

KAMANA TWO
NATURE AWARENESS TRAIL





PATH OF THE NATURALIST
KAMANA TWO

Getting Started...

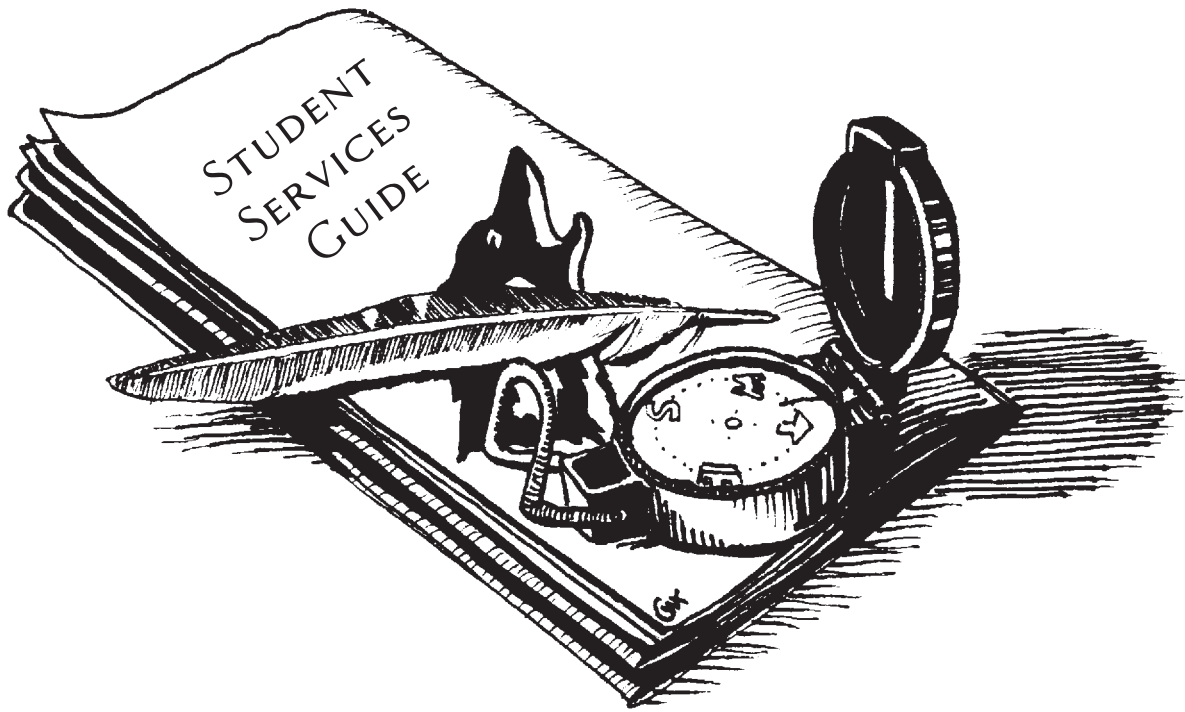
Welcome!

Please register for Student Services as soon as possible if you are intending to do so. Kamana.org has all the information you need to get started.

After you have read the information on Student Services located in the front of the *Nature Awareness Trail*:

1. Read *Songline: An Introduction to Wilderness Awareness School*, located after the Student Services section in *Nature Awareness Trail*.
2. If you haven't already in *Kamana One*, take the **Tourist Test**, located in Appendix B of the *Songline* section. Keep this in a safe place, for when you hand in your final *Kamana Four* assignment, you will take it again on the same paper to compare the difference. The Tourist Test reflection, however, must be handed in with Field Pack 2.1. Need another Tourist Test? You can download *Songline* at www.WildernessAwareness.org.
3. Begin Field Pack 2.1 in the *Nature Awareness Trail*. The *Nature Awareness Trail* is the "hub" book for every level of Kamana. It contains instructions on how to use the Resource Trail book, what assignments to do, and when to hand them in.
4. Join the on-line Kamana community at www.kamana.org! We have an email discussion group that is simple enough for the most primitive of primitive skills computer users.

Have fun!



KAMANA STUDENT SERVICES GUIDE

Dear Kamana Services,

I just had to share this with you....Kamana is working!

Before I began the Kamana program I spent quite a bit of time out in the woods south and north of here just exploring. I really enjoyed it. As I began Kamana my woods time was pretty limited by work and child raising. Today I managed to get in some woods time just south of here in an area I've explored before.

Here's what I wanted to tell you...the quality of this woods time was HUGELY different than before I began doing the awareness routines and my sit spot time and all the book work. What I noticed was way, way beyond what I'd noticed before. Today as I got out of my Jeep I began to fox walk and I kept it up for most of the trip, I was in and out of wide-angle vision all the time.

One of the first things I noticed was the concentric ring of a deer pushed ahead of some hikers walking down the dirt road, and I heard the small birds alarming about it. This was extra good because I was able to figure out what these were the minute I saw the hikers. I noticed bear claw marks (all old) on aspen I'd blindly walked past before, I saw old bear sign I'd passed unknowingly and found some fairly recent. I also found what I think are some old Mountain Lion scratches on another aspen. I fox walked most all of the afternoon.

I heard the Jays mentioning that there was a sneak-away going on in a line down the hill below me as I sat for lunch. Later I found fresh-looking deer tracks in that area. I noticed the pine squirrels barking at me as I moved onto their turf. I found the biggest most giant anthill I've ever seen, the New York City of ant hills. The last part of the trip was back down a small rough dirt road and I just floated along in fox walk, relaxed and drinking in the sounds, and the sights in wide-angle vision, and savoring the rain that was falling, regretting that I was headed home, but enjoying every moment. I was so relaxed that the pine squirrel I passed didn't bark at all. I know there's no end and I feel like I have sooooo far yet to go but... combining fox walking and the sense meditation for an afternoon is so AWESOME!

So thank you Kamana Services for all your help...it all seems to be working!

Bob Wise

THE BENEFITS OF STUDENT SERVICES

Why choose Student Services?

- Our instructors are trained to recognize patterns in the student's growth throughout the Kamana Program. We use Art of Mentoring techniques to help encourage expansion of each student's awareness, beyond that of what the student would achieve alone. Essentially, we are here to keep you on the right track.
- We recognize *Kamana Two* as being a very important level in Kamana Training, as it is in *Kamana Two* that you are introduced to core routines that you will continue to practice throughout the remainder of the Kamana Program. Knowing this, our instructors review your work in *Kamana Two* with the intention of guiding you down the path of least resistance, so to speak.
- In the *Resource Trail*, the feedback you receive will usually be focused on making sure you have a strong grasp on the journaling technique being introduced to you. Once our instructors recognize that you have internalized the technique, they will focus more energy on expanding your awareness through the "Resource Journaling" process.
- In the first half of the *Nature Awareness Trail*, the instructors focus much of their energy on helping you to become comfortable with your secret spot and the routines of awareness introduced to you through the first two Field Exercises. During the second half of the Nature Awareness Trail, they will devote more energy on helping you to internalize the techniques of the "Field Inventory" process on a deep level.
- It is recognized that YOUR commitment to learning the lessons that the Kamana Program has to offer is going to be your greatest tool for learning. Our instructors approach student services with the hope of helping you to better understand each tool you receive through your training. They do not focus on what you are doing wrong, but rather on how you can learn even more from what you experience through the Kamana Program.

Kamana Student Services helped me deepen my understanding of place and of the Kamana program itself...I don't think I could have completed it without their positive encouragement...It's just worth it knowing someone is behind you.

—Kamana graduate



Our studies have shown that a much higher percentage of people who join Kamana Two servicing actually finish the course level. Further research has told us that the main reason for this was the sense of support people felt having us in their lives. A sense of community is very important in this field of learning.

- Every student's journey is different, and so each student's experience with Student Services will be different, as well. One thing that can be relied upon, however, is that the support you receive from our instructors will be focused on **your** passions, **your** struggles, and on **your** goals as a student of the natural world. We are here to serve **you**, just as the name implies. Maybe the instructors will share stories from their own experiences; maybe they will ask you a lot of questions. Maybe you will be given suggestions on how to take a lesson to the next level; maybe you will be given an entirely new technique to practice. Whatever you receive, you can be sure that the instructors have done their best to help your journey through Kamana Two take you a little bit further into the wonders of awareness and the natural world.

You are being MENTORED in our system of learning. Our instructors are SUPPORTING you.

The material itself in combination with you actively using it IS a mentoring relationship. That's what makes Kamana so special and unique. Our instructors are there to simply help you along, remove any blocks, offer advice, peak your awareness with the art of questioning, hear your stories, offer encouragement and keep it all incredibly interesting!

THE CORRESPONDENCE ROUTINE

1. We tell you what needs to be sent in with each Field Pack.
2. Make **photocopies** of the work we require and mail it in. Write and draw in pen or dark pencil in the forms provided. You can also type the written responses and insert them in the provided Field Pack sheets. Typing makes it much easier for us to read your work.
3. We'll send a response to your work via mail or email (your choice).

Once enrolled in Kamana.org Student Services, you may contact your Kamana Student Services office by phone or email. We realize you'll need a little more help in the beginning. Please don't be afraid to ask questions. We found that as the majority of students grow more experienced, they just have that odd technical ques-



tion now and then. No matter what level you're on (*Kamana Two* through *Four*), we'll help you out. Feel free to email or mail us your Kamana stories, bewilderments, grievances, amazements, or just plain reports.

We keep records of your work on your transcript, and when you have completed each level, you will receive a Certificate of Completion. You will also *know* in your bones that you're becoming or have become a qualified naturalist.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE

Student Number

Upon registering for Kamana.org Student Services, you will need to register with Wilderness Awareness School to receive a Student Number. There are instructions on how to do so on Kamana.org.

Your student number is your key to communicating with us. Please put your name and student number on every piece of your work as well as on the envelope, where it leaps out at us when we open our mail. Please keep the card with your student number handy when you call us, as well, and leave your name and **both student and phone numbers** with messages.

Contacting Us: Phone and Email

All Kamana Student Services staff love hearing from you. We enjoy real contact. It keeps us vicariously in wonderful wild places all over the world; it keeps us practicing our teaching arts; it gives us important feedback about how you're doing with our course materials; and we love to hear about your struggles and joys and to find answers for your questions.

The best way to reach us is via email. Contact director@kamana.org. If you have questions about Kamana and Student Services please email us. You will receive a response the most quickly using email.

You may also call us. It is best to call us if you have a question that is best discussed in person. We will return your call, but it will most likely take longer than email to hear back from us.

Please don't call or email the main Wilderness Awareness School line for Kamana questions unless it's an address change or some-

“Regarding support from the staff, I spoke with Jonathan, my student services representative, about once per month and I found it quite helpful but primarily as an adjunct. A big part of what you learn is how to learn and for that you have to do the work. Nobody will spoon-feed this stuff to you. It wouldn't work if you tried. The student services help is primarily in explaining what you don't understand and helping out when you get stuck on something. For example, I began the program in October and hadn't been doing it for long when the shortening days and my work schedule made it obvious that I wasn't going to be able to visit my sit spot in daylight. I discussed this with Jonathan, perhaps expecting him to let me off the hook or come up with some magical solution. Instead he encouraged me to go to my spot in the dark and said that previous students who had tried it found they got a lot out of it. He was right, as usual. By the time spring brought longer days I actually had come to miss my early morning forays in the dark.”

*Carl Herzog, K248,
Kamana Four graduate*



If you decide to join Student Services, remember to send in your registration right away so you can get started.

thing basic. The phone number and email you use is your assigned Kamana Office

For questions administrative in nature or outside your actual course work, contact director@kamana.org.

Mail Written Assignments

Please send your Field Packs through old-fashioned mail. To process your assignments, we need to receive them in hard copy. Please photocopy your work. You mail your work to your assigned Kamana office. **You must send in the YELLOW FIELD PACK FORMS in with your work and use the provided Field Pack labels on the envelope.** **Note: you may also send us digital copies of your work. Please send all the required work with the Field pack labels attached as well.**

Postage and Bother

It's true that copying and mailing your finished work can add up to lunch money and be a bother—making copies, buying stamps, weighing the envelope at post offices—but call it a ritual and try to do it in a spirit of celebration! If you live nearby, you may drop off your work at our offices.

HELP CREATE COMMUNITY ONLINE!

Besides receiving personalized responses, you will also receive lots of other valuable benefits by being a member at Kamana.org. There is a community forum, videos, interviews with naturalists, and lots of articles written for Kamana students.

Kamana.org allows you to connect with the larger community of Kamana students. It also helps you through blocks that come up during your Kamana journey. This exciting resource is constantly being updated. How to sign up:

Go to www.kamana.org. You will find instructions on-line.

On-line student directory

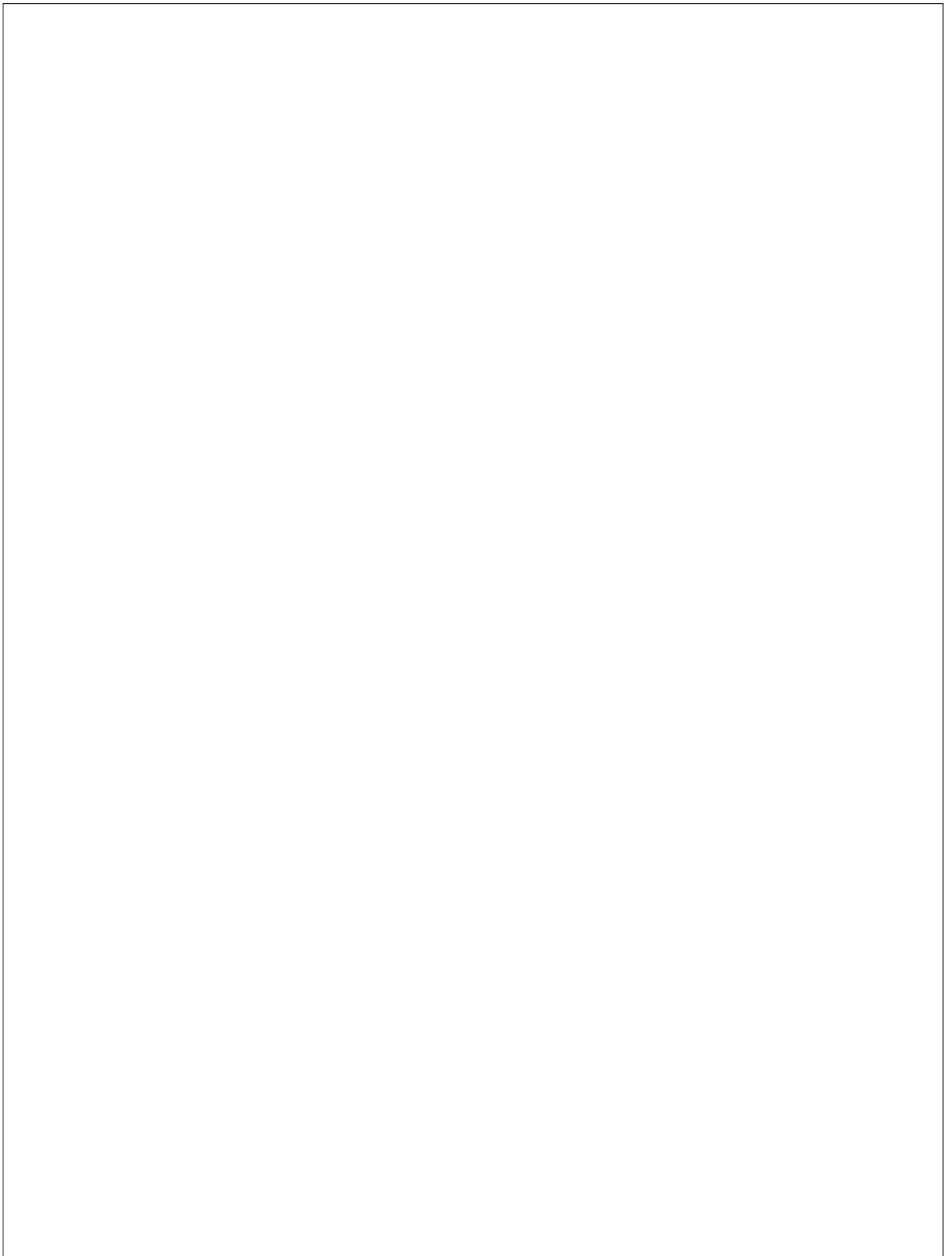
Visit www.kamana.org and access the international Kamana Student Directory.

