

FOREST

EXPLORER'S GUIDE

CLUES

1. Go through a great big parking lot
And then look for a little spot
With a sign that says Glen Garden.
2. Go down a winding hill
And you'll be closer still.
3. The winding hill is stairs;
They'll take you almost there!
4. Look behind the bench
To find lots of forest sense.
5. Now you're at your destination.
Hope you like our rock creation!

FOREST OR WOODS

We typically call a large area covered with trees a "forest." Since Fauntleroy Park is small as parks go, "woods" is probably a better word. We use the words interchangeably here, though, to show their shared characteristics.

Created by students in Room 22 (a third/fourth-grade class) at Arbor Heights School, Seattle School District, with help from teacher Doug Swan and Fauntleroy elders Karen Farnsworth and David Galbraith.

Funded by King County Water and Land Resources.

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FOREST LAYERS AND CYCLE

As a team, **follow the clues** until you locate the stone marker. **Take turns being the READER.**

READER: *Living systems are healthiest when they are diverse and in balance. To understand the diversity and balance of forests in our climate, think of four layers of a cake:*

*The top layer is **emergent trees**. They "emerge" from (or poke out of) the top of the forest. Red-tailed hawks and bald eagles prefer this high altitude.*

*The next layer is **canopy trees**. They form an umbrella with their leaves and branches. Stellar's jays, screech owls, robins, and woodpeckers like to live in the canopy.*

*The next layer is **understory bushes**. They grow in the shady middle of the forest. Trunk dwellers such as tree frogs, raccoons, and squirrels are at home in the understory.*

*The bottom layer is **groundcovers**. "Transformers" live here on the forest floor. They are bacteria, invertebrates, and fungi that help wood decompose and return to soil.*

READER: *The circle of words on the top of the stone summarizes the self-sustaining life cycle of the woods: **soil to seed to grow to fall to eat to rot and back to soil again.***

RIPARIAN ECOSYSTEM

As a team, **look at the woods** from the parking lot above the Fenton Glen garden.

READER: *This is an excellent example of the woods and forests that have formed in Western Washington around a source of fresh water. This woods is part of the "riparian" ecosystem associated with Fauntleroy Creek. Together the creek and woods create a rich home for plants and animals. **What do you see the creek doing for the woods? And what do you see the woods doing for the creek?***

FINDING THE LAYERS

As a team, **take one of the trails into the woods** and go until you are surrounded by trees. Using the page of drawings, **identify at least one tree or other plant from each layer of the forest:**

Emergent layer _____

Canopy layer _____

Canopy layer _____

Ground layer _____

THE LIFE CYCLE IN PROGRESS

Walk until you find a nurse log or trunk on or near the trail.

READER: Remember that the self-sustaining life cycle of the woods is **soil to seed to grow to fall to eat to rot** and back to **soil** again. Fallen logs and rotting tree trunks play an important role in this cycle. Bacteria keep them moist even in dry weather, making them good places for new trees, bushes, and small plants to take root. A "nurse" log or trunk may look lifeless but be home to larva, spiders, salamanders, mice, or larger animals. Wood-boring beetles, termites, slugs, and carpenter ants may find food there and, along with mites, earthworms, and fungi, these "transformers" slowly transform rotting wood into soil.

Using the page of drawings, **list the plants you can identify living on this nurse log or trunk:**

We identified a total of _____ kinds of plants on the nurse log/trunk.

Find a piece of rotting wood no bigger than a loaf of bread. **Break it open** if you can. **Describe anything you see that's alive**, then put it back where you found it.

THE MARKER

**SEED GROW FALL
EAT ROT SOIL**

reminds everyone who sees this stone of the cycle of life in our forests.

Images on the front of the stone call out the **four layers of a forest**. We must protect natural forest habitat from destructive non-native plants such as the **ivy** encroaching from the back.

The **alevin petroglyph** emphasizes the importance of healthy freshwater habitat to growing salmon and ties this site to other links in the chain of water-based habitats.

Overall design and petroglyph detail by Tom Jay

FOREST STEWARDSHIP

Urban forests face a big challenge if they are to fight off invasive non-natives and sustain a diverse population of native trees and other plants. If invasives are not weeded out, all the large trees in our urban forests may be gone in 50 years.

As a forest steward, you can help prevent this destruction:

- ✓ Find out if a group of volunteers already exists to help take care of your woods. If yes, join it. If no, organize!
- ✓ Learn the difference between native and non-native plants.
- ✓ Identify which invasive non-natives are a problem in your woods.
- ✓ Weed, weed, weed!
- ✓ Replant with native species that will encourage wildlife and restore a naturally diverse habitat.

