude and unstructured time enables individual reflection and heightens awareness of one's surroundings (Nicol & Sangster, 2019).

The place I selected for my YANA task was a courtyard near where I work that I often visit during breaks. Whilst I have always enjoyed the courtyard, in the past when I had visited it during work breaks, I was often not particularly engaged with my surroundings. However, I found that having a large amount of time to be there by myself with loose prompts to guide me resulted in my being very attuned with what was happening around me. Although I initially felt intimidated by the prospect of sitting in a place alone for so long, I found that as I became better acquainted with the characteristics of place, I felt more like I was part of the place. As a result, I felt more comfortable, relaxed, and aware of my feelings. For example, I observed that the courtyard had a garden inside it, where shrubs had been planted, but not well-manicured. I spent a long time contemplating why this would be, and why the people who planted them would do this. Although I did not know the answers to my questions, I still felt like I had learned from it and I knew the area better. Through this reflection, I felt more present, and thus connected to the area.

Allowing my thoughts to be unstructured allowed me to engage with the place more personally and deeply. Upon reading Nicol's (2013) paper, what I found interesting was his discussion about the importance of students taking responsibility for their learning, and how solos can facilitate this. He suggests that the kind of outdoor education which is characterised by adventure and thrill are often isolated from the day-to-day world, and so it is difficult for these experiences to be incorporated into further learning. Further, as they are often guided, there is not much opportunity for students to take responsibility for their learning (Nicol, 2013). The YANA exercise was particularly useful for this, as aside from the prompts, it is self-guided, and allows the students to engage with the learning however they wish, which creates a more personal and meaningful experience. What's more, an important part of the task is that students choose their own spot and visit it in their own time. This freedom required students to organise their participation in the tasks themselves and create full responsibility for their learning.

My experience with the YANA task has led me to believe that solos are rich in phenomenology because the lack of structure facilitated more personally led learning and exploration. By being open-ended, the task allows for students to engage and interact with their location and their thoughts however they would like. I believe this also allows for more creative thinking and curiosity. According to Nicol (2013), experiences such as the YANA can spark curiosity in the learning, and this can help demonstrate to the learner what they are studying, which encourages interest and for the student to take the learning further. I agree with this, as I felt more present and engaged during the task because I was able to think creatively about the location and about the prompts, which stimulated my desire to learn more. For example, had I been brought to my location and set a task to learn about the history of the spot, I think would have gone away and learned about what date the courtyard and the surrounding buildings were built. However, because there were no expectations, not only I did think about the history of the spot, but I thought of how the structures were built, who built them and why, and how people use or think about them today. For me, this experience personally highlighted the benefit of self-guided learning and allowed me to better understand the efficacy of the task. Additionally, both during the task and after I felt more engaged with the content that we had learned in the classroom, and I felt I better understood the efficacy of the task.

During the YANA task, I also found that the concepts of 'people', 'place', and 'you' were intertwined and seamless. Nicol (2013) suggests that place-based learning and ontological thinking can enable humans to think more deeply about non-humans within place. During the task, I often found myself beginning a string of thoughts by thinking about how I felt, then thinking about the people around me, then the place, and again back to my own feelings. For example, I felt a little awkward because noticed 'people' taking photos of the buildings around the courtyard and I was in these photos, blocking their view. I then thought about what part of the 'place' they were photographing. Next, I ('you') would again consider my thoughts and feelings towards that part of the place—such as "would I value this spot if I lived here, instead of being a visitor? What does this location mean to me, and why?". Again, I think this is particularly valuable when relating it to Nicol's (2013) notion that we pay more attention to our human concerns, as showcased by the fact that my thoughts did first relate to myself, but as I encouraged myself to be more present, I was able to turn my attention to the other parts of the lifeworld around me.

Being able to turn attention from the self and the human world to the rest of your environment is also valuable for environmental education. If Nicol (2013) is correct in that "the moral significance of our relationship with nature is based on the attention we pay to it"(p. 458), we must ensure that in outdoor learning students can experience ways—such as the YANA task—which in turn encourage them to pay more attention to the environment, and care about it more significantly. This is supported by Gruenewald (2003), who explains that experiential and experimental learning—the core of phenomenology in outdoor education—can "deepen empathetic connections and expand the possibilities for learning outward" (p. 8). I agree with all these authors, as after the YANA task, my self-guided learning which explored 'people', 'place', and 'you', I felt much more connected to the location, and would be much more inclined to protect it.

Beames, Higgins and Nicol (2012) agree with the previous literature, and detail that outdoor place-based learning can help students take more responsibility for their local environment, as they can "experience situations which require them to consider different courses of actions and then make decisions" (p. 9), thus increasing their awareness and responsibility. They also emphasise that experiential learning, like the YANA task, which is rich with physical and sensory experiences, allows for students to develop a relationship with not only the location of the outdoor learning but the greater environment (Beames, Higgins & Nicol, 2012). Thus, the more students visit places, the more they develop a 'feeling of familiarity' which allows them to develop a feeling of responsibility for the place (Wattchow & Brown, 2011). Therefore, by introducing outdoor learning to classrooms in cities throughout the world, individuals can form relationships with the environment, become more inclined to protect it, and

live in sustainable ways. Additionally, continuous place-based outdoor learning allows educators to "develop place-responsive practices" (Nicol & Sangster, 2019, p. 1368), so they can tailor learning to the location. In turn, this facilitates even more meaningful outdoor education for the students.

According to UNESCO (2014), "Sustainable development cannot be achieved by political agreements, financial incentives or technological solutions alone. Sustainable development requires changes in the way we think and act. Education plays a crucial role in bringing about this change" (p. 8). This means that our greatest chance at addressing the consequences and causes of climate change and encouraging populations to act pro-environmentally is through education. If we are able to fully utilise the benefits of place-based learning in cities through activities such as the YANA task, we can continue to ensure outdoor education is meaningful, and further foster a sense of environmental responsibility within our students.

