

HABITAT HEROES – KIDS ECOLOGY CAMPS Summer 2010



Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens
Acadia University, Wolfville NS

The Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens' 2010 Habitat Heroes summer kid's ecology camps educated participants in the ecology of the Acadian Forest Region and the natural world and encouraged them to become habitat stewards.

Forty Kings and Hants County children, from the ages of 6 to 12 years, attended Habitat Heroes for two weeks in summer; one week in July 2010 and one in August 2010.

All learning during the camps was hands-on and took place outdoors on the grounds of the Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens and in the classrooms and labs of the KC Irving Environmental Science Centre in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.



A variety of creative environmental education methods were used to engage young participants in the habitats of the Acadian Forest. The first camp focused on learning to recognize and appreciate the beauty within the habitats through the visual arts. Public environmental art was created and displayed in the Gardens to encourage stewardship and raise awareness within the community on conservation issues. Both common and endangered native plants were the focus of the visual art projects.

The second camp focused on learning through theatre arts. A

theatrical play "Cedarella – a tale of invasive species" was written, rehearsed and produced by the campers highlighting conservation issues within the Acadian Forest Region. The play performed by the kids follows the struggle of native plants competing with invasive species. The main character Cedarella is a young native Cedar tree with two evil Garlic Mustard stepsisters who are continuously stealing her resources. The play took place in the final days of a warm summer, with the Snowball just around the corner. Each year at the Snowball, Jack Frost lays the first frost and decides who will be strong enough to survive the winter. With the help of Park Rangers and a local Conservationist, Cedarella triumphs and wins the Protected Plant tag and the heart of Jack Frost. Community members were invited to come out for this surprising and informative fairy tale with a twist.



The camps were very well received by the young participants and community members. All of the children left with a greater appreciation for the natural world and a much better understanding of what the Acadian Forest Region is all about and why it needs our help. The energy and creativity from the children and student leaders during the two weeks was awe-inspiring.

Today's youth will be tomorrow's leaders. It is essential for us, through projects such as Habitat Heroes, to instill in children an appreciation of the Acadian Forest Region to ensure that they work towards its conservation in the future. The Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens will continue to hold ecology camps to help fulfill this need.