**Visit Student Services at
www.kamana.org**





KAMANA
NATURALIST TRAINING PROGRAM™



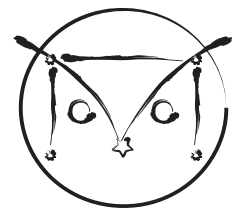


WILDERNESS
AWARENESS

S C H O O L

SUNGLINE

AN INTRODUCTION TO
WILDERNESS AWARENESS SCHOOL



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DEDICATION



Without hesitation, the first and foremost to whom this work and this school are dedicated are the children of today, their children, and the future children for the next seven generations to come on this Earth...

SONGLINE: TABLE OF CONTENTS

The First Words Are “Thank You”	3
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SONGLINE

The Songline, an Introduction	4
Where has Native Intelligence Gone?	4
Are We Aliens in Our Own World	4
Who Are the “natives”?	5
The Mission of Wilderness Awareness School	7
My Land and Lineage	6
You’ll Know Your Student by the Sign That He Carries	8
The Scout	9
The Grandfather and the Tracker	10
College as a Means to an End	11
The Test That Made a School	12
Penetrating the Wall of Green.	13
The Man Who ACED the Alien Test	14
The Key is Mentoring.	15
The Story of Ingwe	15
Ingwe’s Hope	16
Ingwe’s Stories.	17
The Thanksgiving of Jake Swamp.	17
The Spirit of Gilbert Walking Bull.	17
A Long Line of Mentors	18
The School and its Warriors	18
The Importance of Environmental Education	18
The Spiritual Dimension.	19
Songline Analysis: What Are Our Secrets?	20
The Challenge of Mentoring.	21

WILDERNESS AWARENESS SCHOOL’S PROGRAMS

An Array of Programs.	23
Kamana Naturalist Training Program.	23

WILDERNESS AWARENESS SCHOOL’S CURRICULUM

Trails	25
The Nature Awareness Trail	
The Resource Trail	
Tracks	26
Kamana: Inspiration and Hazards (East)	
Shikari: Mammals and the Arts of Tracking (South)	

Msafiri: Plants and the Arts of Wandering (Southwest/Earth)
Anake: Stewardship and Principles of Peace (West)
Tonweya: Trees and the Arts of Survival (North)
Dawa: Birds and Their Voices (Northeast/Sky)
Wrapping the Bundle: Tying the Trails Together

APPENDIX A: KAMANA PROGRAMS 29

APPENDIX B: THE TOURIST (ALIEN) TEST 35



By joining the Kamana Naturalist Training Program, you will be on your way to one of the greatest experiences of your life. By taking this program and the others that follow, you will be headed into a world of such wonder and beauty that at first it will seem almost unbelievable.

You will learn to walk in a sacred manner through the wilderness, respecting the animals and plants as your kin, for you will become part of the wilderness, not an outsider. It will become your home. You will learn of the plants and animals and through them you will find peace and harmony.

In time you will learn to understand the language of the animals, to hear voices in the wind, music in mountain streams and bird song. You will learn to lie under the stars at night, and to fall asleep to the call of the owl and the whip-poor-will, and to dream dreams so real that they will not be dreams, but visions.

Cofounder, Wilderness Awareness School



**WILDERNESS
AWARENESS**

S C H O O L

As Design Editor and Program Director of the *Kamana Naturalist Training Program*, I would like to welcome you into Wilderness Awareness School. You'll hear all you need to hear about this course later on, so I'll just skip to the "special thanks."

I would like to honor program creator Jon Young (who put two decades of work into this even before he laid his hands on the keyboard!); curriculum co-creator and elder Ingwe (who shared with us wisdom, stories and teachings that gave our school a foundation and a mission); Consulting Editor Tom Brown, Jr. for all his contributions; Jake Swamp; writers and editors Alex Callen, Ellen Haas, Linda Cunio, Matt Wild, Dan Gardoqui, Jeff Lambe, Cara Burrow, Jessica Perkins, Kelly Ann Moore, and Paul Houghtaling (special thanks to Paul for his dedication and the challenging work of re-designing the Resource Trail); artist Walker Korby; original Kamana team member Kirstin Young; Former and present CFPA members Diane Marie, Walt Hoesel and Warren Moon; former school director Debbie Winters; the *many* Student Service instructors over the years including Aidan Young, Tyler Hartford, Jenn Jacobson, Barbara English, and Greg Sommer. And last, because he deserves the attention, Jonathan Talbott. Not only was Jonathan the first graduate and a contributing writer and artist, but he was also the very first student services instructor who helped many navigate their way through Kamana.

Finally, thank you to all of our students, community, past and present Board of Trustee members, all those who will contribute to Kamana in the future, and anyone whom I may have forgotten.

Once again, welcome to Wilderness Awareness School's Independent Studies. May your Kamana journey be a rewarding experience.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Manus Gallagher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

John Manus Gallagher
Design Editor & Program Director, Kamana Naturalist Training Program

OHEN:TON KARIHWATEHKWEN; THE “WORDS BEFORE ALL ELSE”

—from the Thanksgiving Address, Iroquois tradition

Most of humanity throughout history has said prayers to the powers of surrounding nature, which they have recognized as their source of life. Surely it is not too late to recover this ancestral wisdom.

– Richard K. Nelson

“The first thing that’s done is you give thanks to everything. You thank the waters beneath the Earth, the stones, the soil, all the way up to the stars. It’s just a reminder of where we are. We should never forget that..”

—Kahionhes John Fadden, Turtle Clan of the Mohawk Nation.

“If all of the children of the world were to be a part of this kind of Thanksgiving each day, I believe that the problems of the world would start to go the other way.”

—Mohawk Sub-Chief Tekaronieneken Jake Swamp

Today we have gathered and have come from many different places. We have all arrived safely at this place to share with each other our gifts from the Creator. So we bring our minds together as one in Thanksgiving and Greetings to one another.

We send greetings and thanksgiving to our Mother the Earth who, like our own mother, continues to give for our well-being. She continues to care for us and has not forgotten her instructions from the beginning of time. We now bring our minds together in Thanksgiving for the Earth.

Now, as one mind, we turn our thoughts to the Waters of the Earth, that continue to flow beneath the ground, in little streams and in rivers, in lakes and wetlands, and in the great seas. They quench our thirst and help us to keep clean. We now bring our minds together in Thanksgiving to all the Waters of the Earth.

With one mind, we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to all the Beings that dwell in the Water which provide for us in many ways.

Now we direct our thoughts to the many kinds of plants that live low upon the Earth—the mosses, the grasses, the herbs, the food plants and the flowers, for they too have not forgotten their Original Instructions. There are many members of this Nation who sustain those who walk upon this Earth and take away the sicknesses of the human family. With one mind we send our thoughts and Thanksgiving to the Plant Nations.

We now gather our minds together and send Greetings and Thanksgiving to all the Animal Life in the world, for they continue to instruct and teach us even today. We are happy that many still walk us with although their natural world has been changed and life has become very difficult for them at times. Sometimes we may see a fox or a deer eye to eye and we are reminded of that feeling of kinship we get when we see the animals. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to all the Animal Life in the world.

With one mind we now think of the Trees. According to their Original Instructions the Trees still give us shelter, warmth and food, and keep the air clean. When we see the trees we are reminded of the beauty and power of the natural world. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to all the members of the Tree Nation.

We now bring our minds together to send our Greetings of Thanksgiving to the Birds. At the beginning of time the Birds were given a very special duty to perform. They were instructed to help lift the minds of the Human Family. Many times during the day our minds are lifted by their songs. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to all the Birds of the world.

We are thankful to the Four Winds who continue to blow and cleanse the air in accordance with their Original Instructions. When we listen to the Winds it is as if we are hearing the Creator's breath, clearing our minds as it blows through the Trees. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to the Four Winds.

Now we turn our attention to the Thunderbeings. They welcome the springtime with their loud voices. Along with the lightning, they carry the waters of Spring on their backs. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the Thunderbeings.

Our minds are one as we send our thoughts to our oldest brother the Sun. Each day the Sun continues according to his original instructions, bringing the light of the day, the energy source of all life on Earth. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to our oldest brother the Sun.

We now gather our minds together and give Thanks to our oldest Grandmother, the Moon who holds hands with all of the women of the world, binding all of the cycles and rhythms of the Waters. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to our Grandmother the Moon.

With one mind we send our thoughts to the Star Nations who continue to light our way during times of darkness to guide us home, and who hold the secrets of many forgotten stories. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the Star Nations.

With our minds as one mind we think of the Four Spirit Beings who live in the Four Directions. We know that they are helping us when we are moving through life and a feeling tells us not to go a certain way, or that we are on the right path. And now we gather our minds together as one and send our special Thanksgiving Greetings to the Four Spirit Beings.

Now we have arrived in a very special place where dwells the Great Spirit that moves through all things. As one mind we turn our thoughts to the Creator with Thanksgiving and Greetings.

We have now become like one being, with one body, one heart, one mind. We send our Prayers and special Thanksgiving Greetings to all the unborn Children of all the Future Generations. We send our thoughts to the many different Beings we may have missed during our Thanksgiving. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to all of the Nations of the World.

Now our minds are one.

WELCOME



WE GATHER OUR
MINDS TOGETHER
AS ONE TO SEND
THANKSGIVING TO
THE PEOPLE

THE FIRST WORDS ARE “THANK YOU”

Wilderness Awareness School and I have been richly blessed by our association with many wonderful people from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, from the four corners of the world. From each, we have received priceless gifts of traditional wisdom, native awareness of the land, and skills for building community and interpersonal relationships. With these teachings and our own knowledge gained from experience, we have gained a “world view” of what it means to be at one with the Earth.

To all these people, we say, “Thank You!” There is no way we can repay the debt we owe you, except to pass forward to the future generations the knowledge, skills and wisdom you have shared with us.

To you, the reader, we also send our special Thanksgiving Greeting, for by picking up this book, you have also picked up the torch which can only be passed on through other hands. We give you our thanks, for through you, the work we have begun will be carried forward and placed in the hands of the generations yet unborn.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jon Young". To the right of the name is a stylized flourish or mark that appears to be a combination of a cross and a lightning bolt.

SONGLINE

The Songline, and Introduction

“There was a time when you journeyed on foot over hundreds of miles, walking fast and often traveling at night, traveling nightlong and napping in the acacia shade during the day, and stories were told to you as you went. In your travels with an older person you were given a map you could memorize full of lore and song, and also practical information. Off by yourself you could sing those songs to bring yourself back. And you could maybe travel to a place that you’d never been, steering only by songs you had learned.”

—Gary Snyder, “Good, Wild, Sacred,”
in *The Practice of the Wild*. Berkeley: North Point Press, 1990

Where has Native Intelligence Gone?

If we were to take a long wander in the Kalahari with natives of the land, and we asked them to identify the most common plants, animals, tracks, and trees we encountered, they would do so with 100% accuracy, men, women, and most of the children alike.

If I were to take you, a resident of Metropolis, USA, on that same walk in the Kalahari and ask you the same questions, you would not do so well, I’m afraid. “Of course,” you would say. “I’m not from around *here!* I live in Metropolis.”

But what if I asked you the same questions about *your own* neighborhood?

When I give people a test about plants and animals in their own region, they fail as badly as if they were walking in the Kalahari. *What does this mean?*

Are We Aliens in our Own World?

If a “native” is in harmony with his or her environment and the natural world, what can we call the rest of us who are unable to pass even the simplest identification test? There is only one word that fits—we are “aliens” in our own world.

This condition and feeling of alienation from our own world, I refer to as the dreaded disease of “Alienitis.” Its symptoms are a lack of knowledge about our world, and with that, a lack of appreciation, understanding and concern. For many so afflicted, the natural world consists of grass—something that is a pain to mow every week, but *must* be greener than their neighbors’—and the neighbor’s dog who uses our patch of green as a waste recycling station.

*I had a funny experience
with some local 1st, 2nd
and 3rd graders recently.
I asked them what we
would call those who don’t
know anything about the
natural world. Usually
they eventually come
out with “aliens”
because they have already
realized what “natives”
can do! This time they
came out with
“tourists!” That’s a
thought, eh? Tourists of
our own backyards?*

In advanced stages of Alienitis, many people do not recognize that the natural world even exists. They move from back-support mattress to drip-grind breakfast to heated garage, then on to a bumper to bumper commute on a cement-smooth roadway, into another heated garage, and up to the 32nd floor in an inertial-damped elevator. After staring at a computer screen and manipulating numbers for several hours, they dash down to the ground floor where they hurriedly throw down a few mouthfuls of pale lettuce and imitation texturized meat, held together by two pieces of white bread, which was made from wheat that had been sprayed with chemicals, harvested by machine, bleached, baked and denuded, then labeled as “enriched.” Is it surprising that many of us have succumbed to Alienitis?

It is not only our life-style that makes Alienitis such a virulent disease. The only kind of education that the average citizen receives about the environment is a frightening digestion of the issues concerning its destruction, misuse, or degradation. Little or no opportunity exists to learn about the positive side of our natural world or to learn to appreciate its gifts to life. Is it any wonder there is such a sense of hopelessness among our young people today, or that we have so many overwhelming problems involving the environment?

Who Are the “natives”?

There are many studies indicating that the indigenous people from many natural areas around the world are capable of identifying, harvesting and using for medicine, food and craft, hundreds of species of wild plants over all four seasons. The knowledge possessed by these people, common average citizens of their societies, includes similar information about trees and their uses, bird and animal language and its significance, weather patterns indicated by clouds, and animal behavior indicated by track and sign.

The ability of these people to read the ground through tracks and sign left by humans and animals is astounding. Tracking, as an art, is unknown to most people in the modern world, yet indigenous trackers are quite capable of seeing and interpreting incredible information from what appear to be random marks on the ground.

So what does all this add up to? These people are perfectly at home in the natural world. They understand everything about their surroundings that they need, not only to survive, but to live in cooperation and harmony with the other elements of Creation.

Does this mean that only people who sleep on the ground, dress

“Nature and I are two,’ filmmaker Woody Allen once said...He does not go in natural lakes because ‘there are live things in there.’ Allen’s aversion to nature, what can be called biophobia, is increasingly common...Biophobia ranges from discomfort in “natural” places to active scorn for whatever is not man-made, managed, or air-conditioned. At the other end of the continuum of possible orientation toward nature is “biophilia,” which E.O. Wilson has defined as “the innate urge to affiliate with other forms of life.”

Is it OK that Woody Allen feels little or no sympathy or kinship with nature? Does it matter that a growing number of other people do not like it or like it only in the abstract as nothing more than resources to be managed or as television nature specials? Does it matter that we are increasingly separated from the condition of nature?...To what extent are our biological prospects and our sanity dependent on our capacity for biophilia? To that degree it is important that we understand how biophilia comes to be, how it prospers, what competencies and abilities it

requires of us, and how these are to be learned.”