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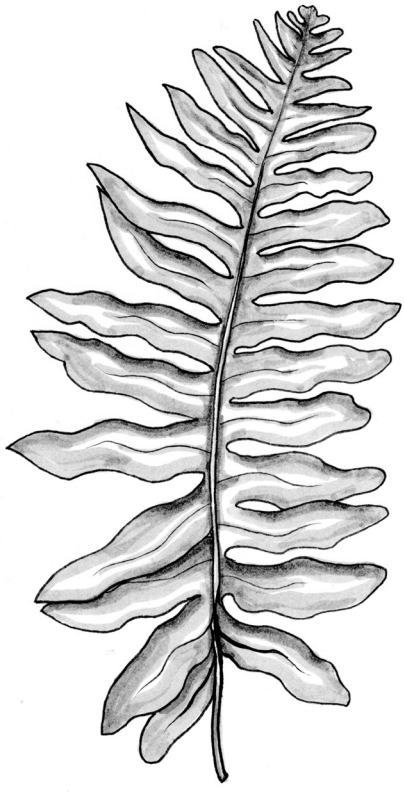


The Integration of Nature-Based Learning (NBL) at an Urban Independent School Over the Course of a School Year

By Ben Blakey

Richard Louv's concept of the *Nature Deficit Disorder* (NDD; Louv, 2005) suggests a need to reconnect children with the environment for the positive benefits to their mental and physical health, development, and learning. NDD is also useful in describing trends showing a decrease in children's time spent outdoors, physical activity, and ecological knowledge, as well as an increase in media use, prescription medications, myopia, and asthma.

Louv's more recent concept of the *Nature Principle* suggests that "the more high-tech we become, the more nature we need" (Louv, 2012). An emergence in ecopsychology and environmental psychology has shown a myriad of beneficial effects of contact with nature on youth populations mostly in terms of their mood, attention, and anxiety, as well as their environmental attitudes and behaviours (Louv, 2005; Selhub & Logan, 2012; Chawla, 1998). Wilson's (1984) *Biophilia Hypothesis* suggests that as humanity has evolved alongside nature we have an innate genetic need to interact with other life, which also suggests that as we detach ourselves from the natural environment we lose the genetically endowed benefits of interacting with nature, inviting less desirable mental and physical health outcomes. Kaplan's (1989) *Attention Restoration Theory* and Ulrich's (1983) *Psycho-Evolutionary Theory* have also been useful in describing direct benefits to attention and stress, respectively, from time spent outdoors in nature.

The Ontario Ministry of Education has released several documents calling for the integration of Environmental Education (EE) in schools across the province, starting with *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future* (MOE, 2007). More specifically, the document envisions EE as "education *in*, *about*, and *for* the environment" that occurs across all grades and subjects in the K-12 curriculum. Recent initiatives such as the TDSB Ecoschools and the Ontario Ecoschools, along with organizations including Evergreen and the David Suzuki Foundation have been instrumental in encouraging the connection of youth to nature in Toronto, as well as within the province of Ontario and throughout Canada.

A position statement initiated by the Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group (HALO) at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute (CHEO) reads "access to active play in nature and outdoors—with its risks—is essential for healthy child development. We recommend increasing children's opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings—at home, at school, in child care, the community and nature" (Tremblay et al, 2015).

A study by Inverness Associates (2013) in collaboration with the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) looked at responses from 678 principals and over 100 school site visits regarding the integration of EE among American independent schools. Among other results, the most successful schools at integrating Environmental Education defined environmental literacy for use across the school and provided many opportunities for professional development to staff. Another study by Schumacher, Fuhrman, & Duncan (2012) investigated the influence of school culture on the integration of EE at Trinity School, an independent school in Georgia, from the perspectives of seven staff selected with help from the principal. The study identified five themes to explain the data: school characteristics, resources, incentives, barriers, and the perspective of the administration.

Montcrest School is a K-8 independent school in Toronto, Canada. It is located downtown in an urban area and has a high degree of access to greenspace due to its proximity to the Don Valley and the Evergreen Brickworks. With over 300 students, there are approximately 40% who have individual assessments consisting predominantly of learning disabilities and attention disorders. The purpose of the study was to describe the current elements that foster Nature-Based Learning (NBL) within the school curriculum and programming, as well as identifying supports to enable further integration of NBL and barriers that prevent further integration of NBL.

Methodology

The study consisted of two phases of data involving semi-structured research interviews conducted in November and June, as well as the researchers' observational notes made throughout each phase. The Baseline Phase was from September to November 2014, while the Implementation Phase was from January to June 2015. The principal gave the researcher a large list of teachers to ask for participation at the beginning of the baseline phase, and the researcher selected some of them for recruitment by email. These teachers represented each division (i.e. primary, junior and senior) as well as both homeroom and specialty teachers. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. The baseline phase round of interviews included six teachers and one administrator, and the implementation phase round of interviews included four of the original six teachers.

In each phase, there was at least one teacher from each of the divisions and there were both homeroom and specialist teachers. All participants had been working at the school for between five and 20 years. The identity and comments of participants were kept in confidence by the researcher.

Results

Question 1: What are current elements that foster NBL within the Montcrest School curriculum and programming?

Many staff had a strong personal and professional connection to nature, seeing its value for students to behaviour, academics, happiness, well-being, and Executive Functions (EF). Some participants identified having philosophies of education that were related to NBL, including a belief in exploration through the curriculum, valuing the engendering of environmental knowledge, and accommodating for inquiry. Though teachers felt supported by colleagues and the administration team regarding ideas involving NBL, there was room to grow in terms of outdoor pedagogical skills and the approach to NBL in the community. There was more awareness among staff to include NBL over the year, and many staff members were making changes in planning for the 2015/16 year to integrate ideas involving NBL into the curriculum. There were more opportunities for student ownership of NBL in the 2015/16 year with the schools' leadership program in having Eco Schools Captains as well as Outdoor Captains. One teacher also became more comfortable outside over the year and perceived fewer barriers from the baseline phase to the implementation phase.

The best opportunities for NBL were found in field trips, extra-curriculars, some lessons, and collaborative inter-disciplinary iSTEAM projects, though there were examples of NBL found across all grades and subjects. Despite many positive examples, the vast majority of classes were inside, especially during the winter. There were a few poor examples of NBL, including outdoor lessons with no curricular connection and school politics endangering ideas involving NBL. Interest in NBL was highest among the principal, students, and faculty, which is similar to the study by Inverness Associates (2013) on integrating EE in American independent schools. The later grades were most

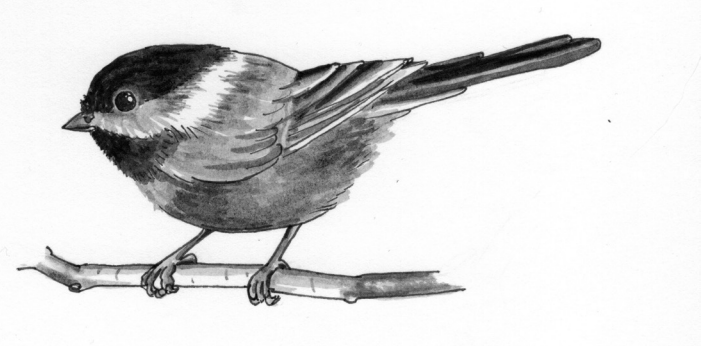
successful at integrating EE, which is an opposite trend when compared to American independent schools (Inverness Associates, 2013).

