Ithaca Ecology
A Scavenger Hunt developed for New Roots' Sense of Place Orientation
Co-Led by Rebecca (Staff) and Wilson (Student)

Generative Question: How have humans impacted the ecology of Ithaca and the development of our city?

Difficulty Level: Rigorous walking on and off trail - 2.5 miles (70 minutes walking)

Clue #1: 1:30 - 2:15

This massive jumble of irregular cascades and a few overhanging drops is 105 feet high and 175 feet wide. The top has a small dam, a remnant from when it was used to generate power. The flow is moderate to high and can get nasty during spring. Swimming, which is prohibited, can be deadly. It starts nearly 8 miles northeast of (your next clue) and then it cuts into what is called Ithaca Gorge about 3 miles east of Ithaca. The sheer cliff drops over several man-made dams on its way to the Cornell campus where it is dammed to create Beebe Lake. It then tumbles over 6 natural falls on its way to (your next clue). From there, it passes through a residential section of the city, then Stewart Park and into Cayuga Lake.

In-depth

Glean from article about lead contamination from the Ithaca Gun Factory answer the following questions:

What was one of the major industries in Ithaca during the late 19th and early 20th century?

How did that industry impact our environment?

Describe the human behavior.

This resource was created by New Roots Charter School and shared through Teaching Our Cities, a project of Common Ground. To learn more, visit http://www.teachcity.org/schools/new-roots-school. If you adopt or adapt this resource, please acknowledge New Roots Charter School and Teaching Our Cities. Teaching Our Cities is funded in part by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement number 00A00115 to Common Ground High School. However, it may not necessarily reflect the views of the Agency and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Clue #2 2:15 - 2:40

Follow the sound of water to the path under 13 through the arch to find the site of ornithology

In-depth

Learn about the Cayuga Bird Sanctuary. Use these books to identify as many birds as possible in 10 minutes. Document: common name, origin and migration pattern.

Why do you suppose this particular area is rich in bird life?

Clue #3 2:40 - 3:25

Use these photos to guide you to your next clue.

In-depth

At the wetland - learn about the benefits of wetlands as a ecological system. Cayuga nation - and the wetlands (Jhakeem/Rebecca) - Ask Jhakeem to meet us there with a snack - something to drink/eat.

Clue #4 3:25 - 4:00

TCAT bus schedule - go to Green @ Commons and then back to your Roots

In-depth

Unless you get car sick, riding the bus is a great time to get your homework done! Take the next 20 minutes to plan a five minute presentation of the highlights of your experience. What did you learn about how humans shape their environment? What places did you visit and what did you learn at each site?