David W. Orr, Earth in Mind, On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect. Washington DC: Island Press, 1994.

Native or native?

Throughout this book, we observe the following conventions with respect to our use of the words native and Native:

Native: refers to a person or persons from a specific indigenous cultural background, and will most often be prefixed to a description of place, as Native American or Native Australian.

native: refers to a person of any cultural or ethnic background who is on a first-name basis with the natural world, a person who has the knowledge, a spiritual feeling for and therefore the mindset of being a part of the land, not separate from it.

in skins and eat food that they themselves have caught or gathered can be called natives? Does it mean that only hunting and gathering people who were born and raised in a particular location, whose parents, grandparents, and ancestors, back to the beginning of recorded time, have lived in that same location, can be called “natives” of that place?

One of the most important parts of being in harmony with the natural world is a deep understanding and appreciation of nature, and that promotes the ability to solve current problems and to prevent future problems by care-taking the environment on behalf of the future generations. This comes quite naturally to people who are personally knowledgeable and spiritually bonded with the natural world, and who consider the other elements of Creation to be their honored relatives.

It is not place of origin, nor skin color, nor family tree that makes a native—it is bonding with and having a deep and abiding love for the natural world. It is an understanding between the natural world and ourselves that goes so deep as to approach the realm of the spiritual. It is an attitude of thankfulness, and actions taken with consideration for their effects on the future generations. And most of all, it is the willingness to set aside our own preconceived notions about reality, our technologically oriented patterns of thinking, and to see the Earth as it really is—a natural system, a whole, with all the elements interdependent upon each other.

My Land and Lineage

It is important for you to know something of me, and why I have devoted my life to creating such a school. My background, though ordinary in many ways, is also very rare: I was a bit on the lucky side.

I was born in 1960 in a hospital in Red Bank, New Jersey, on the banks of the beautiful Navesink River. For the first decade of my life I lived just a few miles away in suburban New Jersey. I had many interests, but my first love has always been nature study, adventure in the wilds and anything that has to do with being out of doors.

My naturalist training began very early and was guided by two remarkable elders. Looking back, it appears that Aunt Carrie and Nanny Cecil conspired to keep me in training to be a naturalist.

My mother’s aunt, Carrie Rozek, was influential in helping my young mind pattern on the natural world. A devout Catholic from Poland, she encouraged me to love the land in a spiritual way. Still

living a life based on faith, prayers to guardian angels, and dreams of her Ancestors speaking to her, she talked to birds and heard messages from God. She taught me to walk quietly and to love and appreciate the beauty of Nature. She and I were very strongly connected and she dreamed of me whenever I was ill.

My mother recognized Aunt Carrie's spiritual gift and often reminded me of her teachings and special concern for me. Aunt Carrie was always sending me clippings from the newspaper about naturalists or people working with animals, with notes of encouragement attached.

At an early age, my father's mother, Nanny Cecil, taught me to read from the little Golden Nature Guides, which in those days only cost about seventy five cents. These books had wonderful color illustrations that really fed the curiosity and imagination of a young child.

This woman, Cecilia McCormack, also taught me to collect and to care for small wild animals which I could easily capture at that age. My menagerie included small mammals, snakes, frogs, toads, salamanders, turtles, fish, insects, spiders, moths, butterflies and other creatures which I would catch, keep for a while, study with the help of my guides, and then release.

In 1971, my family moved to a rural area only a few miles away from my first home. By this time I had quite a collection of tanks, artificial ponds, books and treasures from nature. This area around my new home had all manner of wonders to make a young naturalist's blood race, and put a sparkle in his eyes. The first day I visited the new house, my father and I discovered a kind of toad I had never seen, and several new snakes.

There were over three thousand acres of undeveloped land around this new home at that time. There were old forests on the hillsides with springs giving birth to little creeks which flowed into bigger creeks. There was plenty of diversity, for there were old fields, horse pastures, second growth forests, swamps, ponds, lakes and sandy barrens.

We lived near the bayshore, so there were plenty of waterfowl and a great diversity of fish. There were eels that made their way up the streams each year. There was adventure everywhere, endless acres of new territory to explore, and the fishing was great. Had it not been for my love of fishing, I might never have become anything more than a talented amateur naturalist and weekend fisherman. As it turned out, one remarkable fishing trip cemented my path in life and, in the end, it was this trip to the old fishing hole that, as my mother has said many times, changed my life forever.

You'll Know Your Student by the Sign That He Carries

One day, not too long after we moved into this new home, my friend Steve and I caught a huge snapping turtle at the local fishing spot. Together, we had managed to get it all the way up to the corner of my road. But there Steve's mother collared him, and I was left alone with a turtle that weighed almost as much as I did. I was a slightly built ten-year old, and this creature was starting to look awfully big. I stood and stared at this enormous turtle, and as the thrill of the hunt wore off, the turtle's eye began to look a lot like the eyes of the pet turtles I had in my tanks back home.

The turtle was no longer quarry, but a pitiful creature awaiting my decision for its future. I was sad and frustrated for I couldn't release it with the hook in, nor could I take the hook out of its mouth without risking losing a finger or two.

After what seemed like an eternity, a Toyota Landcruiser sailed up to the corner and stopped. A roofless, red, well-used back country vehicle with a sun-tanned young man at the wheel was rolling slowly to the stop sign at the corner. He looked over his shoulder at me and did a double take when he saw the turtle. He backed up and said, "What you got there?"

"A common snapping turtle," I replied rather smugly. All that book learning had paid off, I thought.

"What are you going to do with it?" he asked with an amused smile.

"I'm gonna make soup." I said matter-of-factly, as if I were going to pull out a kettle and get to it right then and there.

One corner of his mouth twitched up ever so slightly. "Where do you live?" he asked.

I told him.

"Do you know how to kill it? Does your dad? Does he know how to clean it?" To all of these questions I had to respond in the negative, and he realized that the half mile to my house was insurmountable for this half-pint fisherman.

In a letter Tom Brown, Jr. wrote to me many years later on my twenty-first birthday he said, "When I drove up to the corner that day and saw a boy with a turtle, I thought of something my teacher had told me: 'You will know your first student by the sign that he carries.' And I wondered, 'could this be him?' The boy knew it was a common snapping turtle, but that was only half an answer. I wondered if he knew of its significance as a symbol of Mother

Earth and our sacred duties as human beings, living in harmony with nature, the native teachings. These were the other half of the answer and I knew that I would teach that young naturalist. I had found my first student.”

Tom Brown, Jr.’s interest in me forever changed my life.

Tom lived only five houses from me, and his nature museum, his taxidermy lab, his wall displays, artifacts, crafts and field guides, as well as his incredible knowledge of everything I longed to know were not going to get away from me. He adopted me as his younger brother, and I adopted him. We saw one another nearly every day and traveled into the Pine Barrens for days on end. He became a part of my family, and I a part of his. On that day I began a seven year personal apprenticeship with Tom Brown, Jr., now known around the world as “The Tracker.”

The Scout

Tom had been raised in the Pine Barrens under the tutelage of an Apache elder who came to be addressed by Tom as “Grandfather,” though this remarkable man was actually the grandfather of Tom’s best friend. Grandfather was a master tracker and scout. From an early age, he taught Tom to read the ground, to hear wisdom in the silence of the woodlands, and to understand the language of the birds, the messages of the weather and the ways of the forest.

In the life of the hunter-gatherer cultures of the world, the role of the scout has always been critical. A scout had to remain apart from the tribe or village, wandering alone and living from the land for a good portion of his life. The scout hunted his own food, but his purpose in life was to be a gatherer—of information. The scout had to find food, water, shelter and safety for his people. In the ways of many such tribes, love of the land and treating the land with great respect and honor were foremost in the scout’s mind.

This meant that when the land was nearing the point of noticeable impact, where there was danger of permanently scarring the land, the tribe must move on. A scout would pride himself on his ability to become so much a part of the flow of life as to become invisible, not even disturbing the birds from their feeding as he passed. This took great skill and knowledge of the birds and their ways.

The scout also had to know all of the food plants that the people relied on and the sources of water and how to care for them. The scout needed to be able to read the ground with unerring accuracy, for a strange moccasin track could mean that an enemy had learned the location of the people.

In the late 1800's, the life of the scout became extremely difficult. To the various bands of Apache people living in the southwest from Mexico to Arizona along the edge of the plains and into the mountains, it must have felt as if their lives had been turned inside out. Their traditional enemies were no longer on foot, but had taken up the horsemanship of the Great Plains tribes. And they had taken up the guns of the white man. The buffalo in their enemies' territories had been decimated, and now these tribes headed deeper and deeper into what had always been Apache country.

Though certain bands and tribes were peace loving, they were "Indians" nonetheless and the white settlers' policies looked unfavorably at any Indian. So the Apache scout had to not only elude the white soldiers and settlers, but also the ever more dangerous Native enemies whose food and lands had been taken away. These were desperate times. Any small error could mean death to the entire village.

According to Tom, "Grandfather" was such a scout. He successfully navigated his small band of Apaches through these hardest of times.

The scouts were out of a job when the western frontier was settled. The early part of this century found Grandfather without a purpose, yet his heart and life were deeply patterned by solitude in the wilderness. His lifeways were the ways of Sacred Invisibility, not just to avoid danger, but to protect and care for the land which he knew and loved so well.

The Grandfather and the Tracker

Alone, without his traditional purpose in life, he left his home in the southwest to go in search of the knowledge and wisdom of other wild places. Eventually, his wanderings took him to a New Jersey suburb to live with his son. There, his young grandson introduced him to his buddy, twelve-year-old Tom Brown. For nearly a decade, Grandfather mentored the two boys in the ways of the wilderness and the traditional skills of the scout.

Grandfather's knowledge of plants and their uses, his survival skills, and love for the land were unsurpassed. He loved the Pine Barrens and all wild places deeply, and rejoiced in the revitalizing solitude found in nature. His amazing tracking skills, his ability to read the landscape and the voices of the birds, and his deep love and commitment to honoring the land in a Sacred Manner were passed on to Tom, and through Tom to me.

Tom is a fantastic tracker, and his many books on the subject of tracking, nature skills and native philosophies are well known today. But way back then, I was his only student, and for seven years after our meeting on that street corner, he trained me in the ways of the Apache scout. When Tom wrote his first book, *The Tracker*, and was catapulted to national attention, I became his first instructor at his Tracker School.

A turtle on a string on a street corner in New Jersey, a brief instant of time, Tom and I met, and now there are two schools—Tom’s, which teaches tracking and survival lore through week-long intensives, and mine, which is directed at recreating the mentoring experience for those who wish to take this knowledge to its highest expression in the language of the scout—and in the language of today’s world.

College as a Means to an End

After working with Tom for a while, I returned to school and earned a Bachelor of Environmental Science degree from Cook College, Rutgers University, in a combined study of Anthropology and Classical Natural History. My vision was to recreate the experience of the mentoring process for students in today’s society, giving them advanced understanding, self-awareness and leadership qualities in the area of environmental awareness and education—both critical for the coming years.

From Tom Brown I had learned the native approach to life—a way of observing, living and thinking in harmony with the natural world. I had spent ten long, fun years apprenticed to a modern-day Apache scout. What I needed was a way to translate this experience into tracks and trails that my students in the modern world could follow on their own, whether or not I was around.

One thing Tom tells his students over and over in every class he teaches is: “Your job is to prove me right, or prove me wrong...and I’ll bet you can’t prove me wrong!” I set out to prove Tom right, to find references from modern scientific literature and thought which pointed to or supported the ancient teachings and wisdom I had learned from him. And I succeeded beyond my wildest expectations! Everything from the work now being done in quantum physics to current thinking in social anthropology supported what I had learned in the woods. I now had a bibliography for my own students to pursue.

The Test That Made a School

I had some ideas about what and how I needed to teach. I needed to create a way to pass on the incredible knowledge I had been given. But where to begin? I had a name, Wilderness Awareness School, but not much more.

Not long after I graduated from college I began to work with a small group of students from a local high school. When I faced my first class and looked out over the room full of young faces, I wondered where I should start. I had no idea what to say to these young people. What did they know? What did they want to know? What would interest them?

I needed to come up with a test to find out the answers to these questions, so I went out with a camera and a tape recorder to record some common sights and sounds from the wild places around our area. The slides included such shots as a chipmunk's eye peering out from a wild rose bush, wildflowers in winter and other common sights, shown in an obscure way. All the slides were of common things, but only partial views, or distant shots. I deliberately left out the obvious rabbit and deer tracks. The audio part of the test included the calls of very common forest species such as the Wood Thrush, Ovenbirds, and a little frog that used to be found there by the millions, the Spring Peeper.

I kept thinking back to my training with "The Tracker." As I took the pictures I asked myself, "Would Tom Brown be able to identify this from this slide?" When I reviewed my material, I really thought I should have made the test a little bit more challenging. But, what the heck...I'd find out *something*, anyway.

Not One Correct Answer!

When I administered the first version of this test to 125 high school freshmen and sophomores, the results were mind-boggling. The test was simple identification, with 100 questions made up of my slides and sound tracks. When I collected the test papers, the pages were almost entirely blank, or filled with wise-guy answers. They were putting answers like: "bird" and "some tree." Really. Without exception, all the students had completely failed the test.

At first I questioned my own sanity. How could all these people be wrong? I must be living in a fantasy world or something. Then I checked over the test questions again. Perhaps this meant something. I decided to do a really easy version of it to see what would happen. I included pictures of a robin, clearly showing the eye ring, of dandelions in bloom and in leaf, skunk cabbage, poison ivy in leaf, poison ivy in winter, poison ivy berries, and Canadian

geese. I included calls of the robin and of jays. I included deer tracks and mole tunnels, fox droppings and starlings and gulls. I decided to accept the answer “hawk” for Red-tailed Hawk and “seagull” for Ringbilled Gull, even though “seagull” is technically incorrect. “Bunny” for Eastern Cottontail is an acceptable answer on this test, though any high school biology teacher would mark that one wrong.

I included so many urban and suburban species I thought for sure that they would all ace the thing—I would find out that there was no need for my school after all, and I’d have to get a job at the local convenience store. I finally got a few correct answers, but even with the suburban version, the results became quite consistent: people could not even identify the most common bird in the state with any certainty, by picture or by voice, even though I knew they encountered hundreds of these every day around our area. I was flabbergasted.

Even professional environmental educators, ecology professors and environmental leaders failed this easier version of the test. The average correct response rate was only about 10%. This is failing, really failing. Children of native people living close to the land know, by the time they are in their teens, how to read the ground like we would read a newspaper; they know the calls of the birds and local animals and even understand the significance of the various calls, songs and tones that the birds and animals are using; they know how and where to find drinking water, how to find food, what wood to burn and why. By the time they are adults, their knowledge of the world around them is so vast and intricate that they could teach college with several doctorate degrees. This is not an exaggeration...this is native knowledge. And this is the knowledge I knew I had to find a way to teach in my school. So it was that a test made a school.

Penetrating the Wall of Green

I have now administered the Alien Test to thousands of people around the country. After failing the Alien Test, almost everyone expresses a great desire to be able to pass such a test in the future. The answers to the questions, the lore about plants, tracks, bird language and animals are fascinating, and people long to recover this knowledge.

The most commonly expressed frustration is that people do not know where to begin. They look at the Wall of Green out there and throw up their hands. Students see the overwhelming array of available books and field guides and have no idea which way to turn or which ones to begin with. They can’t see the forest for the trees!

“If the Aborigine drafted an I.Q. test, all of Western civilization would presumably flunk it.”

