

Naturalist in the Classroom

NEWSLETTER—Issue #7

November 2020

Grateful

Dear Teachers, Administrators, Parents, and Friends,

As we have highlighted on our Instagram (@prescottfarmenviroedctr) and Facebook (@PrescottFarm) pages this month, we have a lot to be grateful for at Prescott Farm. We are surrounded by a caring, engaged, and resilient community.

One thing I am grateful for is the return to our Naturalist in the Classroom schools to learn and explore with students in person. Mask-wearing, physical distancing, and exclusively outdoor lessons are a few of the precautions we take each lesson. This change challenged us to adapt some of our favorite programs to the new circumstances. On the other hand, changing how we approach school has also led to creative new projects, inspired by student questions about their surroundings. You will find stories of these adaptations and creative approaches to learning in the following pages.

This season, I hope you have the opportunity to head outdoors, and take a moment to be grateful for the gifts of healing and connection that the natural world brings to us.

Be safe and well,

Andie Hession

Andie Hession
School & Community Programs Director
ahession@prescottfarm.org



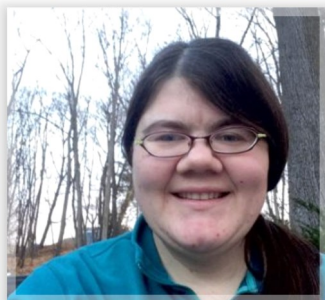
A ferro rod, steel, & girl power created this spark after students learned how early peoples harnessed fire.

NATURE CHALLENGE:

We recently shared “The View from Here” video on social media.

Can you pick a nature spot to take a picture once a week in 2021?

Welcome, Ashleigh!



Please join me in welcoming Ashleigh Roberts to the team as our newest Environmental Educator! Look inside the newsletter for Ashleigh’s bio.

Here is a message from Ashleigh:

I am really excited to be joining Prescott Farm and working with the Naturalist in the Classroom program. Going outside with students to explore and make new connections to nature and what they’re learning in class is one of my most favorite things.

Meet Our Team



Andie Hession

School & Community
Programs Director
ahession@prescottfarm.org

Andie started with Prescott Farm in October 2017. She graduated with a B.S. in Public Health from George Washington University in Washington, DC. Andie worked with several environmental education programs in Arkansas and across New England before joining the team at Prescott Farm. Andie enjoys hikes with her dog, gardening and cooking with the veggies, and exploring New Hampshire's great outdoors.

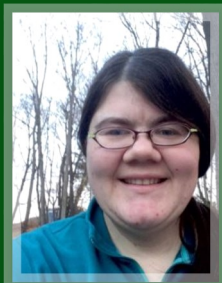


Jake Newcomb

Camp Director
jnewcomb@prescottfarm.org

Jake received his B.A. in History with a secondary education minor from UMaine Orono and holds a

Maine teaching certificate. He worked for all three 4-H camps in Maine before joining the team at Prescott Farm in July 2018. Jake enjoys all things outdoors – including hiking, camping, backpacking and canoeing – when he is not at home with his cats Chloe and Mabel, as well as occasional foster kittens.



Ashleigh Roberts

Environmental Educator
aroberts@prescottfarm.org

Originally from Ohio, Ashleigh began teaching outdoors as a summer camp counselor while earning a B.A. in Middle

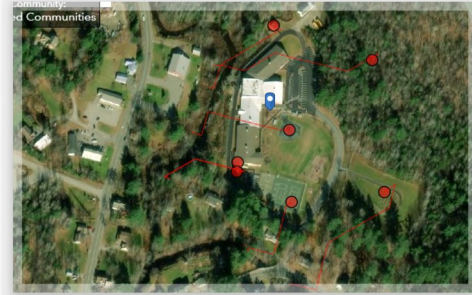
Childhood Education from Ohio Northern University. Since then, Ashleigh has worked as an outdoor/environmental educator across the United States from Virginia to California and earned an M.A. in Education from Muskingum University. Ashleigh enjoys hiking—with lots of stops to enjoy the tiny things, being curious, and learning about how people relate to the outdoors.

Grantham Village School

Fifth grade visited a stream they have walked by many times and can see from their classroom. On this November morning, though, we looked at the stream as something more than a feature at their school; we imagined it as a part of the larger watershed.

Students observed and journaled about their surroundings. Where were we? What could they see that reminded them of water? Are they a part of the watershed? We experimented and used maps to discover what impact human actions have on watersheds by modeling runoff and following the path of a raindrop at their school.

If you want to explore your watershed, find instructions for this project at: epa.gov/enviroatlas/exploring-your-watershed.



This map follows the path of a raindrop to where it will join the closest body of water.

Gilmanton School

Over the last few years, 6th grade has investigated real artifacts borrowed from the NH Division of Historical Resources. Typically a program held indoors, students pass the artifacts freely to each other. Instead, in 2020, students arrived at the outdoor classroom to the gridded site of an archaeological excavation. They became archaeologists and began documenting the findings. They hypothesized what the objects were and how they were used before learning the origins of each artifact.

Mrs. Hollingsworth's 2nd grade class learned about the Abenaki people in social studies.

On a Forest Friday, they realized the wigwams they saw in pictures would have been built years ago in the same place where they spent their time exploring. Could they build the same structure? Sure! Why not?



Sixth grade archaeologists document the excavation site.



A wigwam built by 2nd graders near their Forest Classroom.