FOREST

HELPER'S GUIDE

GETTING THERE

Fenton Glen is at the east end of the Fautleroy Church/YMCA parking lot at 9269 California Ave. S.W. Short-term parking is usually available on the upper level of the lot. Call the church office at 932-5600 if you will be bringing several cars. By bus, take Metro 54 to the stop just beyond the church. Follow the clues from the glen entrance.

PREPARATIONS

1. Preview what you will be doing on this field trip, go over the "Explorer's Guide," and answer any questions.
2. Assemble for each youngster
 - a cover-weight copy of the "Explorer's Guide" for this site
 - a copy of "Plants Common to Pacific Northwest Forests"
 - a pencil
 - a copy of the rubbing page for this site.
3. Bring a couple of field guides to forest plants in the Pacific Northwest and **large crayons** to make rubbings of images on the marker.

SEASON AND SAFETY

The park is a safe and pleasant place to visit on all but the coldest and wettest days of the year. Advise youngsters to dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes or boots. If it's raining or has rained recently, they might get muddy.

For safety and help focusing in a very stimulating setting, we suggest **one adult for every four youngsters, third through fifth grades.**

APPROXIMATE TIME

In the woods: **45 minutes**

At this site, young "explorers" will

- explore the forest's role in riparian habitat.
- see what the layers of a forest look like and how they relate.
- discover what each stage of the forest life cycle looks like and how they relate.
- understand how to help take care of our forests.

STEWARDSHIP OF THE GARDEN

Point out to youngsters that the Fenton Glen garden is enjoyed by many as a place for quiet rest and reflection. Guide them in deciding what "rules" should apply to their behavior there today.

To avoid overwhelming the garden, divide into teams of three or four youngsters with an adult. Start one team with "Forest Layers and Cycle" at the lower level of the garden and another with "Riparian Ecosystem" at the garden entrance, then rotate.

EXPLORING THE WOODS

Go either north or south of Fenton Glen to explore the woods in Fautleroy Park:

To go east, walk to the upper parking lot and turn east, following the alley as it becomes a trail. This is the easier route but you will need to walk farther to be surrounded by the woods.

To go south, walk behind the church, cross the small bridge, and head up the steep trail until it flattens out. Although this route is more challenging, you will quickly be surrounded by the woods.

A FEW MORE TIPS

If you can, introduce the topic of forests and riparian ecosystems prior to the field trip so that youngsters will know what to expect and not be dependent on what is read to them near the creek. Even a loud voice can be difficult to hear streamside.

Encourage youngsters to take turns being the reader.

In answering questions about the relationship between woods and creek, youngsters should understand that the woods is an important link in the watershed chain. In addition to providing food and shelter for wildlife, the trees, bushes, and forest debris absorb rainwater and help reduce erosion and runoff. In turn, the creek is a constant source of water and nutrients.

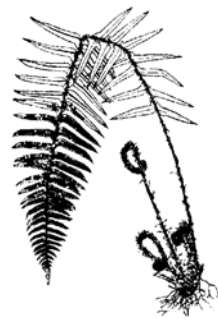
The page of drawings ("Plants Common to Pacific Northwest Forests") has many of the species you are likely to find here. You will discover others, though, which is why we advise bringing field guides. Using them will demonstrate their value for providing information on the spot *and* enhancing a nature experience.

PLANTS COMMON TO PACIFIC NORTHWEST FORESTS

Use these drawings to identify trees, bushes, and other plants that grow in woods near a stream or river and that grow on rotting wood. (Drawings are not to scale.)



BIGLEAF MAPLE



SWORD FERN



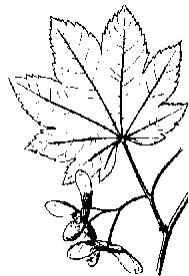
SNOWBERRY



**EVERGREEN
HUCKLEBERRY**



BEAKED HAZELNUT



VINE MAPLE



OCEAN SPRAY



RED HUCKLEBERRY



SALMONBERRY



BRACKEN FERN



RED ELDERBERRY



**WESTERN
RED CEDAR**



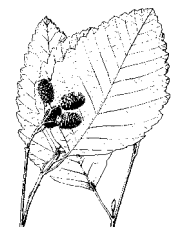
STINGING NETTLE



MOUNTAIN ASH



SALAL



RED ALDER



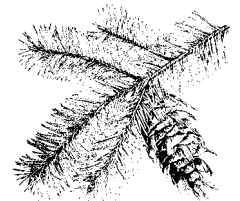
INDIAN PLUM



DEWBERRY



OREGON GRAPE



DOUGLAS FIR