—Stanley Garn

Wilderness Awareness School's unique approach to environmental education would respond to the need this test revealed. We would assist people to penetrate the Wall of Green. Our mission would be to foster native awareness by teaching people how to see forest *through* the trees. We would teach them how to pick and use the field guides so they acted like living mentors as they wandered through their studies. We would focus their eyes and widen them to mystery at the same time.

The Man Who ACED the Alien Test

Back east there is an environmental educators' network that meets regularly to work on areas of mutual concern, to sponsor seminars and to share information. These people are primarily teachers in local schools and colleges. I was invited to do a presentation for this group, an evening of lively anecdotes from the experiences of a rough-hewn "field naturalist" is what I imagine they were expecting. Instead, they got the Alien Test!

When I checked their papers, I was amazed to find that one man in the group had answered all the questions correctly. He *aced* the test! Then proceeded to sing frog calls in my face and challenge me to identify them. I sang some back at him and soon we were in the middle of a frog-calling contest. It was a riot! In the end, I asked the group to give him a round of applause...He received a standing ovation instead.

That same night, Mr. Brown looked out at his peers and fairly berated them for their lack of knowledge of the most common wildlife and plants. He basically told them that no self-respecting environmental educator should fail such an *easy, really basic* test of the *most common* wildlife and plants, and how did they *dare* to call themselves environmental educators?

I came to their rescue. "No one in this room should feel guilty for not doing well on this test. No one here has been given the opportunity to study these things. There has never been a school in our country to teach these things, and no school has ever included this in their curriculum."

"The question I have, and that you all should have right now, is: 'How did this one man learn so much about nature that he managed to ace this test?'" We all looked at Mr. Brown, who turned out to be a high school science teacher.

"When I was a young boy," he said, "I lived up the block from an elderly couple who gardened and worked outside most of the time.

They knew so much about the land, and I spent all my free time with them. They had learned everything they knew from growing up among the Native Americans living around the Great Lakes.”

Once again, here were two generations who had been mentored by people with great knowledge and love of the land.

The Key is Mentoring

Mr. Brown’s explanation that night gave me the key to responding to the need out there for environmental education that really works: mentoring. We would teach people how to gain a deep knowledge of nature by replicating the situation Mr. Brown had experienced—by guiding them out into the woods with people who knew the area as natives do. We would replicate the experience Tom Brown had with Grandfather, and I had with Tom. We would learn from natives, and from Natives, how they taught their children and figure out how to do this as a school in the modern world.

The Story of Ingwe

Some years after I graduated from college and began to search for a direction for Wilderness Awareness School, another amazing teacher and elder entered my life. My first meeting with Ingwe was just as unlikely, and just as fortuitous, as my meeting with Tom Brown had been.

Ingwe is a grand old Englishman of British ancestry, the fourth generation of his family to be born in Africa, and a true native, in our sense of that word. Ingwe had grown up in the wilds of Kenya in the early part of this century. His only playmates and companions were the sons of the warriors of the Akamba tribe of that region. He grew up speaking Kikamba and Swahili, as well as his own English, while being mentored in the arts of survival and tracking and in the spiritual traditions that made the Akamba people so dear to him.

The Akamba’s love and knowledge of the wilderness were extremely rich, and offered Ingwe the connection with the land that led him to appreciate all that the natural world does for the benefit of mankind. Ingwe has worked closely with youth and nature for most of his life and strives to restore positive thinking, hopefulness, and a sense of self-awareness through connection with the natural world.

Ingwe's childhood was similar to Tom's, but his teachers were a respected medicine man and elder named Musami, and an Akamba youth named Ndaka—which means “Child of the Earth.” As Ingwe became involved with the local tribal village, the other Akamba also influenced him, especially the storytellers. These gifted people filled Ingwe's childhood with a sense of wonder and a spiritual love for the earth.

Ingwe's Hope

When Ingwe walked into a restaurant I was managing while teaching high school science nearby, I knew I had found someone who could make the school a reality. But Ingwe was old and tired. He loved the idea, but kept putting me off saying, “I'm too old. I just want to stay home and paste my pictures into scrapbooks.” I tried and tried to urge him to throw his wisdom and energy back into the fray, but he resisted claiming he was finished living his life.

One day Ingwe took a tumble off a short ladder at his house and ended up in the hospital. When I went to visit him he looked pale and ashen, as if his life was ebbing away. He was wrapped in hospital sheets and tied into tubing in all directions. I was horrified, but he seemed calm, resigned to giving up the ghost. That day, I had just given my students a version of the Alien Test with some questions at the end asking for their ideas on how we could improve the world environmental condition. Their answers, one after another after another were depressed, reflecting the attitude of the next generation of suburban kid: “There's nothing we can do.” “There's no hope.” “It's too late.” As I left Ingwe (to get him some good Kenyan coffee for the next day, hoping that might jolt him back to life), I heaved the sheaf of student questionnaires into his listless hands, saying, “Here, why don't you read these and I'll visit you again tomorrow.”

An hour later, back at the restaurant, the phone rang with a call from Ingwe at the hospital saying, “Come back NOW!” I dropped everything and ran, fearing he'd taken a turn for the worse, that all the richness of his incredible experience would have expired before its story was told. When I opened the door to his room, instead I found him sitting bolt upright, all the tubes torn off, his face red and raging, ready to jump out of bed. “This is intolerable,” he ranted, waving the sheaf of student questionnaires at me. “These students have no hope. We must start your school! We must teach them to hope again!”

Ingwe's Stories

That was 1984, and after that the school got off the ground, thanks to a revitalized Ingwe who poured his wisdom, love, and stories into both the development of programs and the individual students who trickled then poured in. Above all, Ingwe mentored the school in the importance of storytelling, the time-honored invisible teaching method so native to Native people. Always he began all conversations and all activities with relish in a story that captured students' curiosity and inspired their adventure and heroics as well as their resolve to delve deep and stick with explorations when they got sticky or scary, mosquito-bitten or — worst of all for itchy teenage kids—, boring. Ingwe brought to the school the secret of the old ways of teaching, full of honor, inspiration and a twinkle in the eye.

In October of 2004, Ingwe celebrated his ninetieth birthday, and his twenty-first year as “The Grandfather of Wilderness Awareness School.” His life is the subject of a book, titled simply *Ingwe*. He is a prolific author and poet, and a marvelous storyteller who remains busy even in his later years. Ingwe believes strongly in living for a dream of the future. His teachings and love have healed and inspired many people. We are deeply grateful for his contribution of great lore and wisdom to this program.

The Thanksgiving of Jake Swamp

Through my work with Ingwe and our little “community” of teachers and students, I met Tekaronieneken Jake Swamp, a sub-chief of the Wolf Clan of the Iroquois Nation, and his wife Judy. Jake leads the Tree of Peace Society in New York and has written a wonderful children's book, *Giving Thanks*, which has been translated into several languages and featured as a Reading Rainbow book on PBS. We have learned invaluable lessons about giving thanks first of all things, at waking, at the beginning of meetings, in times of turmoil. Jake and his wife Judy have mentored the school in translating our love of earth and our tracking skills into good stewardship. They have taught us community, role modeling, peace-making and democracy. (www.mohawknation.org. click on Tree of Peace Society)

The Spirit of Gilbert Walking Bull

In the United States in the last two hundred years there was a systematic effort to eliminate elders from the native tribes here. Boarding schools, various forms of punishment and discipline, and religious controls were placed upon the various tribes to remove their traditional knowledge. Children were taken from the elders and were not allowed to speak their language.

We invite you to take a version of the Alien Test we call the “Tourist Test” in Appendix B of the *Songline* section. It is the very same one our Kamana students take before they begin their program.

Gilbert Walking Bull is a national treasure. He was raised in a community of pure Lakota speakers who were almost all holy men and holy women. When Gilbert was a small child, this small group of elders gathered together and moved out to a quiet district to escape religious persecution. There they maintained their sacred teachings and ceremonies, as well as their native language. Gilbert is now considered a holy man himself. He is a traditional healer, pipe carrier, teacher, singer and ceremonial leader. Gilbert has taught us how songs, ceremony, mind-focus (“prayer”) and thanksgiving all fit into the larger scheme of things. He has shown us how energy influences nature and our experiences through our senses and intuition.

Gilbert has mentored many, and is now back in South Dakota running a special healing and retreat center. (www.TatankaMani.org)

A Long Line of Mentors

Many other Native people of the central states have shared stories, songs and good times with me, my family, and students who traveled with our wilderness tours. Together with martial artists, naturalists, and teachers of Chinese wisdom, East Indian teachings, Celtic traditions, those of aboriginal Australia, and the writings and teachers from the Findhorn community, the school has compiled a world-wide perspective not only on the science of restoration ecology, but also the Original Teachings of traditional cultures from around the world.

The School and its Warriors

Remaining to be thanked are the unsung warriors, my friends in the field. The people you see mentioned in the credits to this book have carried the torch through many trails, down many tracks through the hills and valleys of creating this school. *They are the heroes of our songline.* Frequently, as we have wandered together making this school, we have sat together over fires under the sky, singing it in an ever widening circle, like wolves calling in circles over the tundra to each other. They are the Anake, the young warriors. To each and every one of them I am deeply grateful.

The Importance of Environmental Education

Environmental Education is under attack nationwide for wrong reasons and some right ones. If environmental education is about

learning about endangered species, the growing hole in the ozone layer, global warming, etc. it won't save the world. When I ask the children who should make decisions on behalf of the environment, there is wide agreement that it should be resource managers who love the land. The goal of all environmental education should be to make individuals aware of their own intimate connection to the workings of the earth. It must include an emphasis on understanding the living things around us and it must recognize that Nature itself is the best teacher.

Wilderness Awareness School's environmental education aims to create an environmentally literate population who will *naturally choose* to be more responsible in their actions on behalf of the environment. In order for us, as a nation, to come to grips with the larger problems facing our ecosystems, it is important for as many people as possible to be so educated.

But, suffice it to say, regular school systems are not well geared to succeed in this effort. Back in 1949, Aldo Leopold, a forester honored as "the father of the conservation movement in America," recognized this problem. In a wonderful essay called "The Land Ethic," he wrote:

We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in. Perhaps the most serious obstacle impeding the evolution of a land ethic is the fact that our educational and economic system is headed away from, rather than toward, an intense consciousness of land. Your true modern is separated from the land by many middlemen, and by innumerable physical gadgets. He has no vital relation to it; to him it is the space between cities on which crops grow...The land is something he has outgrown.

One of the requisites for an ecological comprehension of land is an understanding of ecology, and this is by no means co-extensive with education."

The Spiritual Dimension

Wilderness Awareness School teaches living ecology and *living ecology is spiritual ecology*. In the very old days, most tribes worldwide felt a spiritual connection to the land and so they shared vast and powerful sacred knowledge. (I use "spiritual" here to mean a natural phenomenon that occurs in human beings regardless of religion or race.) Today's children and grownups are fascinated by the stories of these native people, for through them they see the environment as a complex ecological system with many com-

ponents in ever-shifting balance, as it was in the past, as it is in the present, and as it can be in the future. Native knowledge of the land is the language of survival; it is also the language of the human heart and soul. This is why Wilderness Awareness School teachings draw so eagerly from native traditions. Our students see, feel, understand, love, and have faith in the land's vitality. They find great healing in reconnecting with the natural world when it is offered in a positive manner with the guidance of native understanding. They find a feeling of meaning and belonging. They become motivated to do something.

This process is nothing less than sacred to me. How can looking at footprints or sitting under a tree quietly and journaling have such a profound effect on humanity?

Songline Analysis: What are our Secrets?

In our experience training naturalists with a native eye, I have been passionately driven to understand how and why people change as a result of this kind of training. I have discovered how awareness influences people's beliefs, feelings, perceptions, and ultimately their consciousness. There are clear ways in which people transition through different states of mind as they connect more fully and deeply with the natural world. These changes are consistent and follow a seemingly pre-programmed series of signs of growth in each individual. Though each person's experiences are truly unique, there are definitely patterns that correlate with other "deep" training systems—there are similar cycles of development in the study of acupuncture, in various forms of bodywork and counseling, as well as in the internal martial arts.

By profiling these clear developmental cycles, we have designed systems of learning that flow smoothly along the learning curve for people studying the art of nature awareness and tracking and help them evolve to a higher sense of empathy and compassion, as well as peace of mind.

People who know me know that you can't make me make a point, or answer a question directly, or give away a secret. But, what I have learned from Tom Brown Jr., college anthropology, the Man Who ACED the Alien Test, all our mentors, all our warriors, and all our experience are some technologies for learning, some medicine bundles to carry into the field.

Here is an incomplete list of hints.

Nature as teacher:	It's all about dirt time.
Circle of Life:	Orient to natural cycles.
Invisible Education:	Don't let them know they're "learning"
Mentoring:	Everyone teaches.
Capture Passion:	Incite the individual curiosity
Coyote teaching:	Ask, don't answer.
Pattern Awareness:	Imprint the mind's eye.
Storytelling:	Create heroes.
Tracking:	The ultimate technology
Thanksgiving:	The attitude
Peacemaker Principles:	The spirit

The Challenge of Mentoring

Our mentoring involves many, many things—spending our free time with eager students, making time, being patient, telling stories, asking questions instead of giving answers, inciting curiosity, tricking students into looking more closely, repeating key notes until patterns imprint in students' minds—many years' worth of teachings. But the basic approach involves someone who loves and understands the land spending a lot of time with someone who really wants to learn.

For years in New Jersey, we experimented with ways to mentor and stay afloat as a business. How can you spend a lot of time with a few students and make a living, or run a school/business? How can you spend a lot of time with a few students and get your message out to a lot of students? How can you make naturalist mentoring work in school where children can't get outside often or don't want to learn?

Well, we haven't entirely solved these problems yet, but we have hit on some approaches that work quite well:

- We trust that Mother Nature is indeed the best Mentor. Our job is to get our students out there, armed with field guides written by people who know and love the land, and teach them how to be truly aware. Then we wait for them to come to us with questions, which we answer with more and deeper questions.
- We don't just teach students. We teach students to become teachers. We train naturalists to train naturalists to train naturalists. We build into our systems a desire and sense of responsibility to pass on the mentoring to the next generation. So we build an ever growing cadre of mentors.

- And most of all, we instill in our students an insatiable curiosity about, and provide them with the opportunity to establish a deep bonding with, the natural world. Armed with these attributes and the self-sufficiency learning skills that our work provides, there is no limit to what they can offer to heal our burdened earth.

With All My Being

This Songline tells who I am, and what our school is about. It describes what I believe with all my being. I hope you find value in the teachings of, and in your association with, Wilderness Awareness School, as well as a renewed sense of hope, and your own vision for the future.

In Peace,
JY

WILDERNESS AWARENESS SCHOOL

THE MISSION OF WILDERNESS AWARENESS SCHOOL

Wilderness Awareness School is dedicated to caring for the earth and our children by fostering understanding and appreciation of nature, community and self. Through dynamic programs that combine ancient and modern ecological wisdom, we empower people to become stewards, mentors and leaders.

Founded in 1983, Wilderness Awareness School is a national non-profit environmental education organization. Over the past two decades, we have grown from a small group of visionary individuals to a leading national organization impacting the course of nature education and inspiring many schools and individuals across the country and the world to share our teachings and curriculum.

AN ARRAY OF PROGRAMS

Wilderness Awareness School is modestly headquartered in Duvall, Washington east of Seattle, a small town on the edge of the Snoqualmie River nestled into the beginnings of the foothills of the Cascade Mountains.