Over the course of three weeks, students marked a 14' circle, selected saplings, dug holes and buried the saplings as supports, created shelter around the structure with bark and branches, and designed the interior with benches and a "cooking fire". They showcased their work to their peers and the school administration as stop on the annual Abenaki Quest.

Inter-Lakes Elementary School

Mr. Moore's 6th grade class hiked the new Lavarack Nature Trail in Meredith to learn about local ecology and create their own naturalist guidebook based on their findings. Mr. Jake led the class as they visited the trail and saw a variety of wildlife, including painted turtles, a Great Egret, and a Great Blue Heron. This sighting inspired the class to study Great Blue Herons in depth.

Mr. Jake also helped 3rd grade appreciate the resources we have in New Hampshire. We have access to the outdoors for both work and play; they concluded that these assets offer a lot of health benefits.



Does the Great Blue Heron inspire you?

Inter-Lakes School District: Page Pond

Inter-Lakes middle and elementary school students celebrated being a part of an "Adaptive Community" with a day of learning at Page Pond, a local Meredith conservation area. The project, spearheaded by retired Inter-Lakes principal Everett Bennet, brought ILES, ILMHS, Prescott Farm, and AYF-Merrowvista together as partners to plan a full day at Page Pond for each grade over the course of two weeks. Students enjoyed activities such as: shelter building, nature art, a team-wagon physical challenge, and a lesson in beaver adaptations. This project was a great success, and the staff at Prescott Farm applaud the effort. We cannot wait to do it again!

Inter-Lakes School District: Virtual Pathways Program

Students learning remotely this year were the first to meet our new educator. As temperatures drop and the first snowflakes flurry, humans and animals are getting ready for winter. Ms. Ashleigh reviewed wildlife winter adaptations before sending students on an at-home scavenger hunt to see if they are as prepared as the animals to survive winter by completing the following challenges:

- Layer like a coyote— How many layers can you wear at once?
- Gather food like a squirrel— Inspect food sources indoors and out.
- Build a beaver lodge— Blankets, pillows, sticks, leaves. Use what you have to stay warm and safe throughout the winter!
- Move like a salamander and freeze like a frog— How do amphibians survive winter?



How do you get ready for winter? How does New Hampshire wildlife get ready for winter?

Adventure Packs

Looking for something to *do* outside? Everything you need is provided, including activities, games and fun facts to impress your friends.

Now offering:

History of the Land

Before it was owned and operated as a nonprofit education center, the land you will see was a working farm owned by one family for over 200 years. How has this history influenced the landscape around you? You will journey around the lower field, past the barn, and into the Red Trail.

Stories of the Undergrowth

The forest floor is an extremely important part of forest ecosystems because everything starts from the ground up! Come explore the forest floor of the Yellow Trail as we discuss everything from the nutrients in the soil, what grows on the forest floor, the creatures who live and play there, and play some games along the way.

On Deck for Winter:

- **Strategic Survival:** Try out different adaptations and wildlife survival strategies.
- **Is It Time Yet?:** Instead of worrying about the cold, understand the solstice, shadows, and signs spring is coming.
- **Snow Science:** Get to know the snowpack from the snow falling from the sky to life below ground.

Visit our website for more information and to reserve an Adventure Pack!

Do you know a school that needs *Naturalist in the Classroom?*

We are always looking to expand the program into more Lakes Region schools. Since 2001 Prescott Farm's team of Naturalists and Environmental Educators have connected students and teachers to their communities and the natural environment. The staff works directly with teachers to integrate curriculum requirements into lesson plans that utilize the resources at hand. These lessons create opportunities for hands-on, placed-based learning and facilitate an enhanced understanding and respect for nature, natural systems, the natural history of the area, and the adoption of environmental stewardship practices.

Contact Andie Hession, School & Community Programs Director at:

ahession@prescottfarm.org or

(603)366-5695 ext. 304.

NEW at Prescott Farm:

You are invited to a:

Discovery Tour

Along with the beautiful natural setting and stunning views, Discovery Tours feature the people who create and participate in the programs that make Prescott Farm a vital resource to the area. You will see and hear how our team expands participants' understanding and appreciation of the natural world through a variety of programs promoting education, social connections, and wellness. We will also share with you some of the ways that we envision Prescott Farm expanding its impact in the future.

Upcoming tours:

Wednesday, December 9- 12 pm

Thursday, December 17- 12 pm

Wednesday, January 6- 12 pm

Thursday, January 21- 12 pm

Wednesday, February 10- 12 pm

Thursday, February 18- 12 pm

Thursday, March 4- 12 pm

Are you interested but these times do not work for you?

Gather a group of up to 10 friends and colleagues. We will plan a time that fits your schedule. Contact Phoebe VanScoy-Giessler for more information at pgiessler@prescottfarm.org.

About Us

Prescott Farm is a nonprofit dedicated to environmental education and preservation. We provide year-round environmental education programs for all ages, and we are a place in the Lakes Region that encourages curiosity, discovery, fun and connection to the natural world.

Founded in 1997 as Prescott Conservancy, Inc., Prescott Farm has helped build appreciation for nature and concern for the environment in thousands of program participants. We offer a wide range of programs designed to preserve and pass down knowledge and skills that encourage understanding of the natural systems that sustain us. Programs include: Naturalist in the Classroom, Field Trips, WildQuest Camps, Community Connection Programs, Fledglings Nature-Based Pre-School, and volunteer opportunities.

For more information:

Contact Us

Prescott Farm

928 White Oaks Road
Laconia, NH 03246

(603) 366-5695

info@prescottfarm.org

Visit us on the web at
www.prescottfarm.org

