



PEEC

Pocono Environmental
Education Center

A Trail for Everyone Trail Guide



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1. Welcome to A Trail for Everyone at the Pocono Environmental Education Center. This trail is a 1/3 mile ADA compliant trail, marked with purple blazes. It encompasses different habitats, including field and pond ecosystems. The trail has numerous benches to serve as observation points and resting spots.
2. Pitch pines (*Pinus rigida*) have slightly twisted needles in bundles of three. The needles are 1.5-5 inches in length. Cones are 1.5-3 inches long. Pitch pines are one of the more fire resistant tree species. After a forest fire, pitch pines will produce new needles from new branches from suppressed buds. The tree's wood contains high amounts of resin, useful for building material, such as ships and railroad ties. Pitch pines are an important food source for wildlife. Seeds are eaten by bird species such as black-capped chickadees (*Poecile atricapillus*), dark-eyed juncos (*Junco hyemalis*), and red squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*).
3. Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) can grow as a shrub on the ground or as a vine on trees. While dangerous to humans, the berries of this plant are a important food source for migrating birds. Other animals, such as goats, like to eat the leaves of poison ivy and are unaffected by the urushiol oil contained within the plant. DO NOT TOUCH the poison ivy, but take time to notice the characteristic hairy vine and three notched leaflets which may be green, yellow, red, and shiny or dull. If you do come in contact

with this plant, rinsing with cold water can help wash off the oil and prevent a rash.

4. Grey Birch (*Betula populifolia*) trees have chalky white bark and triangular long-pointed leaves. These trees are a pioneer species that grow in freshly disturbed areas. Wildlife such as songbirds and ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) eat the seeds and buds. Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) and porcupine chew on the bark of grey birch. Sticks and twigs are browsed by white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and snowshoe hare (*Lepus americanus*). The wood can be used for woodenware such as clothespins, toothpicks, and spools.
5. Shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) trees are characterized by their long, shaggy, peeling pieces of bark. Shagbark hickory trees grow in moist soils, and can be found throughout forest environments. The hickory is a member of the walnut family, and is a prime food source for a variety of wildlife. Foxes, songbirds, mice, black bears, squirrels, and rabbits will eat the nuts of the hickory tree. Local bats, such as the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) and the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), will use the peeling bark as a temporary shelter from the rain. Typically the wood is used for cabinets, furniture, and axe handles.
6. This area is dominated by white pine (*Pinus strobus*) trees. White pines have five needles in each bundle. White pine trees will produce a new tree whorl each year. The amount of space between each whorl indicates the quality of the growing season. More space between each whorl indicates that the tree had a healthy growing season. A small amount of space between each whorl would indicate

a poor growing season. The number of whorls along a tree trunk also indicates the age of the tree. White pines were logged heavily during the 18th and 19th centuries for the building of ship masts and furniture.

7. These bird houses were built and donated by Pottstown Middle School. PEEC summer campers decorated and hung the bird houses. Bird houses provide habitat for a variety of bird species. Common songbirds in the area include chickadees, tufted titmice (*Baeolophus bicolor*), eastern bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*), and wrens (*Troglodytes*). Keep an eye out for any of these bird species and others.
8. Our yurts are a modern interpretation of a traditional central Asian nomadic shelter. They are set upon wooden framework and consist of a durable fabric cover, tension band, and a wooden frame, including a central compression ring, lattice wall, radial rafters, and a framed door. Our yurts were provided in partnership with Lehman Township and PEEC; financial assistance was provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The yurts were built by Pacific Yurt, Inc.
9. The marsh is a great habitat for a multitude of wildlife. During the spring, spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) emerge from hibernation and begin their mating season. Spring peepers are a type of chorus frog and are the first frogs to call when the ice begins to melt. Spring peepers are nocturnal carnivores and will eat spiders, ants, beetles, and flies. Other frogs can also be found here, including bullfrogs, green frogs, pickerel frogs, wood frogs, and grey tree frogs. Common insects that can be seen include dragonflies, butterflies, and damselflies. Turtles, such as

the painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*) and the eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina Carolina*), will also make their home in the marsh. Additionally, the marsh is used as a water source by large mammals including white-tailed deer, rabbits, and raccoons.

10. Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier grandiflora*), and sumac (*Rhus aromatic*) bushes provide food for songbird species. Blueberry bushes can be enjoyed by black bear and humans. Autumn brilliance multi-stem serviceberry will produce lacy white flowers in the spring as well as purple-red berries. The berries can be used in baking and the juice can be extracted to make syrup. The berries will be eaten by songbirds but will not attract deer. Fragrant sumac will attract butterflies and songbirds. Fragrant sumac is a pioneer species and will rapidly establish itself after a disturbance. In the spring, the plant will produce tiny yellow flowers and hairy red berries.