Locally, we run a large Youth Programs department with ongoing intensive mentoring opportunities for 3-18 years old, daycamps, teen expeditions and more. We also run an array of programs for adults which take place all over the Puget Sound region. Our Residential Program is an adult intensive mentoring experience for 18 and above. It runs from September to June 3 days a week.

Nationally, we coordinate intensive workshops on many aspects of our curriculum – including Coyote Mentoring, The Art of Mentoring, and tracking expeditions.

From our offices we run the *Kamana Naturalist Training Program*, administer our present programs, and research and develop new programs.

Through our website, we explain all this in current detail. Visit us at www.WildernessAwareness.org You'll find announcements of current events, a discussion forum for our students, resources to order field guides, audio tapes, cool T-shirts, etc., as well as detailed explanations of all our programs. You can also join our e-news list and find out how to contribute financially to Wilderness Awareness School, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Please visit
our web site
for current
and detailed
information
on all of our
programs.

KAMANA NATURALIST TRAINING PROGRAM

The core program of the school is called the *Kamana Naturalist Training Program*. Offered as a mentored, four level correspondence course, this program is introductory to everything we teach at Wilderness Awareness School. Its substance is our “core curriculum.” So, by understanding it, you can glimpse the seed of everything we teach. (See Appendix A of the *Songline* section of this book for a complete description of our four-level Kamana program.)

The word “Kamana” is actually a Kikamba word. It comes from the Akamba Tribe of Kenya and translates to “the bearer for the Warrior,” and I decided that the name “Kamana” fit well for this program. Here is our reasoning.

The Warrior, or Anake, was not an aggressor, but a defender. In the Akamba tradition, the warriors protected the people against threats, especially those who could not care for themselves, namely the children and the elders. The Anake faced threats to survival by using their deep knowledge of their land.

What threatens today’s people most is ignorance. So today’s warriors must face the environment’s more troubling issues, find ways to solve them, and then succeed in leading our people out of ignorance. The modern warrior, to be effective, must address our cultural ignorance about nature and how our human interactions affect it with a full arsenal of fact, compassion, and creativity.

The Kamana were the bearers for the Anake. In this way, they became apprentices to the warriors. In a sense, by carrying the burdens for these protectors of the tribe, a Kamana is demonstrating his worthiness to bear the knowledge of the warrior society.

Certified *Kamana Training Program* graduates possess skills that benefit the communities they serve, for they will have a good basic understanding of all aspects of the local bioregion they have trained in. They will know the true hazards, the important species and ecological features, the watershed resources, the native history, the land-use history, and the current status of wildlife and plant populations. These people will know the important topics for local restoration ecology and will represent good, sound leadership in these efforts. Therefore, they should all be recognized as belonging to a network of experts with similar skills and knowledge across the land. This is the purpose of our first level certification. Nationwide, many individuals and organizations already recognize the quality of our students at this level, and their skills and knowledge are in demand.

WILDERNESS AWARENESS SCHOOL'S CORE CURRICULUM

The curriculum that runs through *Kamana* is hitched to everything else we do. It is organized along two trails which are crisscrossed by six tracks and a resting place.

TRAILS

The two twin trails are designed to prepare you to be a skillful and fierce naturalist or tracker.

The Nature Awareness Trail

This trail focuses on developing your awareness in an expansive way. It is about using your eyes and ears and other senses in ways not often challenged in academic training. *Kamana One* through *Kamana Four* contain **Field Exercises** to practice. If you work on them every day, the result will be new patterns in your awareness, an increase in your “mind’s eye” ability to visualize things, a strengthening of your gut feelings, and an ability to be in the right place at the right time.

The *Kamana Two* through *Four* Nature Awareness Trail also involves **Field Inventories**. They develop your depth of awareness. You will go to the same place every day and create inventories of what you observe in the surrounding environment throughout the four seasons. By keeping a journal and mapping your most vivid memories throughout the week, you will become conditioned to a sense of native groundedness in a place. It will get so you know this place like your own home. You will develop a very special bond with this place.

The Resource Trail

The second trail guides you into research to develop background skills using resources. Though this may sometimes seem like an academic exercise, trust me, it is not. There are elements of poetry, spirit, and power in the observational experience inherent in this exercise series. The goals on this trail are manifold. Most important, we want you to increase in your ability to use your “mind’s eye” as a tool for field observation—while providing your mind’s eye with a set of “mental file cards” to work in concert with your newly developed observation skills.

To do so, we’ll guide you toward an overall sense of the patterns that define the various families and groups of plants and animals in your area. Through investigating all six tracks on this trail, you will gain an appreciation of the language of science, and you will develop self-sufficiency in research. You will learn to sort through

nature's overwhelming diversity to focus in on key species. With each Kamana level, you will go deeper with your investigations until you have finally built a foundation for awareness.

TRACKS

The following six tracks are embedded into the Resource Trail throughout all levels of Kamana. As you progress, you will be taken deeper into each of these subjects.

Hazards & Inspiration

Inspirational stories from native elders and people closely associated with the natural world; assessment of the modern environmental education movement; organization of resources; understanding the “mind’s eye” technique for study; self-sufficiency skills in using resources; foundations of taxonomy; hazards of the wild.

Mammals

Natural history, physiology, and strategies of mammals; tracking skills: identification of sign, aging, ecological tracking.

Plants

Taxonomy and identification of plants; research native use of plants in crafts and as food and medicine; overland navigation techniques including aidless navigation.

Ecology

Indicator species (invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles); prediction of animal behavior and plant species location based on knowledge of ecology; interplay of extremes and bird’s eye viewing of land features; conservation ecology; the history of the land and the native people’s staple resources; natural community dynamics; stewardship.

Trees

Taxonomy and identification of trees; trees as they affect aspects of the landscape; research use of trees for survival, food, medicine and in other native lore.

Birds

Taxonomy, physiology and behavior of birds; migration and range maps; basics of understanding the language of birds.

Wrapping the Bundle: Tying the Trails Together (The Final Synthesis of Kamana Skills)

Synthesis of the two trails of the Kamana program: 1) Nature Awareness Trail Field Exercises and Field Inventories and 2) Resource Trail Research. Review of background basics; tracking skills learned from study of mammals; self-sufficiency in plant skills; field ecology; review of tree lore for survival; review of bird language for awareness; overall closure for Kamana path. This assignment is sent after students complete *Kamana Four*.

www.WildernessAwareness.org contains:

- Information on the benefits of Student Services
- Current information on course prices, *Kamana Two* servicing fees, mailing addresses, resources, etc.,
- More detailed information on all Kamana levels
- *Songline* (First section of *Kamana Two*)
- Sample exercises from higher Kamana levels.
- Information on continuing education credits & more!

APPENDIX A: KAMANA LEVELS & GENERAL INFORMATION

Kamana One: Exploring Natural Mystery

How long it takes to complete: Two to six weeks

Includes: *Kamana One: Exploring Natural Mystery (Introduction, Nature Awareness Trailhead. Resource Trailhead)* No student services support. Letter and Certificate of Completion sent upon submission of Field Pack (extra fee).

Resources to buy: *Readers Digest: North American Wildlife, Seeing Through Native Eyes* (6 cassette series) with Jon Young.

Kamana Two: Path of the Naturalist

Prerequisite: *None*

Includes: Binder, *Nature Awareness Trail Two, Resource Trail Two*, Field Journal pad.

How long it takes to complete: Minimum of 4 months

Length of Student Services support (optional): 12 months

Student Services support options for those who choose it: 1) Full servicing (includes review of all four Field Packs, phone and email support, one year of *Foxprint* quarterly newsletter (will add a year if already receiving it), Certificate of Completion) or **2)** Certification option (includes one review for all four Field Packs and a Certificate of Completion).

Structure: Resource Trail: Field journaling from each of the 6 Resource Trail tracks; Nature Awareness Trail: 3 monthly Field exercises, 12 weekly Naturalist Inventories. Total of 4 Field Packs must be handed in to complete.

Additional Resources: Books/Tapes: *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* (children's book) by Jake Swamp, *Ingwe* (book) by Ingwe OR *Spirit of the Leopard* (tape) by Ingwe, *Seeing Through Native Eyes* (6 cassette series) with Jon Young (if starting Kamana at *Kamana Two*)

Field Guides: *Peterson's Field Guide to: Mammals, Birds* (your region), *Tracks, Venomous Animals & Poisonous Plants, Wildflowers* (your region) or a good local plant guide; *Birder's Handbook* (Ehrlich, Dobkin, Wheye); *Audubon Guide to Trees* (east or west); *Newcomb's Guide to Wildflowers*; *Golden Guides to: Insects, Pond Life, Reptiles & Amphibians*

Kamana Three: Deepening the Roots of Nature Awareness

Prerequisite: *Kamana Two*

Includes: Binder, *Resource Trail Three, Nature Awareness Trail Three*, field journal pad, **STUDENT SERVICES SUPPORT.**

How long it takes to complete: Minimum of 5 months

Length of Student Services support: 18 months

Structure: The Resource Trail will now look at your journals from “a broader perspective.” Valuable taxonomy skills and family studies will precede more involved journaling. This is the beginning of your ecological view. Nature Awareness Trail: 4 more Field Exercises, advanced routines for weekly inventories (16 more). Total of 5 Field Packs must be handed in to complete. **Additional Resources:** Required: *Botany in a Day* (Tom Elpel); *Skulls & Bones* (Searfross); *Peterson’s Guides: Medicinal Plants, Edible Plants*, a college level Biology textbook

Kamana Four: The Complete Naturalist

Prerequisite: *Kamana Three*

Includes: Binder, *Resource Trail Four*, *Nature Awareness Trail Four*, field journal pad, *Trails/Wrapping the Bundle* assignment (sent when level completed), **STUDENT SERVICES SUPPORT.**

How long it takes to complete: Minimum of 8 months

Length of Student Services support: 24 months

Structure: The Resource Trail is now taken from a complete ecological perspective after making master and focus lists. Over half the field journaling in the entire course is done at this level. A tracker in any field will now see how natural communities work together. You’re now ready to understand focus and the key to efficient learning in this field of study that can be perceived as infinite and overwhelming. Nature Awareness Trail: 5 more Field Exercises, advanced routines for weekly inventories (24 more). Total of 6 Field Packs must be handed in to complete the level, in addition to *Wrapping the Bundle*, which ties all your experiences from both trails together. *Kamana* certification is granted upon submission of this assignment.

Additional Resources: *Stoke’s Animal Tracking & Behavior*; Bird call tapes; *Peterson’s: Reptiles & Amphibians* (your region), *Forests* (your region); *American Wildlife & Plants: A Guide to Wildlife Food Habits* (Martin & Nelson); other resources such as survival and local ethnobotany books.

Note about Required Resources: We try our best to only require books and guides that will be lifelong friends, not books you stick on a shelf and never look at again after you’re finished. If you’re short on cash you can always find most of them at a public library. Guides you buy for earlier levels will be used throughout the entire program. All resources are for sale at our web site.

Foxprint is Wilderness Awareness School’s quarterly newsletter that comes as a benefit to those who contribute to the school, which is a non-profit organization. One year of *Foxprint* comes with the purchase of Full Student Services support for *Kamana Two*. After that, students may continue to receive it yearly by mak-

ing an annual contribution to Wilderness Awareness School. Those who currently receive it when joining *Kamana Two* servicing will have a year added to their subscription. **Please call Wilderness Awareness School or visit our web site for details and to receive a free sample.**

How long will the *entire* course take? It's up to you.

The time length we give is based on our experience with the student who has a job, a family and maybe even is going to school part time. Some may finish in half that time and some may take long breaks between each level. The important thing is that you are consistently working on the Kamana routines while you are enrolled in a class, whether you finish in half the time we give or the full amount of time. *Kamana One* is designed to give you an idea of what life might be like with Kamana as part of it. It is wise to begin *Kamana Two* after you know you can devote an average of an hour a day toward study if you want to complete it in four months.

How Field Packs and Time Limits Work

If you are given 12 months to complete *Kamana Two* for instance, that means all four Field Packs must be completed and sent in before your deadline. If you go over your deadline, you must include a \$25 late fee per Field Pack in order for us to review, respond and give you credit. Let's say you hand in two of the four Field Packs for *Kamana Two*, it is June 1 and your deadline was April 15. Whenever you send in your last two Field Packs, each must include a \$25 late fee.

Kamana Two Student Services Option

When you purchase *Kamana Two*, you are purchasing all the materials you need to take yourself through the course (minus the required field guide resources). For an additional fee, you can sign up for Student Services through Wilderness Awareness School, which includes written review of work, phone and email support for the duration of the program, a year of our Foxprint newsletter, and a certificate upon completion. A second option for *Kamana Two* allows you to receive a certificate with one response upon completion. *Kamana Three* and *Four* are only available with full servicing.

We recognize *Kamana Two* as being a very important level in Kamana Training. It is in *Kamana Two* that you are introduced to core routines that you will continue to practice throughout the remainder of the Kamana Program. Knowing this, our instructors review your work in *Kamana Two* with the intention of guiding

you down the path of least resistance, so to speak.

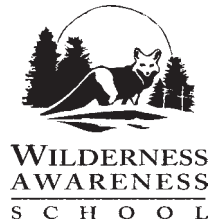
For very expanded information on Student Services including all the important details on the options and tuition fees, please visit www.WildernessAwareness.org. This information is also included in Kamana Two's *Getting Started with Student Services* guide.

Continuing Education Credit

Continuing Education credits are available for all levels of Kamana. For details on how this works and for the current forms, please visit our web site for current updates. We also have information that may help you to get credit from your existing college or university.

Internet Community

Please visit www.kamana.org for information on joining the Kamana list server, to access the Kamana student directory, to download forms and templates, and more!



KEEP CONNECTED, GET FOXPRINT

Keep connected to our international community of students while receiving educational and inspirational articles on nature education and mentoring. *Foxprint*, our quarterly newsletter, contains the following each issue:

- Teaching strategies
- Mentoring activity
- Student expressions
- Program updates, features and schedule
- Update from the Executive Director
- Mystery track, featured articles and more!



THE ART OF QUESTIONING

By Paul Houghtaling,
Local Programs Director

At Wilderness Awareness School, the process of questioning is one of the most basic – and profound – learning tools that we work with. Whoever it is that is doing the asking, questioning is one of the ways that we can drive our senses to become more deeply involved in what we are experiencing. It can bring us deeply into the moment, present to the wondrous and mysterious things happening around and within us.

In *The Art of Mentoring* program, Wilderness Awareness School founder Jon Young speaks of his experiences as a youth with tracker and author Tom Brown, Jr. He says that one of the most profound ways that Tom kept him continually going back to the forest near his home was through questions. According to Jon, Tom would call him in the evenings and ask him about what he had experienced there. Jon says that when he was 10 years old on his very first outing at this “secret spot,” Tom called him that evening to ask if he had



Every issue features a Mentoring Activity, such as shelter building (above) or primitive fire making (below).



Foxprint is a quarterly newsletter that comes with the Kamana Two Student Services Option. You can also receive it for a year by contributing to Wilderness Awareness School. Visit www.WildernessAwareness.org to download a free issue and to contribute!

APPENDIX B: THE TOURIST TEST

The “official” title of the test you are about to take has changed several times. “Alien Test,” “Tourist Test,” and “Tracker’s Backyard Journey” are some of the names we have used to describe this experience. On some fronts, “Alien Test” has seemed harsh, while “Tracker’s Backyard Journey” hasn’t adequately captured the essence of what the test is creating for the person taking it. Perhaps “Tourist Test” is the best option, and recently it was decided to stick with that title for this experience.

See page 12 of the *Songline* section of this book for more background information on the Tourist Test.