The naturalized courtyard was used frequently, while the community garden was used sparsely. The community garden was used for some lessons involving mostly science and extra-curriculars, which included many students, teachers, and parents. There were many effective external partnerships with organizations such as Outward Bound that involved NBL. There were also several school-wide activities that made use of Riverdale park and local outdoor spaces including the Don Valley and the Evergreen Brickworks.

Question 2: Supports for NBL at Montcrest

Identified supports included previous occupations of some staff related to NBL such as summer camps and related teaching disciplines, as well as teaching strategies learned from professional development experiences and experts involved with external organizations such as Outward Bound. There was some resource sharing between staff, collaborative opportunities (such as iSTEAM), partnerships with external organizations, and professional development opportunities. There was some degree of NBL present in the curriculum across all grades, though it varied between grades and subjects. There was an increased understanding of the benefits of students having contact with nature as well as the need in education for NBL.

There was a supportive administrative team and board, and there were many teachers and parents who supported NBL. There was a high level of accessible greenspace including local facilities (Riverdale Park, along with the school courtyard and garden), nearby urban greenspace (Don Valley), and close proximity to the Evergreen Brickworks, a notable urban environmental educational hub of activity. There were programming supports including outdoor gym periods, an increase in recess time for the 2015/16 year, and iSTEAM classes, as well as extracurriculars that used the outdoors (such as teams and clubs), school events, and some good examples of lessons. There was also an interesting fit for NBL with the school focus on EFs along with a new interest in self-regulation.



Question 3: Barriers to NBL at Montcrest

There was room to grow in terms of teachers' comfort and confidence with NBL, as well as some lack of understanding of how NBL fit and the belief that it didn't fit with specific curricula. There were concerns in terms of classroom management, safety, and a desire for supervision. There was limited time to revise the curriculum and to co-plan in order to focus on NBL. Some seasons made establishing links to the curriculum involving NBL difficult, and there were some conflicts with other curricula as well as programming priorities. There were some teachers who organized their curriculum primarily through software for the Smartboard, which meant that outdoor lessons took more time to organize.

There was an identified gap for NBL in teacher education, as well as a shift in education paralleling advances in psychology and neuroscience, giving rise to a greater need for schools to support professional development for all faculty regarding NBL. There were transportation and mobility issues involved with taking classes outside, as well as a greater difficulty involving access to washrooms. The garden space at the school was limited and disconnected from the main school (though it was very close), and there were parental concerns for specific connections

of NBL to children's education. There were also some students that didn't like being outdoors, so there was a need to respect students' individuality and make outdoor lessons effective.

Perceived Influence of Nature on Students

Although not studied directly in the three main questions, it seems useful to mention teachers' perspectives about students' experience of nature. Participants suggested that being outdoors helped with anxiety, stress, calming, behaviour, and EF, as well as helping with social skills by permitting a wider variety of play behaviours with varying levels of social interaction. The schools' partnership with Outward Bound was seen as helpful for promoting peer relationships, and often more difficult but useful for those with social needs. Students' freedom outside heightened emotions allowing for more practice of EF and developing emotional control, but also less emotional inhibition. NBL was seen as useful for goal-directed persistence, shifting, creativity, imagination, enthusiasm, enjoyment, losing track of time, deeper and more realistic learning, as well as engaging a sense of discovery.

Other observations made by teachers included that they found being outdoors led to some over-excitement, mostly in boys. They also noted that some students didn't like being outdoors (though very few). A variety in lessons was seen as important for motivating students, and students were motivated for environmental science lessons, iSTEAM across different subjects, and outdoor library periods. Students in Eco Club were also particularly engaged in outdoor lessons.

Opportunities for Improving NBL at Montcrest

Several strategies were identified as opportunities for improving NBL at Montcrest, namely providing opportunities for staff collaboration to share strategies, continuing support for outdoor classes, and investing in PD for all staff. Providing incentives for demonstrating effective outdoor classes and providing opportunities for collaboration with external partner organizations to link curriculum and familiarize both staff teams would be useful. As there are many competing terms, it would be effective for the school to define environmental literacy for the community and in the strategic plan, as well as to make use of *Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations* (MOE, 2011) to guide curriculum by grade and subject. Regarding future work with NBL, it is important to communicate the research to the board, staff, parents, and other schools, as well as to propel involvement in research with CAIS and educational communities. Finally, future research could be directed towards investigating NBL, EF, and outdoor active play.

Inspiring Comments from Research Interviews

"I don't think there are as many challenges as I thought there were... I think a lot of it is perceived challenges but then when you get out there it's actually very good learning."

"I think overall their executive functions are really improved when they get to be outside and get to move around and have space; that's the biggest thing about being outside is the space."

"[the planting lesson] was really good; they were all engaged they were all interested they all wanted to do something. Nobody was messing around."

"I think there's lots of support if we ever want to take our students outside... I feel supported in the opportunity if I wanted to do something. I know there would be support there."

"I'm excited about it. I have to tell you I'm a little bit nervous because it's not my strength. I love nature and I think it's so good to take the kids outside but I'm nervous because I don't know yet how it's going to look...I'm definitely willing to do it and I wanna work towards it."

Conclusion

The study opens the conversation up to augmentation with the aim of continuing to enhance the educational experience and health of Montcrest students and the school community. More broadly, the study offers the insights and perspectives of staff members on the value, efficacy, and challenges presented by the opportunity for NBL within schools and education.

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Hjemstedslaere: It's Too Late to be Pessimistic

By Chris Peters

"*Unless the new forms of community extend beyond traditional humanistic bounds to include the community of Nature, the game is up.*"

—Stan Rowe, *Home Place* (1990)

Strapped into the front seat of the helicopter, I took the headphones and microphone and put them on in what I hoped would be a nonchalant gesture. As though I did this every day. It was therefore disappointing to hear the pilot, as he flicked buttons and checked dials mutter into my ears, "Don't say anything unless I ask. Just sit."

Still, as the rotors whirred to life there was a thrill: all those Vietnam War movies I watched in adolescence suddenly made real. Then the 'copter left the ground and I had sudden vertigo as I found myself looking down at coastal spruce at my feet, seventy feet to the ground and still rising. We rose, moved forward, and I could see the washed-out logging road and the huge swath of forest that had been cleared from the mountainside which we were replanting that day.

