NATURE'S NEWS

From: Four Winds Nature Institute – www.FourWindsInstitute.org

A Newsletter for Parents, Teachers, and Students participating in Four Winds Natural Science Workshops

Topic of the Month:
SIGNS OF LEAF-EATERS!

On a September day, schoolyards are busy places, filled with the buzzing and stirring of not just children, but thousands of insects and other small creatures. A closer look reveals an ecosystem in action, with a whole host of hungry leaf-eaters busily feeding and hiding in the schoolyard plantings. In fact, by early fall, it's hard to find a leaf that's still completely intact.

There are two main ways these hungry leaf-eaters feed on leaves. Insect with sucking mouthparts, pierce the leaf and simply sip out the plant juices, leaving behind discolored patches where they fed. Critters with chewing mouthparts feed on leaf tissue in a variety of ways. They can leave scattered holes, feed along the leaf edges, or just eat the soft tissue between the veins, revealing a leaf skeleton. Some are even called leaf miners for they only eat the tissue between the top and bottom surface of the leaf. Their feeding can look like pale windows or tunnels that snake across the leaf like roads on a map. Leaves can also be rolled, folded or covered in silk to create a shelter or safe dining spot.

So get out your magnifying glasses, it's time to take a closer look and try to read the stories written/eaten in the leaves.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?!

Right in your own backyard, thousands of small creatures are dining out. Small shrubs are great places to look for these hungry leaf-eaters and their predators. Spread an old white or light colored cloth on the ground underneath a shrub and give it a good shake. Several different kinds of critters will fall to the ground and be visible on the sheet. See how many different kinds of critters you can find. Gently return the critters to their home. Then check the leaves for signs of feeding. How many different eating patterns can you find? Can you find

NEWS FROM YOUR SCHOOL

The Four Winds Nature Program is back for another year of exciting, hands-on learning!

Feel free to click on the following links to learn more about what our parent volunteers do in the Williston Schools.

Williston Four Winds Website:
HYPERLINK "https://sites.google.com/cvsdvt.org/willistonfourwinds/home"
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