If you don’t know the answer right off, just move on to the next question. It shouldn’t take you that long, maybe an hour. Enjoy the test and regardless of whether you feel you were able to answer many of the questions or not, take time to reflect upon this once you have finished. Have fun and enjoy taking...

THE TOURIST TEST

Name:

Today’s date:

Name of nearest town:

Simple description of the area:

INSTRUCTIONS: The first thing you should remember when taking this test is that honesty is the best policy. The object is not to prove anything, but simply to find out what you know and what you do not know. The test will illuminate for you what Wilderness

If you have already taken the Tourist Test in *Kamana One*, please proceed to the next section.



Awareness School is all about. If you find yourself interested in knowing the kinds of things that are on this test, then this school is for you.

Find a quiet place where you will be able to concentrate. Answer the questions in short, succinct phrases or with single word answers. If you do not know the answer, leave a blank. Quick guesses are fine. If you were asked, "What is 2+2?", in a second you would write "4." This is how we want you to treat this test.

When answering the questions on the following pages be sure to think of plants and animals that are specifically located in the area described above (only name animals and plants from the bioregion that you have chosen).

Have fun!

1. Name two species of ticks found in your area.

a)

b)

2. Describe these ticks by size, color and general characteristics.

a)

b)

3. What two diseases are carried by ticks?

a)

b)

4. How does one prevent tick infestation when traveling in the wilds?

5. Which wind in your area is the harbinger of heavy rains?

6. Which direction does the cold, clear air blow from?



7. What type of tree is lightning most likely to strike in your area?

8. What five plants in your area are most poisonous to eat?

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

9. Name one poisonous snake in your area. (If none, write "none")

10. What is a sign in your area of a particularly cold winter to come?

11. Which plant growing locally is known to natives of the region for its effectiveness in cases of fever, colds or respiratory ailments?

12. Which plant growing locally is known to natives of the region for its effectiveness in aiding insect bites or stings?

13. How are they used?

a)

b)

14. When is the best time of year or in their life cycles to gather these plants?

a)

b)



15. Name two plants which are edible that have poisonous look-alikes growing in the same bioregion.

a)

b)

16. When people encounter bears in the wild, they sometimes do things which cause bears to become aggressive. Name two of the most dangerous and common situations where bears are known to attack people.

a)

b)

17. What time of day (during daylight hours) is least active for birdsong and calls?

18. When a mountain lion makes a kill, what does it do with the carcass after it has had its fill?

19. What are the symptoms of rabies in a wild animal?

20. Which mammal in your area does not have the potential to carry rabies?

21. What are the symptoms of distemper?

22. Name an animal in your area which commonly carries distemper.

23. Which trees are most dangerous in a wind storm? Name two species and explain why they are dangerous.

a)

b)



24. Name a tree that is good to hunker down by during a severe wind storm.

25. Which trees make the best products for use as insulation in a survival situation for building a temporary shelter.

26. Which trees in your area indicate an area of low sunlight, cold or wet situations which should be avoided in a cold emergency situation?

27. When a twig is ready to be harvested for burning there are ways to tell. How does one recognize twigs which are perfect for kindling?





3.5"



4"



4.5"



0.5"



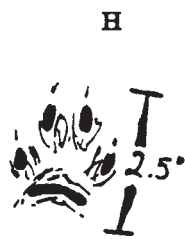
2.5"



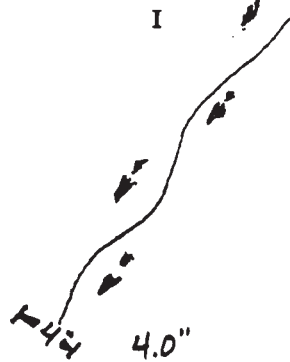
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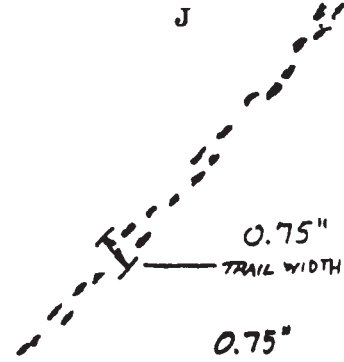
2.5"
(WITHOUT NAILS)



2.5"



4.0"



0.75"
TRAIL WIDTH



3.25"



1.2"



Track Identification

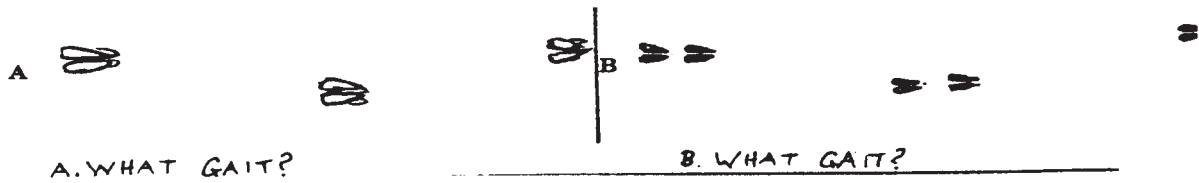
Use the illustrations A through L to answer question 28.



28. Pick 10 of the 12 tracks from the previous page and identify the animal, or a close relative that lives near to you (non-human that is). Identify the species (or at least family) of animal for each of the 10 that you have chosen. Place the letter of each track next to the name.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)
- 9)
- 10)


Trail Interpretation for Gaits and Body Mechanics

Use the illustrations/questions A through L to answer question



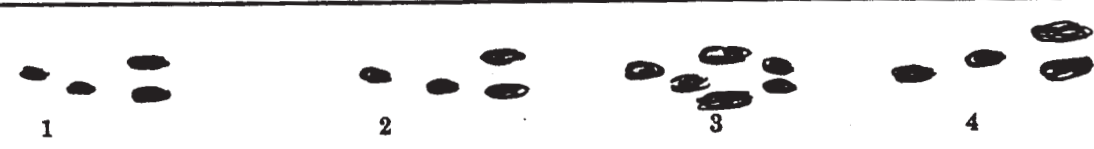
<p>C</p>  <p>C. WHAT GAIT?</p>	<p>D</p>  <p>D. WHAT GAIT?</p>
---	--

E



E. What animal? (Describe body if necessary)

F



F. What happened at #3?

G



G. What gait? →

H




H. What gait?

I



I. What gait?

J



J. Buck or a doe?

K



K. Increase or decrease in speed?

L



L. If head turn, which way?

29. Look at the track and trail patterns on the previous two pages and choose 10 which you can interpret. Place the letter of the track pattern next to your brief interpretation.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

9)

10)

30. What is the relationship between the rate at which a track ages and sunshine?

31. What is the relationship between the rate at which a track ages and:

a) sand content?

b) clay content?

32. When a bird is singing from a low perch, how will a feeding deer respond?

33. What predator leaves its droppings at the base of large trees or on logs?

34. What predator leaves its droppings concisely at the intersection of two trails but only in places in open country or with open sky above?



35. What predator marks its droppings, or those of another of the same species, with urine?
36. What animal sometimes fills hollow trees or caves with its bean-shaped droppings?
37. What is a deer's most likely response to approaching humans?
38. Why do deer respond to approaching humans in this fashion?
39. Think of a deer's most common response to approaching humans. How do jays respond to the deer's actions?
40. Describe the odor of red fox urine.
41. What predator will eat a bird and leave feathers which are cut neatly at the base—especially of the larger feathers?
42. What predator will eat a bird and leave the feathers mangled and matted with saliva?
43. There is a large tree on the edge of a dense thicket bordering a field. There is a slight breeze blowing from the southwest to the northeast. There are many intact dove feathers in a northeast-southwest line with the smallest the furthest out into the field, the largest right beneath the tree. It is afternoon. That morning at dawn there was no wind, last night a south breeze blew. What is the predator most likely to be?



44. At the base of a pine tree there are several egg-shaped gray masses of fur, skulls and feathers littered about that are of varying ages. The masses are about golf-ball-sized in diameter. What are these most likely to be?

45. Name an insect that becomes very abundant during late summer and early fall in the grasslands and meadows and that provides an important staple food for many ground feeding mammals and birds.

46. What do green, shiny flies in large concentrations indicate?

47. What type of caterpillar feeds on cherry and makes visible webs that are commonly seen in spring?

48. What is one of the most dangerous spiders of your area and what markings identify it?

49. What four-legged animal has five toes on the rear foot, four on the front, and leaves footprints in the snow around the base of berry or seed sources in the snow showing a predominately hopping gait, with tail mark in the powder and a trail width of 1.5”?

50. What animal is so strong that it can hardly contain its energy when it moves across the level ground and must jump extra far every so many bounds just to use up that extra energy? Hint: It is quite dense in body mass, it has bark colored fur and speaks with its tail.

51. The tracks of this animal are in a pattern often confused with the animal in #50, as they are similar in width and in the number of tracks together. But it is almost its opposite in body density: light, almost bird-like in its build, especially its bones and skull. It uses its tail in a different way. It is colored like the ground it lives next to and uses almost no trails in its usual forays for food—that is, unless one considers the whole of its environment a trail.



52. Where would one most likely encounter a network of vole trails (Describe the environment especially concerning the relative height and species make-up of the vegetation)?

53. What is a small mammal that feeds beneath the leaves and litter but above the soil, either moving incessantly in its search for insects and other invertebrates, or going into a state of torpid rest? Its remains are often found in the pellets of owls.

54. What small mammal feeds on insects, insect larvae, and other invertebrates by wedging the root mass of surface vegetation into a continuous trap for its prey?

55. Deer trails in the wilderness (away from the influences of the modern world) appear and disappear as one follows them through the forest. What is the reason for this?

56. What are two common rocks of your area (by name or description)?

a)

b)

57. What are three basic soils of your area?

a)

b)

c)

58. What can you predict about the whereabouts and/or exposure of deer regarding their winter daytime bedding areas in relation to the four directions, weather, and position of the sun?



59. How do squirrels and birds behave before a cold weather pattern arrives in the winter or fall?

60. What did the settlers of the region do to the area that created a major impact on the life of the area?

61. How did this change in the land effect the rivers, lakes and/or bays of the area?

62. What is the single most important factor affecting a deer herd's choice of trails in a suburban setting?

63. What animal leaves a dropping, or series of droppings, in one location composed entirely of one food type including all yellow jackets, all berries, all animal products or all acorns?

64. List two mast (nut producing) trees of your area.

a)

b)

65. List four types of edible berries of your area.

a)

b)

c)

d)

66. If there were no sun shining (cloudy sky) and you needed to walk in a straight line for several hundred yards through a thicket, how would you do it? List three ways.

a)

b)

c)



67. Describe three methods that you can use to find your way back through trackless wilderness in a situation where there is no snow or sand and where tracking is difficult (such as through a forest)—in other words, back tracking is not an option.

a)

b)

c)

68. Where in the sky is the sun at noon?

69. In the summer, the sun rises _____ (North, East, South, or West) of _____ (North, East, South, or West).

70. The most reliable part of an herb to be studied as far as identification is concerned is which structure or part?

71. What is a compound leaf? (Draw one.)

72. What is an irregular flower? (Draw one.)

73. Name two ways you can be sure you are looking at a leaf on a tree and not a leaflet.

a)

b)

74. Draw a simple map below and simply place a check mark next to the letter if you have completed that task as indicated by the instructions and letters below.



If you were flying above your neighborhood at the altitude of a high-flying hawk, could you easily map out the waterways (a.), the forests (b.), the thickets (c.) and the other features of your neighborhood for a one mile radius (d. indicate the four directions)?

a)

b)

c)

d)

75. Name five plants that are extremely common in your area:

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

76. How did the native people ensure that there would be enough plants for medicines, crafts and other uses of herbs, in their area?

77. Why did the forests flourish as result of the interaction of the people and the land?



78. Name four non-flowering more primitive plants of your area.
- a)
 - b)
 - c)
 - d)
79. What was the indigenous culture of your area?
80. What was their primary staple food in winter?
81. What was their primary staple food in the autumn?
81. What was the most important food in the summer?
82. Did they migrate?
82. From where to where?
83. What time of year is the time of most rapid plant growth?
84. What is the time of year where plants add wood to their structures?
85. What key animal and/or plant species are missing today from your local forests (name three)?
- a)
 - b)
 - c)



86. Describe second growth forest.
87. What in an aquifer is the recharge zone? Describe it.
88. What does an established river otter population indicate about an ecosystem?
89. What does the presence of many frogs indicate about an ecosystem?
90. What does the presence of many kinds of vines and thorns indicate in a forest?
91. Name local ecosystems of at least six types.
- a)
 - b)
 - c)
 - d)
 - e)
 - f)
92. Where in your area can you:
- a) find sand?
 - b) clay soil?
 - c) really rich soil?
93. What is the first type of tree to move into a newly cleared area (name two)?
- a)
 - b)



94. What is the most common soaring hawk of your area?

All animals have certain strategies which they follow. Their bodies and behaviors are a reflection of this. For instance, a house cat has large eyes, as that is the dominant sense, and therefore its strategy is to walk slowly, and to look around often during a short pause. Considering that, answer the following questions:

95. Coyote:

- a) What is the dominant sense of a coyote?
- b) What is its *hunting* strategy?
- c) How does this strategy influence a coyote's choice of trails?

96. Weasel:

- a) What is the dominant sense of a weasel?
- b) What is its *hunting* strategy?
- c) A weasel has a concern that a coyote does not, which greatly affects its behavior. What is this concern?
- d) How does this affect a weasel's behavior?

97. Deer:

- a) What is the dominant sense of a deer?
- b) What is its *feeding* strategy?



98. What is the *activity* strategy of a typical, suburban house dog?

99. Where are the descendants of the native people who once inhabited the area located today (What states or reservations primarily)?

100. Describe the difference in forest cover between a North slope and a South slope in natural-timbered areas. What species really gets more numerous on the north side?

101. What herbs grow in the winter on southern exposures in local parks, yards and roadsides (name three)?

a)

b)

c)

102. Draw a fast and effective shelter for emergencies (label materials in a cut away view showing some detail of structure, insulation and other important aspects of practical shelter building).

103. What tinder works fastest in your area under:

a) dry conditions?

b) wet conditions?