Before I had even registered the enormity of the silvan scar we were coming down to land and the pilot yelled, "Go!" I kept my head below my knees in an exaggerated pose to avoid gruesome injury and stepped clear of the rotors to find my planting bags, shovel, and lunch bag at the bottom of the basket. I grabbed them and the helicopter rose up and away.

My crew boss gave me a plot alongside the treeline. Because the mountain was so large and we were so few I couldn't even see the planters in my area. I felt minute, the trees towering. High above the silver-white snows on the mountain top glowed with the morning sun.

For the first hour and a half, the work went smoothly. I planted, marking my work with orange flagging tape along my path. The sun eventually crested the mountain top and in the sudden warmth insects awakened. I could hear the mosquitoes coming before they arrived in earnest. I was prepared for this eventuality. I was wearing a long sleeve t-shirt round my head, the arms tied around my head and my face poking through the neck hole. That shirt, in turn, had been pulled through another long sleeve tee. I had taken the added precaution of duck taping the wrists. A liberal dose of DEET covered the shirts and any exposed skin.

These precautions weren't even an inconvenience for them. They bit across the arch of my back, *through* the t-shirt every time I bent to plant a tree. They crawled up my nose and along my brow ridge, and when I opened my mouth to curse them, I swallowed several whole. I glanced back more than once to find my shadow alive. The noise even more than the biting drove me mad. All at once, I broke.

The planting block was surrounded by tall stands of trees, a green-black border. At the bottom of my piece, I could hear the distant roar of a river. When I lost it, I

made pell-mell for that sound, sure that the waters would drive the mosquitoes away. I ran through the slash and substantial undergrowth into the forest itself and found myself at the edge of an opaque torrent of mountain runoff. I barely stopped to register the flow beyond a dull sense of the relief I would feel when I got rid of the mosquitoes. I dove in.

I realized immediately the enormity of my mistake. The ice-cold water stole my breath as the rushing torrent whisked me downriver. I flailed, uselessly against the water, trying for shore. Even working with the current, this was no easy matter. My clothes weighed me down and the desperate cold made everything so much harder.

Just as suddenly as I had jumped into the river, I found myself in the sudden reprieve of an eddy. I lurched for the shoreline, panting, my heart hammering in my ribcage. Thankful to be alive. I had been in the water for no more than ten seconds.

When I finally could, I stood. I noticed that the woods were quiet, that I was alone. For a brief second, I felt elated. It had all been worth it! I was free!

Then they descended again. The waters had scoured my clothes and skin of DEET and the mosquitoes took no time lacing my hands and face in bloody bites that would, by days end exaggerate my features into a grotesque Quasimodo mask. Defeated, I trudged back up out of the woods and to my planting bag and shovel.

Bleeding freely. Half drowned. Surrounded by mountain vistas most of the world would never see and weighed down by the whine and prick of hundreds of thousands of mosquitoes. I was utterly exhausted. It couldn't have been more than ten in the morning.

Home Environment Learning Crucial to Citizenship

"*Nature has introduced great variety into the landscape, but man has displayed a passion for simplifying it*."

—Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (1968)

In the world we have created, insects are no longer welcome. Globally, 40% of species are undergoing "dramatic rates of decline". And compared to mammals, reptiles, and birds, insects are disappearing eight times faster. Pesticides, intensive monoculture agriculture, habitat loss, and climate change are offered as the main reasons (McGrath 2019).

Hjemstedslaere, as envisioned by Norwegian educational philosopher Anna Sethne sought to connect students' lives to the ecoregions they lived in. Deliberately, this was to be done in the first three years of formal education so that students got a nuanced understanding of their locality. A foundation, rooted in place. Educationally, this would allow the learning-teaching dialogue to springboard into more focused streams of academic study— biology, silviculture, literature—as students advanced (Aagre, 2016).

Frederick Emerson, a trustee of the Land Settlement Scheme in Markland, Newfoundland in the 1930s shared Sethne's hopes for Hjemstedslaere. Emerson was aware of the devastation wrought by the Great Depression upon Newfoundland. The global market for salt cod, the backbone of the Newfoundland economy, had bottomed out. People were suffering for want of food. They had no direction, no hope. Emerson wanted to infuse these Land Settlement Scheme communities with a 'Newfoundland' spirit unique upon itself. This spirit, of economic self-sufficiency, culture, and stories, and engaged citizenship would help the island regain its footing. After all, the people best equipped to solve the problems of Newfoundland were Newfoundlanders (Colton 2014).

Emerson was particularly interested in the educational opportunities in Markland. He felt Hjemstedslaere—or as he understood it 'Practical Local Knowledge'—offered real merit and rigor in the creation of this

Newfoundland spirit. And, as so many have pointed out, Nature is the foundation of Culture. Therefore, a study of Nature would best prepare students for looking after this place into the future (Colton 2014).

Nature though has been under sustained assault locally, and globally. Dr. Bob Browne, former head of the Australian Green Party notes that every day we wake up, a new record has been set for the *least* amount of forest in the world (Lowther 2018). Fishermen are seeing species of fish migrating into more northerly waters because the oceans are warming. They leave an absence in their wake, physically and economically (Smith 2018). This sustained assault on nature, which we understand as part of the global economy focused on growth, has severed our intimacy with our surroundings. Sigmund Kvaloy Setreng noted our attachment to a specific home environment provides us with inner strength and self-reliance. Should we lose that attachment both the ecosystem and human society free falls towards disaster (2015).

As I write this Halifax is only just waking from the calamity of Hurricane Dorian, which fell upon Nova Scotia as a Category 2 cyclone. An event entirely without precedent historically, yet which environmental forecasters tell us could be the reality of the future. And so, in this changing world, we now inhabit how do we adjust (McKibben 2010)? Many have suggested that we can engineer our way to a solution, that we need only take pause and someone will help us. It is our society's infatuation with technology, however, that has helped us into this situation (Jenkinson 2015).

Hjemstedslaere offers a holistic means back into our local, lived surroundings. It asks

that education be focused outdoors. It roots our stories, our histories, our experiences, and our society to Nature. Therein do we find sustenance physically, mentally, and spiritually. If we are going to find a way to grapple with the realities of the climate crisis, resource depletion, and species extinction and how they affect us, we must be connected to where we live.
We must find a local spirit that weaves through community life, as Emerson hoped for the Markland students. And communities, including the study of citizenship, should not be at a remove from young people. It is part of the fabric of their lives, tethered to their surroundings (Colton 2014).

An Informed, Engaged Citizenship to Place

"*No one learns to tell the song of a woodlark from that of a skylark in order to make it easier to detect approaching catastrophe. All of that comes later*."