104. What trees in your area have opposite branching with compound leaves (name two)?

a)

b)

105. What are the most common native trees in your area growing in wetlands (name two)?

a)

b)

106. Name three more shrubs not mentioned in the previous questions that are common in your area.

a)

b)

c)

107. What is a common creekside plant in your area?

108. What are three native grasses of the area?

a)

b)

c)

109. Name four plants which are used for making baskets in the area.

a)

b)

c)

d)



110. Name three plants good for making cordage in the area.

a)

b)

c)

111. What wood in the area makes good bows (name two)?

a)

b)

112. What wood in the area is good for arrows?

113. What wood is really hard in your area (name two)?

a)

b)

114. Which are the hottest burning woods (name two)?

a)

b)

115. Which tree grows really fast?

116. Which tree grows really slow?

117. Name five animals that can be physically or strategically imitated in your area which would help you in a survival situation. Give the behavior you would mimic from each next to the animal's name.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)



118. Name one type of call (a sound emitted by wildlife) that affects many species of birds or animals.

119. Name two kinds of insects which call in your area.

a)

b)

120. What common bird in your area has a crest on its head?

121. What common bird of your area has a white eye-ring?

122. What common bird of your area has white wing bars?

123. What common bird of your area feeds on the ground and has white in its tail feathers?

124. What common bird of your area lives in thickets and will not usually be seen in tree tops?

125. What common bird of your area loves the tree tops?

126. What are five really common birds in your area that you haven't named yet?

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

127. Name two kinds of common woodpeckers in your area.

a)

b)



128. Name two birds that will tell on a stalking hunter or animal in your area.

a)

b)

129. Name a bird that will tell of the presence of a large soaring hawk or owl by mobbing the predatory bird.

130. What is the most common snake in your area?

131. What is a common turtle of the water in your area?

132. What is the first frog, toad or treefrog chorus to sing in your area in spring?

133. What is a common salamander in your area?



TOURIST TEST REFLECTION

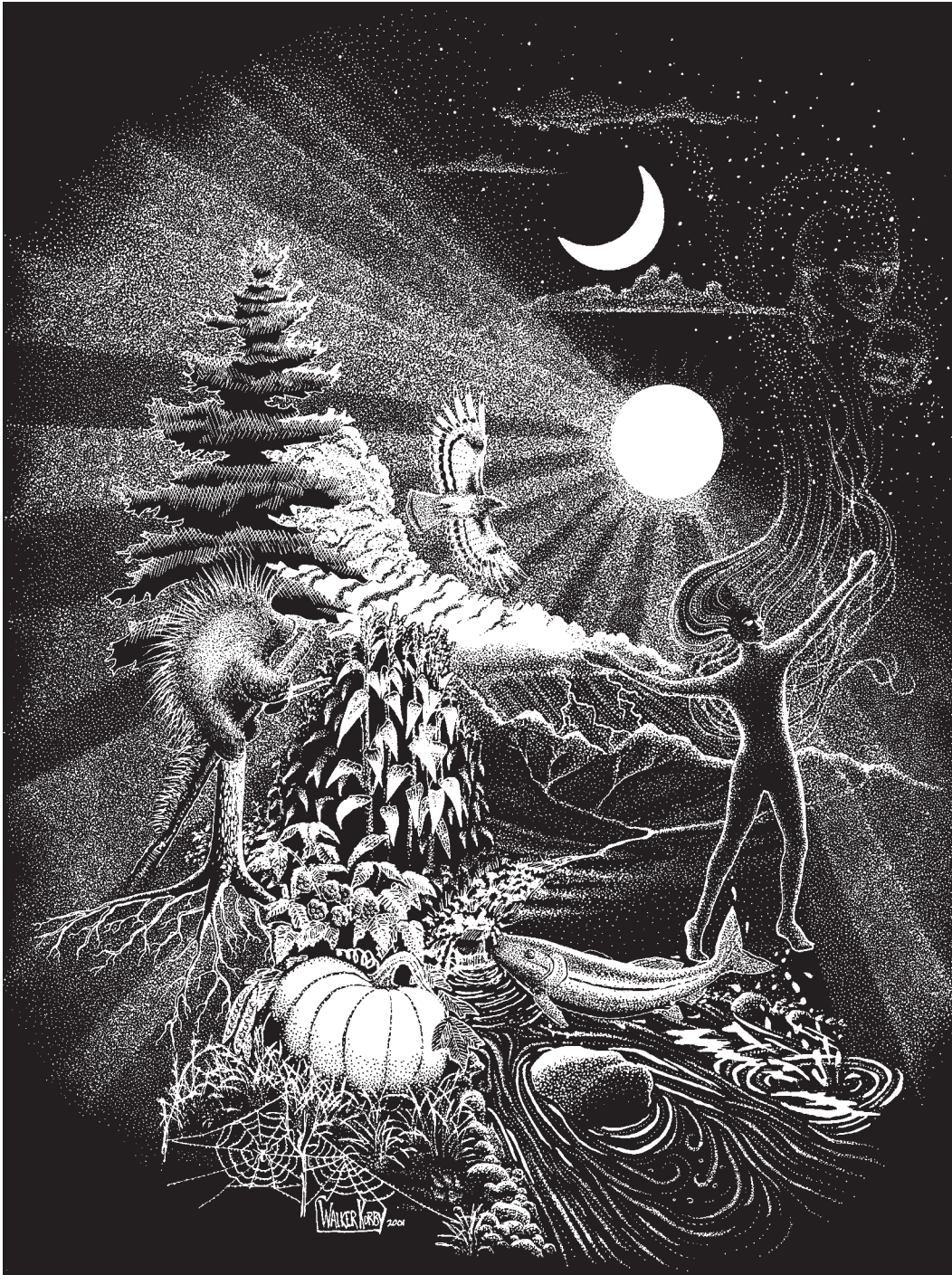
After you finish all four levels of the Kamana program, we will ask you to go back and take the test again so you can compare the differences. Take a few minutes to reflect on your experience before writing.

NOTE: ONLY SEND IN THIS REFLECTION, NOT THE ENTIRE TEST



Name: _____

Date: _____



KAMANA TWO

NATURE AWARENESS TRAIL



NATURE AWARENESS TRAIL

KAMANA TWO

written by

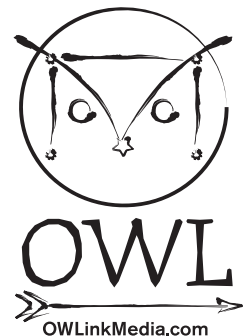
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Linda Cunio

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CONTENTS

Field Pack 2.1	1
An Introduction to Kamana Two: The Nature Awareness Trail . . .	3
Field Exercise One: The Secret Spot.	13
Field Pack 2.2	79
Field Exercise Two: The Sense Meditation	81
Field Inventories	96
Field Pack 2.3	109
Field Exercise Three: The Thanksgiving Address	111
Field Inventories	139
Field Pack 2.4	153
Field Inventories	155

About Field Packs...

ALL students PLEASE read CAREFULLY!!!!!!!!!!!!


You are about to begin your first Field Pack. Each pack will begin with a **BLUE** sheet that will preview what work you will be doing. At the end of each Field Pack, there is a **YELLOW sheet you tear out and send in with copies of your work** (if you have registered for Student Services). If you opt for the Certification Option, you will hold on to your fully completed Field Packs until you have completed the entire course. Follow the same procedures as if you were signing up for full services.

Every Field Pack will contain work from The *Nature Awareness Trail* and the *Resource Trail* books. ******If you want to know EXACTLY what work you will be handing in, please take a look at the yellow sheet at the end of the Field pack you are on at any time.******

Even though they are located in this book, the blue and yellow sheets will tell you what work from the *Resource Trail* you will be handing in for the Field Pack you are on. The journals we

ask for will not make sense to you until you have actually read the *Resource Trail* book. You should be reading this while you are working on Field Exercise One of the *Nature Awareness Trail*.

Most of the work for the *Resource Trail* is done on the blank Field Journal Pad pages that were given to you on a pad in the binder. You'll send photocopies of your journals. Please make photocopies of the blank Field Journal pages for continued use should you run out. Also check www.kamana.org for blank templates to download.

The pages you need to copy for the *Nature Awareness Trail* are contained within this book and are marked with the  icon. Feel free to type your responses as well. Simply make sure you head your paper with the title, name, student number, and date.

Kamana Services Option (ALL STUDENTS read carefully)

This is a reminder that you have the option in *Kamana Two* to have your work reviewed by Wilderness Awareness School or an approved Kamana Affiliate*. You will certainly get the most out of this program with feedback and support from our experienced instructors who are Kamana graduates themselves. You also get phone and email support for any question you may have. **Information on current Kamana Affiliates are available at www.kamana.org.*

This course and the instructions are written as if all who work with these books have chosen the Kamana Services Option. If you have not chosen this option, you may want to choose the **Kamana Two Certification Option** at a later time (which is sending all the work in at the

end of *Kamana Two* for one response and a certificate). This is necessary should you want to go on to *Kamana Three* and *Four*. **We recommend you thoroughly complete the course as if you were taking the Kamana Services or Certification option in any case.**

Registration Forms for the Kamana Services Option are located in the beginning of this book. They can also be downloaded at www.kamana.org. Information and prices for both options are available in the *Trail Guide* and at www.kamana.org.

Field Pack 2.1 Assignment Overview:

The Tourist Test

Make sure you have taken the Tourist Test, located in Appendix B in *Songline*, before you go any further. You may have already taken it in *Kamana One*. Put it aside, for you will need it again after *Kamana Four*. For Field Pack 2.1 you will hand in the Reflection.

The Nature Awareness Trail

Read and complete the exercises for **Field Pack 2.1**. This assignment and Field Pack should take you no less than 30 days and no more than 60 days. See the yellow sheet at the end of this Field Pack for the exact exercises. No need to feel overwhelmed, you only read one Field Pack for the 30 day minimum.

The Resource Trail (read carefully)

What you'll be handing in: **ONE Resource Trail journal from each chapter (Chapter's 2-7)**. You can either read the entire Resource Trail book and then go back on do ONE journal from each chapter OR do the ONE journal per chapter as you read the chapters. You will hand **all SIX journals** in with your Field Pack 2.1 yellow sheet located at the end of the Field Pack. This will become clearer as you read the Resource Trail book.

If you have not listened to the *Seeing Through Native Eyes* audio series by Jon Young, please do so while you are working on this field pack. It is available at www.WildernessAwareness.org.

Please Note:

- We recommend you start reading the **Resource Trail** while you are working on Field Exercise One. This way, you will be finished within the same 30-60 days that you take to finish the *Nature Awareness Trail* work. After Field Pack 2.1, no more reading is required for the Resource Trail. All you have to do is the journaling! It's that simple!
- If you registered for the **Student Services** option, the time limit you were given is for *all* the Field Packs in this course level. So if your deadline is 4/15, then you have until then to hand in all four field packs. If you only complete three by the deadline, for example, then you will have late fees applied to the one you didn't finish in time. We allow one two month extension if requested per Kamana level. Email this request to the main Kamana services office.
- If you should finish your monthly and/or weekly *Nature Awareness Trail* assignments before your *Resource Trail* work, you may go on to the next Field Pack's *Nature Awareness Trail* assignment while finishing up. Just make sure you send in exactly what the Field Pack asks for when you are ready.
- Be mindful of the time limits. Try not to spend more than two months on any one Field Pack. Pace yourself at a reasonable rate so the routines introduced become part of your everyday life. Last minute cramming isn't very effective for this type of learning experience.
- Enjoy yourself! Make the time that journal personal enrichment time. The information in the resources you are reading comes from ancient knowledge, hard won and compiled for your benefit so you can learn quickly and pass it on to others. Put special time aside in the early morning or evening after work regularly, relax, and immerse yourself in the beauty of the natural world. We all need that slowing down time in this fast paced world. Before you know it, you will have learned and internalized so much about our amazing world.

Tips for Kamana Two

Nature Awareness Trail:

- Make sure you reflect on the actual Field Exercise content ONLY in your Field Exercise Reflection.
- Fill out every space in your Field Inventories (Field Pack 2.2 and after). Be creative as well as observant.
- Make sure you make a map for every Inventory after Field Pack 2.2.

Resource Trail:

- Try not to spend more than half an hour on a journal. (You want to get this down to 20 minutes).
- Use the **Mind's Eye** approach. **Do not copy information verbatim.**

CONFUSED???

- If you are signed up for Student Services and need help, DO NOT hesitate to call! We love hearing from you.

IMPORTANT

Please hand in your work one Field Pack at a time. Do not send us more than one at a time to review. Your work with Student Services will provide you with 50% of the value of this course. You will get the most from Wilderness Awareness School or its Kamana Affiliates if you hand them in one at a time as you complete them.

PLEASE WRITE NEATLY IN INK OR TYPE THE WORK THAT CAN BE TYPED.



For students new to Kamana: the icon to the left indicates work you will be copying to send in to us.

AN INTRODUCTION
TO KAMANA TWO:
THE NATURE
AWARENESS TRAIL



TAKE IT ONE
STEP AT A TIME...

PLEASE NOTE:

THIS COURSE WAS WRITTEN ASSUMING ALL STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED *Kamana One: Exploring Natural Mystery*. Though we highly recommend *Kamana One* be completed first, it is not at all required. If you are starting with *Kamana Two: Path of the Naturalist*, please be aware you will find many references back to *Kamana One*. Understanding these references are not necessary for the completion of *Kamana Two*.

WELCOME BACK!

So, you've completed *Kamana One* and you're back for more. I can't tell you how happy I am about that.

As we explained before, *Kamana One* serves many, many purposes. By taking the steps necessary to complete *Kamana One*, you have shown that you know how important this work really is. Now we get to move on to more fun stuff that we know you will take to heart. We reserved some of the goodies and tricks of the trade until we knew you had put in some "dirt time."

What's new?

I thought we'd start by explaining some of the differences between *Kamana One* and *Kamana Two* so you know what to expect. As you noticed, the main theme of *Kamana One* was inspiration. We tried to make sure you had lots of fun and built a solid foundation for some focused study. Guess what? The time for focused study has arrived, and that is going to be a main theme for this level of the program. Here, in this binder, you will find something you can really sink your teeth into.

In my opinion, your completion of *Kamana One* has proven that you are ready for more. That is exactly what lies ahead—much more! Don't worry, it's still going to be a lot of fun.

You're going to be on your own a bit more this time, too. Many of you have expressed that you enjoyed the "morning and evening session" format but you'll have quite a bit more freedom from now on. Yes, we all love freedom. However, as we all know, it has its costs. Self-discipline, motivation and determination, combined with your passion and love for Mother Earth, will now be your driving forces. Don't sweat it though, OK? Again, we've made it nice and easy and it's full of fun stories and games.

It's actually quite a significant landmark on your path to becoming a naturalist and a tracker. A rite of passage, of sorts. I remember when I was first introduced to studying Nature in this way and was living with Jon Young. At the end of almost every day he would ask me all sorts of questions about what I had observed and noticed. He would fire off a couple dozen questions until my head was spinning and I thought, for sure, I would never get the hang of it. After a little while, though, he stopped asking so many questions. I was kind of disappointed. Was he just busy?

Had he given up on me?

In an effort to get him going, I would tell him about something that happened to me at my Secret Spot or while tracking. “Oh,” he would say casually. “Did anybody call for me while I was out?” I couldn’t believe it! What was the matter with this guy? I’d try again.

“Hey Jon, I was wondering if you had a couple of minutes...”

“What is it?” he’d say while looking out the window or sorting his mail or something.

“Well”, I’d get all excited and move around the room, talking with my hands and everything, “I saw the *craziest* bird today.”

“Hmm.” It was more of an exhale than a remark.

“It was the coolest looking bird I’ve ever seen, but I can’t find it in the field guide. I was wondering if you knew what it was.” I’d go on to describe the bird.

“How long did you look in the guide for it?” Now he would make eye contact.

“Well, uhh....you know. It’s hard to keep track of time when I really get into it. You know how it is.”

“You didn’t look it up at all, did you?” He’d go back to what he was doing.

Nine times out of ten, I hadn’t. Finally he explained to me why he had made this change in our relationship. He told me it always happens—people get to a certain point in their learning where they already have all the inspiration they need to get down to it and actually do the work.

“There’s nothing more I can do for you until you start practicing these skills every day and keep up on journaling. I’ve taken you as far as I can for right now. It’s time for you to fly. That’s the way it works. I’ve inspired you to fly, I’ve told you how to fly and I’ve shown you how to fly. Now, you are the only one who can let yourself fly. Once you fly, you can come back and I can teach you a bit more. Then you must go and do that. Then, again, you can come back for more. That is the way it has to work. I’ll never leave you on your own, but there are some things you must do for yourself.”

So, it’s time for your flight. *Kamana Two* is designed to keep you flying and having fun. Here is how the Nature Awareness Trail is set up. There are three Field Exercises that we’ll be sharing with you. Each of them will take 30-60 days for you to complete. It’s kind of like the exercises and games we played in *Kamana One*, but this time they’ll be a bit more challenging and we’re asking you to focus on one for at least 30 days. Of course we can’t make you do anything, but to get your *Kamana Two* diploma and move to the next level, you *must* practice them—one at a time—for no



less than 30 days each. They will be explained more as we move along.