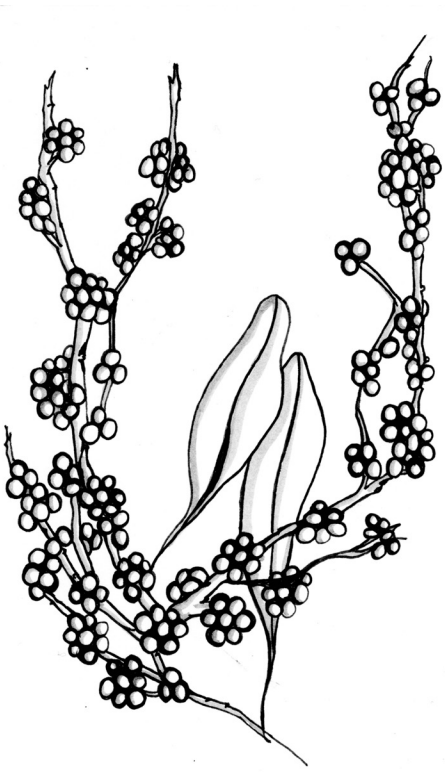
—Fredrick Sjoberg, *The Fly Trap* (2015)

As an educator, I believe there isn't a more radical act than taking students beyond the classroom door and into the outdoors.

As a father I want my daughters to know the beauty in a sunrise. I take them hiking to smell the air, feel the wind on their cheeks, to know blueberries from partridgeberries, a larch from a fir.

Parenting, though is at a more intimate level than teaching. Sometimes radical acts need some tempering.

My mom and I took my daughters out canoeing while we were visiting New Brunswick. We drove out to Hammond River, made nationally famous recently because of the Saint John River flooding in 2018 and 2019. But on that July afternoon, it was a meandering blue strip of water. Reed grasses, golden yellow rubbed up against drowned, hallowed out trees, grey branches polished by the elements to a silver gleam. But the skies teemed with life. Swifts darted and ospreys hovered, then swept up on the gusting winds that churned the river. We saw an eagle nestled in an evergreen, watching. Intent.
A heron flew past, wings creaking as it made its rickety flight past us, long legs trailing. Dragonflies darted. And of course, the deer flies were relentless.



My mother sat in the bow and I put my oldest daughter in the stern seat. Which was a mistake. But she had been canoeing at camp and I was trying to encourage her paddling. So, we veered from side to side, and my mother would call/shout, "Is *anyone* steering?!" as we headed into the muddy shoreline.

I encouraged and cajoled, and once I looked back to find my eldest watching the birds as the canoe went broadside into the wind-furrowed waters and had to call her back to the present.

On the whole, it was a pleasant paddle. Until, on the way back, we rounded a bend and the winds were lost to the shelter of the reeds. We found ourselves blanketed by deerflies. My youngest daughter was nearly manic, dropping her paddle and slapping at insects real and imagined. "Kill them! Get them off! *I want out*!"

There was nothing to be done but paddle round the bend, back into the wind and away from the attack. But in that moment all she could focus on was getting the flies off her and out of the canoe. My attempts to calm her, to assure her that soon we would be fine of course failed. I even resorted to my parents' old stand-by: That when the bugs are biting it's because *you're too sweet*!

I heard myself say it and my nine-year-old self recoiled. But eventually, we made it back to the spit of beach beneath the covered bridge where we'd started, our feet swollen and itchy. Otherwise fine.

Hjemstedslaere provides a philosophy that makes outdoor education the means and focus of lessons. This is sorely needed in contemporary education, across all grade levels. Hjemstedslaere, as Sethne and Emerson envisioned it offers a point of connection between school gardens, hikes in the woods, and school lessons. It extends student learning opportunities beyond school into their community. Hjemstedslaere, because it encompasses people—their jobs, stories, and culture—as well as nature—the seasons, trees, wildflowers in season, insects—nourishes the commons (Bowers 2006). To paraphrase Sigmund Kvaloy Setreng, such an educational approach would reinvigorate children as vital contributors to society's very survival (2015). They will be blessed with practical skills and be knowledgeable about the limits and opportunities present in their eco-region. They'd be versed in a vernacular rooted to place.

As outdoor educators, we know that sometimes nature can seem indifferent, harsh. You may scream from a mountainside and find yourself gasping for breath in a river swollen by snowmelt into a torrent.

But Nature also makes us who we are. We can no more escape it than avoid breathing. This is why we want to share it with our children, our students, the larger community. This is why Hjemstedslaere is relevant again today. And tomorrow.

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The World Feels Better After Being with the Birds

By Hollay Ghadery

Every week or so during the summer months, I drive my nine-year-old son Joseph to a woodlot an hour away, near a conservation trail in Newcastle, Ontario. There, Sam Trentadue, his falconry mentor and the force behind the Ontario Falconry Centre (OFC), shows him how to offer a Harris Hawk her first live kill: a pigeon.

Joseph stands resolute and alert as the hawk swoops toward him from her high ring perch about 20 feet away, her four-foot wingspan materializing miraculously from her 780-gram body. As Trentadue has instructed, Joseph gives a sharp tug on the lure holding the pigeon, which has been lying still near Joseph's feet. The tug excites movement from the bird and keeps the hawk focused.

This isn't the first time I've stared on in breathless amazement as my son engages with birds of prey with respectful, cautious confidence. Is this the same kid who seldom speaks up in class, doubting his academic intelligence to the quick?

The same kid who had an existential crisis playing baseball, standing in the middle of the outfield, a ball hurtling toward him, screaming, "What's the point of any of this?"

"Mom, look!" Joseph shouts over his shoulder as he watches the hawk mantle around his kill. Mantling, Trentadue had explained to us during our first workshop with him, is how these birds protect their meal.

They spread their wings wide, encircling the food to guard it against possible poachers.

Joseph is a falconry apprentice. After seeing a falconer during a Medieval Times show in Toronto, he was enraptured. While falconers do not abound in Ontario, I found Trentadue easily enough and set up an OFC workshop for our family in mid-April.

Two of my four children—the youngest two—were so frightened by the birds they spent the workshop in the van with my husband.

Joseph, who was eight-years-old at the time, and my eldest daughter stayed the course, feeding hawks, eagles and owls meaty chunks of quail from their gloved hands.

But while my daughter meandered back to the van to listen to a Taylor Swift CD after the workshop, Joseph stayed, following Trentadue around as he packed up the birds, asking dozens of questions.

"What were those small, yellow balloon-like balls that the birds didn't eat?"

"Eggs," Trentadue explained, picking up a massive golden eagle who had fallen off her perch.

"We feed the birds spent hens, so they have multiple eggs still in them."

"And what would happen if you took off her hood right now?" Joseph probed, nodding to the eagle Sam had just sat back on the rail.

The hoods are fastened over the birds' heads, covering their eyes when they aren't flying. This gear helps calm the birds and protects the handlers.

"She'd probably try to tear my face off," Trentadue answered.

"Again," he added, pointing to a blood-crusted scab running from his lip to about an inch up his cheek.

He had told us of how he'd put his face too close to the eagle and she'd made a grab for his mouth, ripping through his skin with her sharp, powerful beak.

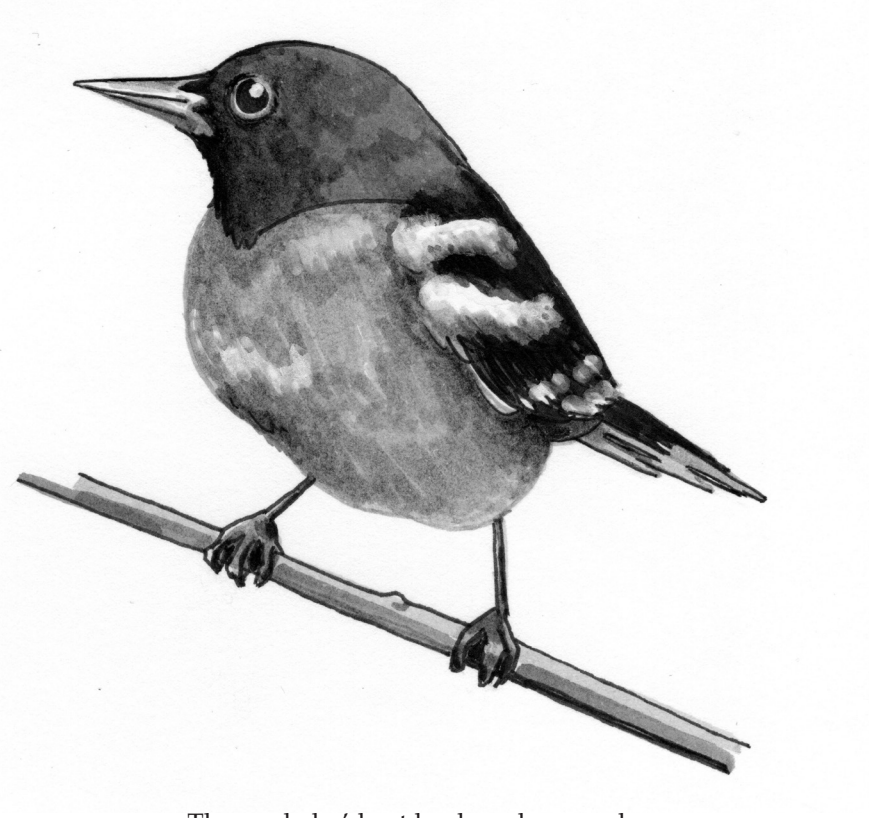
It was a stupid mistake, Trentadue said. He'd known better. The same eagle had

taken down a coyote a few weeks before, and another had put her talons right through Sam's forearm.

There are a few birds Trentadue admits he won't fly alone; they're that dangerous.

He reassured me and Joseph: just follow the rules, stay vigilant and there's little chance of getting hurt.

During that first workshop, Trentadue also explained that movies like Harry Potter had made owning owls and other birds of prey trendy but most of the new bird owners were in over their heads.



Eagles, hawks, and owls are demanding, temperamental, and highly aggressive animals—the closest living relatives to coelurosaurian dinosaurs. A few of his roughly 100 birds have been surrendered by people who could not care for them. Trentadue works with these birds toward their readjustment and eventual return to their owners or release.

Many of his other birds have been brought in by wildlife officials when they've been hit by vehicles. Some can be released with time and others are not fit to roam free again, whether it be because of their age and circumstances when they were brought in or because of the nature of their injuries.

Young male Harris hawks are particularly prone to injury. Like most young males, they're stupid, he joked.

It's easy to laugh with Trentadue. He has an unpretentious, rough charm that helps you feel comfortable around these prehistoric-looking raptors.

"But remember these aren't pets," he told Joseph again. "These are deadly animals and they'd kill you given the chance."

The eagle he'd sat back on her perch screamed.

"This one acts like I'm the bane of her existence," Trentadue said, stroking her breast feathers. "She's probably right."

I have mixed feelings about keeping these terrifying, beautiful creatures bonded and contained. From an education and conservation standpoint, I can see how the practice of falconry has merit, but I'm also left with the same feeling I had after swimming with dolphins in Cuba: just let them go.

Suffice it to say I haven't made any peace with the ethical implications of falconry.

My son, on the other hand, addressed my concern frankly.

"Mom," he said, sounding a little exasperated.

"I don't know how to explain it, but the world feels better after being with the birds."

Letting my son handle birds of prey is hardly a decision I take lightly. However, Trentadue is a diligent teacher and this activity, in one summer, caused less physical harm than most kids experience in a week of playing rec hockey or football.

And by less injury I mean none. Joseph has left each session with nary a scratch.

That doesn't mean that injury won't happen, only that there's an element of risk to everything and Joseph is learning how to manage that risk by forming respectful relationships within the natural world.

Of course, I still worry. But as I see my son come into his own under Trentadue's careful tutelage, I see there is far more to gain than to lose.

After that initial workshop, I'd emailed Sam and asked to set up another, just for Joseph. He replied, "How about he just comes and helps me with the next workshop?"

By the end of that session, Trentadue had given Joseph his own falconer's glove.

When I asked if I could pay for lessons, he offered to take Joseph on as an apprentice—an honour considering many falconers don't take apprentices and Trentadue hadn't had one in years. Joseph would help him prepare the workshops and clean up afterward. While doing so, he would learn about falconry.

"Are you sure?" I'd asked, elated but also feeling that the opportunity was too good to be true. My son, who often felt so out of place in much of his day-to-day world, would have a place to feel confident and more like himself—more like the person he wants to be.

"Sure," Trentadue said, unleashing another easy smile. "He's got the passion. Reminds me a lot of myself at his age."

"Sam had a sparrow hawk at my age!" Joseph interjected, beaming.

I think of how kids at his school have called his smile creepy. It's not his real smile they're referring to. It's a facial tic he's had since he was a toddler.

While his real smile is unrestrained and breathtaking, his tic smile is anguished and strained–an unconscious muscular reaction to feelings of discomfort or stress.

I think of how much I see him smile, really smile, when he's training with Trentadue.

American climber and noted outdoor educator, Willi Unsoeld once said, "You go to nature for your metaphysical fix—your reassurance that the world makes sense. It's reassurance that there's something behind it all and it's good, you come back to where people are, to where people are messing things up, because people tend to, and you come back with new ability to relate to your fellow [people] and to help your fellow [people] relate to each other."

I looked at Joseph standing there smiling in the sun-washed clearing, gently petting the great horned owl he was returning to her carrier.

"Huh, Mom? Whaddya say? A sparrow hawk?" He raised his eyebrows at me in a teasing, expectant wiggle. "They're so small, you won't even notice one."

I beamed right back at him. "I say don't get ahead of yourself, kid."

Hollay Ghadery is a writer and mother of four young children living in small-town Ontario. She has her MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. Her fiction, non-fiction, and poetry have been published in various literary journals, including The Malahat Review, Room, Grain, and The Fiddlehead. Her upcoming memoir, Fuse, is coming out with Guernica Editions' MiroLand imprint in Spring 2021. Follow Hollay on Instagram: @hollayghadery or Facebook: @ hollayghaderywriter.

This essay first appeared on LadyLatitudes.ca on March 17, 2020. Reprinted with permission.

The Bronte Creek Project: Preserving a Legacy

By John McKillop and Ruth Silver

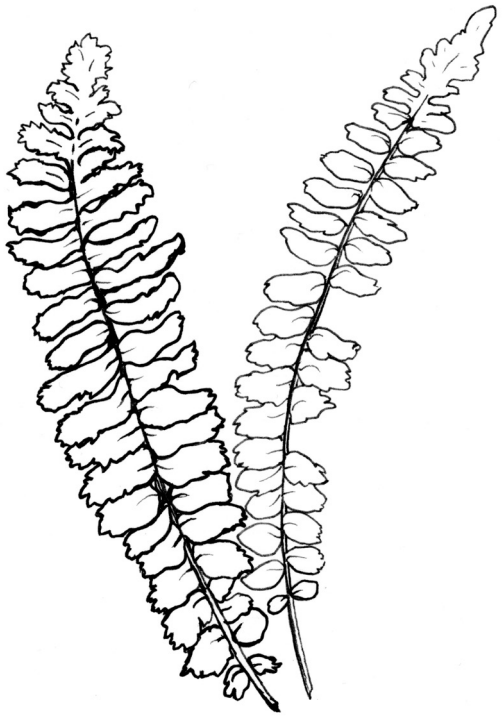
The Bronte Creek Project was a unique Ontario high school program initiated by two teachers in the Halton District Board of Education in 1981. This integrated, environmental leadership training program provided a transformative experiential program for over 3000 high school students and 8000 elementary school students in the community over its 38-year history.

It was born in the crucible of an emerging environmental movement and a growing interest in learning that was more experiential, intuitive, and creative. Like any new thing, it was not born whole, and evolved under the tutelage of its many staff and students, always looking to improve itself. It also, like most alternative programs, did not experience smooth sailing, constantly having to contend with financial stress, unstable site locations, transportation, and recruitment issues.

Nothing, however, happens in a vacuum. The founders John McKillop and Bryn Davies came from different backgrounds and influences that, when they began working together, helped to crystallize their thinking and planning. The Bronte Creek Project became a distillation of where they had come from and what drove them. Ultimately, the program, like any organism, was influenced by everyone involved and came to be a result of all their varied experience, skills, and values.

The program was canceled in 2019 due to financial restraint caused by provincial budget cuts. Of course, in these so-called times of restraint, it is the non-mainstream courses that go first. Most environment focused programs in the province have unfortunately been eliminated.

We feel that our species is in the midst of an existential crisis and that education should be a large part of the solution. Our children need to be raised with an understanding of the interconnectedness of all things, and that there are solutions to climate change and other serious issues that we can bring about when we martial energy and resources and work together.



With this in mind, several BCP alumni are creating a website that will be a memoir of the program for former staff and alumni, who we hope will find in this memoir, a refresher of the experiences and values that were a part of their learning while involved in the program. This memoir, a time capsule of sorts, is designed also to be a template for future reference for anyone who may wish to resurrect the program or design something similar. There will be lots of specific, useful information that can be enlisted for such a venture.

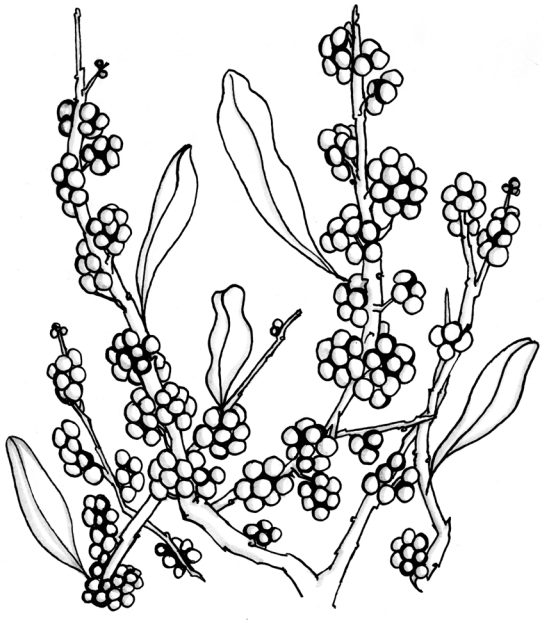
We are currently soliciting input from former staff and students—which includes reaching out to environmental advocacy groups such as COEO—and are in the process of creating the website, which we hope to launch in January. If you would like to reach out to us regarding any aspect of this project please contact us at bcpmemoir@gmail.com.

Tânitê ohci kiya – Where are you from?

By Naomi McIlwraith

Someone asks and then another,
surprising me because I am from
here – *ôta ohci niya*
from this place and these people.
All these memories, all my relatives.
At this early hour this place is black –
like the *maskisina* of the Blackfoot,
ayahciyiniwak –
then slipping like *nâmêw* through
kisiskâciwani-sîpiy
into the cobalt of Blue Bird, *sîpihkopîyêsîs*
and sliding again into the light of day and
Rabbit's white coat
wâpiskisi-wâposw. I am from my father's
Scottish people –
ôki môniyâwak kâ-kî-pê-takosinicik wâhyaw
and the Frog Lake people – *ekwa ayîkis-sâkahikan iyiniwak*
My mother's people – *ôki môniyâwak kâ-kî-pê-takosinicik êkwa mîna wâhyaw*
and my grandmother's people – *nêhiyawak êkwa nahkawiyiniwak*
and my grandfather's people – *ôki môniyâwak kâ-kî-âkayâsîmocik êkwa kotakak pîkiskwêwin*.
I am from Tamarack, Spruce, Pine, Juniper,
Aspen, and Poplar – *wâkinâkan, sihta, minahikw, kâhkâkîwâhtikw, wâpi-mîtos, êkwa mâyi-mîtos* –
I am from Juniper Berry and Crow –
âhâsiwimin êkwa âhâsiw –
Red-Tail Hawk, Chickadee and Chipmunk,
Magpie, Goose, and Loon –
sahwatamow, kicîskosîs êkwa sâsâkwâpiskos, apisci-kahkâkîs, niska, êkwa mwâkwa.
I am from Rock – *asiniy* – and more relatives
the Assiniboine – *asinîwipwât* –
from Labrador Tea and Sage – *maskêkwâpoy êkwa paskwâwihkwaskw* –
Buffalo and Beaver, Bear, Coyote, Fox, and
Wolf –
paskwâwi-mostosw, amiskw, maskwa, mêstacâkan, mahkêsis, êkwa mahihkan.
I am even related to our cat, Whisper – *ôki minôs kâ-kîmowêt*
and Trickster – *wîsahkêcâhk êkwa nênâpos*.
I am from the Upriver people and the
Beaver Hills people –
natimîwiyiniwak êkwa amiskowacîwiyiniwak.
The Parklands people and the River people
paskohkopâwiyiniwak êkwa sîpîwiyiniwak
the House people and the Touchwood Hills
people –
wâskahikaniwiyiniwak êkwa posâkanacîwiyiniwak
the Calling River people –
têpwêwisîpîwiyiniwak.
The Downriver people and the Lake that
Does Not Freeze –
mâmihkiyiniwak êkwa sâkahikan êka kâ-âhkwatik.
My relatives, my people, my memories –
they are not mine. I am from them, from this
place
near the *pâhpâsces iyiniwak*.
I am a visitor and I am a dweller in this
place –
ê-kiyokêw êkwa ê-wîkiyân ôta.
With all my relatives, may I live in peace.
asici kahkiyaw niwâhkômâkanak kâ-miyo-wîcihêyihtakowak.

Naomi McIlwraith lives in Edmonton, Alberta (amiskwaciwâskahikan-Beaver Mountain House). She is the author of kiyâm, a poetry collection in English and Cree. Naomi has worked as a Historical Interpreter at Fort Edmonton and has been working as a school teacher since 2018.



Information for Authors and Artists

Purpose

Pathways furthers knowledge, enthusiasm, and vision for outdoor experiential education in Ontario. Reflecting the interests of outdoor educators, classroom teachers, students, and academics, the journal focuses on the practice of outdoor experiential education from elementary to post-secondary levels, from wilderness to urban settings. *Pathways* highlights the value of outdoor experiential education in educating for curriculum, character, well-being, and environment.

Submitting Material

The *Pathways* editorial board gladly considers a full range of materials related to outdoor experiential education. We welcome lesson outlines, drawings, articles, book reviews, poetry, fiction, student work, and more. We will take your contribution in any form and will work with you to publish it. If you have an idea about a written submission, piece of artwork, or topic for a theme issue, please send an email outlining your potential contribution to the chair of the editorial board, pathways@coeo.org

We prefer a natural writing style that is conversational, easy to read and to the point. It is important for you to use your style to tell your own story. There is no formula for being creative, having fun, and sharing your ideas. In general, written submissions should fit the framework of one of *Pathways* 20 established columns. Descriptions of these columns may be found at www.coeo.org by clicking on the publications tab.

Whenever possible, artwork should complement either specific articles or specific themes outlined in a particular journal issue. Please contact the chair of the editorial board if you are interested in providing some or all of the artwork for an issue.

Formatting

Use 12 point, Times New Roman font with 1.25 inch (3.125 cm) margins all around. Text should be left justified and single spaced. Place a blank line between paragraphs but do not indent. Please use Canadian spelling and APA referencing.

Include the title (in bold) and the names of all authors (in italics) at the beginning of the article. Close the article with a brief 1–2 sentence biography of each author (in italics).

Do not include any extraneous information such as page numbers, word counts, headers or footers, and running heads.

Pathways contains approximately 600 words per page. Article length should reflect full page multiples to avoid partially blank pages.

Submit articles to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor, preferably as a Microsoft Word email attachment.

Each piece of artwork should consist of a single black and white drawing (crosshatching but no shading) scanned at 300 dpi.

Submit artwork to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor as a digital file (jpeg is preferred.)

Submission Deadlines

Volume 1	Fall	September 1
Volume 2	Winter	December 1
Volume 3	Spring	March 1
Volume 4	Summer	June 1

Complimentary Copies

The lead author receives one copy of the issue in which the article appears and one copy for each co-author. Lead authors are responsible for distributing copies to their coauthors.

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
Membership Application/Renewal Form

Please visit our website at www.coeo.org/membership.htm for more detailed descriptions of the benefits of each membership category.

Please print and fully complete each line below.

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Type of Membership *(Check one box)*

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- ☐ Family $65.00
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Journal Format *(Check one box)*

Please select the format in which you wish to receive your four ***Pathways*** journals:

- ☐ PDF version through password access to the COEO website
- ☐ Printed copy through postal mail
- ☐ Both a digital and a printed version (an additional fee of $5.00 applies).

COEO Membership is from September 1 to August 31 of the following year.

Every ***Ontario member*** of COEO will be assigned to a region of the province according to the county where (s)he lives.

Central (CE)	Welland, Lincoln, Hamilton-Wentworth, Halton, Peel, York, Simcoe, Metro Toronto
Eastern (EA)	Victoria, Durham, Peterborough, Northumberland, Hastings, Prince Edward, Renfrew, Lennox and Addington, Frontenac, Leeds, Grenville, Ottawa-Carleton, Lanark, Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry
Northern (NO)	Parry Sound, Nipissing, Muskoka, Haliburton, North Bay, Patricia, Kenora, Thunder Bay, Algoma, Cochrane, Sudbury, Rainy River, Timiskaming
Western (WE)	Essex, Kent, Elgin, Lambton, Middlesex, Huron, Bruce, Grey, Dufferin, Wellington, Waterloo, Perth, Oxford, Brant, Haldimand-Norfolk

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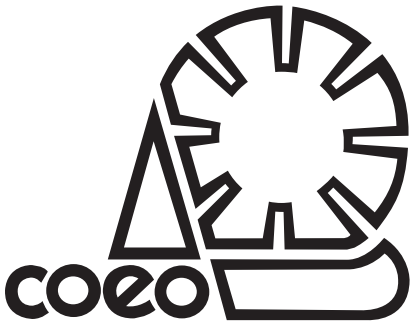

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