Reading list:

Required:

Ingwe (book), by Ingwe OR *Spirit of the Leopard* cassette
Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message, by Jake Swamp.

Recommended:

The Education of Little Tree, by Forest Carter.
The Tracker, Tom Brown, Jr.

WHO IS THIS GARDOQUI GUY, ANYWAY?

by Dan Gardoqui

I bet you a brand new ten-foot tracking tape measure that you've never heard of a Basque-Newf. That's what I thought. Well, that's my bloodline. My dad's folks were both born in the region known as Guipuzcoa, a small fishing, farming, and herding community in the foothills of the Pyrenees mountains of modern-day northwestern Spain. My mother's parents, and my mother herself, were born in Kilbride, another small fishing, farming, and herding community in present day Newfoundland, Canada. That makes me an odd chap. There aren't many Basque-Newfs out there, and the world is probably happier that way. I, like some of the other old dogs that stalk around Wilderness Awareness School, was born less than a half-mile (as the gull flies) from the Atlantic Ocean coastline in Long Branch, New Jersey.

So why am I writing here in the *Kamana Two* program for Wilderness Awareness School? You may have heard of my name via some infamous story that Jon Young has shared with you (*most* of which are *mostly* true). The first of such stories goes back to 1988. Having just left a nationally famous high school track team for physical and emotional reasons, I had a lot of free time (we're talking eleven months a year, six days a week that were previously dedicated to running). A friend told me about this wilderness guy, Mr. Young, who would take you out in the woods, and he wouldn't even say anything if you wanted to smoke a butt. Now, I didn't smoke and I didn't particularly care for the woods/nature/etc., but, I had nothing to do. So I went. You have to remember that Jon was (and continues to be) a young-looking individual, and on the day of the first Wilderness Club meeting I, the ever-important sophomore, mistook him in the cafeteria for a fresh-



man and kind-of demanded that he buy me something. You can imagine the embarrassment and ridicule I received for that one. So, one strike against Gardoqui—and the wilderness stuff hadn't even begun.

Soon after that mishap, Mr. Young (who insisted that we call him Jon when not in the presence of other teachers) and I began an intense mentoring relationship. Nearly every day after school, Jon and I would spend some amount of valuable time together. Sometimes we would go tracking on the beach or in Tatum Park with the wilderness club “dudes,” hang out with his family at the house, or I'd do some yard work or babysitting for him. All the while, Jon was slowly teaching me about becoming more aware and in tune with the rest of the earth.

Now, do yourself (and us) a favor here and don't get hung up on the “I wish I had a Tom Brown, Jr. or Jon Young as a mentor” attitude. In case you hadn't noticed, tracker, look at the names on the front of this book. They *are* your mentors.

Okay. Back to the story. After a few years in the high school Wilderness Club, which grew from 12 to 120 students in a single year, Jon asked me to be his assistant in teaching high school students the basics of what was then called the “Bearer” program, and is now known as *Kamana One* or Kamana. Needless to say, I was psyched! This meant more time camping, wandering, tracking, and scouting around. At age 17, I was assisting on Sophomore wilderness retreat programs for our high school, sharing Kamana teachings at nearby high schools, and giving “tourist tests” to local groups.

Developing the “Alien” or “Tourist” Test with Jon made me aware of how unconscious the majority of modern human-kind was to the life around them and their impacts on this life. Furthermore, I found that there was tremendous beauty and spirituality in the observation of nature. We presented this test to thousands of people and only *one* received a perfect score. I was shocked. With that realization, *I was convinced to teach more people about the world of nature.* I focused my passion on planning the first Wilderness Awareness School expeditions, hoping to find more aware people and other interesting environments across the country. These tours, although at times unwieldy, were a huge success. Travelling for a month with a group of folks ages 15-50, we learned and shared with native communities (Pine Ridge and Cheyenne reservations and Akwesasne Nation), experienced beautiful (Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Great Smoky Mts., and Shenandoah National Parks) and spiritual (Bear Butte, Medicine Wheel, ancient redwood forests) places, and all the while training as amateur naturalists.

Additionally, Jon, myself, and other instructors began Wilderness



Awareness School summer programs for teenagers in the early 1990's. These camps took place primarily in the Lacey Tract of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. Our grandfather and co-founder Ingwe was a regular guest campfire elder on such programs. Sharing his inspirational stories of his youth as an Akamba boy in the Kenyan wilderness, Ingwe would lull us into a dreamy state where we would experience the most intense dreams under the starry skies of the pines.

Yet another spiritual elder, Chief Jake Swamp, came into our lives in the spring of 1990. Jon and I (skipping school) drove to Netcong, New Jersey, to meet Jake, where, for the first time, he shared the Thanksgiving address with Wilderness Awareness School. As you can imagine, this was quite an amazing day for the vision of the school. Soon after, we plagued Jake and his wife Judy with requests to share more of their teachings with us. Next came the peacemaker traditions and a night at the longhouse of thanksgiving, dancing, and volleyball. Jake and Judy became elders to the Wilderness Awareness School community almost instantaneously.

Throughout the 1990's, I led and assisted on numerous expeditions, summer programs, high school leadership training courses, and children's programs. We also branched into youth-at-risk, juvenile delinquent, and other special needs programs in the state of New Jersey. In the early 1990's the New Jersey Divisions of Youth and Family Services and Juvenile Services subcontracted Wilderness Awareness School to work with troubled teens about to reenter their communities after a juvenile sentencing. It was at these TREK programs that Wilderness Awareness School had the good fortune of meeting Tony Ten Fingers and began nurturing what was to be a fruitful partnership. Tony introduced us to the Pine Ridge Reservation community. Specifically, to Will Peters, a true warrior for the children, and to Gilbert Walking Bull. Gilbert lived for several years in Washington State and has become a spiritual teacher for the Wilderness Awareness School community.

My association with Wilderness Awareness School continued until the school moved to Washington State in May of 1995, at which point I became a Kamana Naturalist Training consultant (having attained the highest score on the introductory Alien test) and east coast staff for programs such as the Art of Mentoring series, and Pine Barrens Expeditions. The 1999 collaboration of Wilderness Awareness School/Tracker School in "The Way of the Coyote" class re-awakened my roots in coyote teaching and mentoring fellow humans in the ways of nature.

My formal education includes a bachelor's degree in International Environmental Studies with an independent focus on Earth Systems Awareness from Cook College, Rutgers University as



well as a master's of science in Environmental Conservation from the University of New Hampshire. I served as a teaching assistant and instructor for the forestry, wildlife ecology, and environmental policy programs while completing my degree at the University of New Hampshire.

I have returned to devoting the majority of my time to sharing the sacred teachings that I have been entrusted with. The lineage that I am a part of includes that of Stalking Wolf, Tom Brown, Jon Young, Ingwe, Jake Swamp, the Lakota people, and many more. I try to live a life that honors these teachings. I humbly strive to give their teachings as much respect and life as possible. It is with these goals that I write to you, the Kamana students. I look forward to a fruitful, fun, and gratifying correspondence with you all. Best of luck. *Now, go to your secret spot!*

RUNNING DEER

by Dan Gardoqui

Looking back, I can clearly see when my role as a student of a coyote teacher first began. It was at my first high school Wilderness Club meeting. The Club advisor, Mr. Young, immediately challenged me. You see, I had told him that my experiences in nature mostly involved running through it at high speeds during cross-country training. With that little bit of knowledge, he was able to “profile” me. He quickly deduced what pushed my buttons and then analyzed how he could turn that information into guiding me down the path of living closer to the earth. I made the mistake of mentioning the name of a park that was practically in my backyard. It was called Tatum Park, and I frequently trained on its miles of winding, forested trails. “So, I take it that you’ve seen all the deer there?” asked Mr. Young. “Deer?” I thought to myself. “This guy must be crazy, there’s no way that there are deer in my backyard. I would have seen them.” Instead, I politely responded “No...I’ve never seen a single deer there—ever.” Jon just nodded and looked beyond me with his squinting glances, watching some bird or tree or something while he chewed on a piece of grass. I was annoyed at his apparent indifference.

Later on that day he sat us down in a little opening in the woods behind the high school and told us a story. The story was about young native boys from the four corners area who could outrun deer because of their great stamina and stalking abilities. As he told this story, I knew immediately that I could, and would, outrun a deer—and soon. The very next day I hurried home and set out into Tatum Park, taking Jon’s advice to follow what he



called “deer trails” off of the human trails. I couldn’t believe the network of these things. After hours of wandering to uncharted reaches of the county park, I sat down to my lunch. As I opened my backpack, I heard this loud snorting-sneezing type explosion to my left. I jumped, sending my sandwich into the air, and saw what I thought was a wolf. Needless to say, it was my first deer— a young buck.

That very day I carved my walking stick out of a black locust sapling and began marking each deer I saw in the wild on the stick with a hieroglyphic representation of *Odocoileus virginiana*, the white-tailed deer. In the two years that followed, I would chase deer whenever the weather was right (careful not to force them off their beds in the winter when their energy balance is fragile). One moonlit early autumn evening while lying still in a patch of dogbane that was my secret spot, I heard two deer approaching. I let them get close. Then I sprang on them, splitting them in two directions. I ran after the doe and quickly squatted down into the dogbane just before she settled and turned over her shoulder to look. From previous chases, I had learned precisely when the deer would look to see if you were still behind them. Deer tend to be kind of lazy that way, since most people don’t chase them through the woods. So I crouched down into coyote run, sneaking closer each time she would get into her “ghosting” walk. She would again bolt when the wind shifted, my scent easy to detect. This went on and on, her bursting and stopping and me running, squatting, then trotting, etc. After only half an hour, I noticed that I was getting considerably close. Finally, after a short burst of speed and a flash of her white tail, I found that I was trotting nearly next to her! “Heck” I thought, “Let’s see what happens if I run past her.” The doe seemed temporarily confused before breaking into a laggard run back the other way.

I had outrun a deer! What an incredible experience! As I proudly walked home through the familiar trails of Tatum Park with my success on my mind, I nearly walked into the middle of a raccoon raucous. I was immediately humbled and got back into my owl eyes and fox walking. It wasn’t until I was writing in my journal, reflecting on this experience a day later, that I came to a realization. As a younger boy, I was given the name Running Deer in my Indian Guides (analogous to Boy Scouts) group. “Hmmm...” I thought to myself. “What a coincidence.” I thought this was pretty strange, but merely coincidence. I hadn’t yet realized the simple and beautiful synchronicities that are a basic part of living a life close to the earth.



The Field Exercises

You'll be hearing more from Dan later. Now it's time for a word from Jon Young and then Field Exercise One. There are twelve Field Exercises in the Kamana Course. The first three are given here in Kamana Two. It is important that you spend at least 30 days practicing the lessons in each exercise. I would suggest reading Field Exercise One now and then closing the book. Come back again tomorrow, or as soon as you can, and reread it before going out to do it. Just be sure to go in order, and don't skip anything. As you do these exercises, consider the elders who shared these teachings with us, and what a natural part this knowledge once played in the lives of all our ancestors.

SOME WORDS ABOUT GILBERT WALKING BULL

by Jon Young

There are not many people left that I know who live a life based purely on following a Sacred path. Most of them are monks of some kind. They have taken various vows of poverty, celibacy and religious discipline, but precious few of them are simply common people living the way of their ancestors. I remember hearing stories of Stalking Wolf and the simple way in which he conducted his life. Few were his possessions, few were his cares. He lived free and simple. Close to the earth and to the source of all life itself. Tom, my own mentor, shared these values with me as well. He was always lean and mean, with only a small bag and blanket whenever we hit the Pine Barrens. I learned to value simplicity. I yearned, and still do, for a simple life close to Mother Earth. Ingwe, too, cherishes a simple life close to the riches of Mother Earth. All he ever needed as he traveled was a bedroll and his hunting weapon as he explored the wilds of Kenya.

In 1991, I had the great fortune to meet Gilbert Walking Bull at a gathering in West Virginia. Gilbert poured water in the Inipi (traditional Lakota sweat lodge) ceremonies we attended after our workshop days were over. This elder shared engaging stories with us in the shade of the pines, laughed heartily and smiled with his eyes, danced happily around the landscape that he knew so well. Gilbert was raised in the rural district of Wanblee, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Reservation. In the days of his childhood, he was kept from the white man's schools, and immersed among his own elders and relations speaking only his own people's language until he was in his early twenties.

Gilbert, today at over 70 years, cherishes the simple life, remains true to his Sacred path, the ways of his ancestors, and he loves the Sacred Silence. In his own language he refers to this as



“wo-wahk-wak--ka.” This means ‘peace’ or ‘quietness.’ He learned it from many elders around him always telling him to “Listen,” or “Han” in his native language. From early boyhood, Gilbert wandered the hills, the pine forests, the prairies, the badlands and the juniper draws. He traveled often with other children, but just as often he was alone.

He speaks of the importance of gaining comfort with the sacred silence of Nature. “The Creation, in some aspects, are the Sacred Powers of Grandfather Great Spirit. When we get to know nature, the trees, the birds, the animals, the waters, the winds or any part of His Creation, we are looking at Grandfather.” It is vital that we take the time to be alone in nature and to practice the attitude of quietness, of listening, of solitude. In this way we get to know how the Great Spirit is also within each and every one of us.

Gilbert has taught us to understand that the Great Powers that created Nature in the first place are *still* at work creating Nature in every moment around us. These powers also exist within us, at the core of our being, or our spirit. This power that moves through all things is a positive force. The human mind in the modern world tries to nourishes itself, instead of from this force, from creations of thought and philosophy that are far removed from the natural processes that influence all the Earth’s inhabitants. When our senses take in nature from our time alone, from our listening, from our observing birds, plants and animals, we build within our brains positive resources that nourish from the positive and Sacred powers of Grandfather’s creation. This is the root and core of what it means for us to find health and happiness by living for this day, for the hope of good days to come.

This elder owns little more than his clothes and his sacred items. Yet, he wants for nothing. He loves to walk the land, make crafts, wander the hills and continue his on-going conversation with the Mother Earth and his ancestors. He loves to work with kids, sing songs and lead ceremony to help people overcome themselves, and for others to receive important and much needed healing. Gilbert’s lifestyle, simple and close to the Earth that he loves, continues to be a role model for all of us here in the Northwest who have the pleasure to know and work with this authentic native elder. I know I, for one, am impressed with the level of dignity and love with which he approaches all things. He is a man of action, decisiveness, kindness and service to people who wish to make a difference on this Mother Earth. I hope some day that you will have the opportunity to visit Gilbert and perhaps sit in a lodge with him around some hot stones! In the meantime, take comfort knowing he teaches you through the Kamana Program!





FIELD
EXERCISE
ONE

THE
SECRET
SPOT

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to your first Field Exercise! You could call the Secret Spot the cornerstone routine of Kamana. **It forms the foundation for everything else you will do and learn in this program.** For this reason, you need to **take your time** in the process of finding your place, and really read the materials in this assignment. These readings should be done when you have the time, and the proper mind-set, to really picture in your mind's eye what is being said.

It is important to us here at the Office of Independent Studies that you find the “perfect” spot. Many students have struggled with this part of the program for a long time, so I have developed the directions below to help you out.

Please read carefully all instructions before going out to do it.

Write a brief response to the Martin and Sean story. Your response should be based on where you see yourself on the continuum represented by the two extremes of awareness depicted in the characters of Sean and Martin. One paragraph will do.

I know you are thinking to yourself that you've already done this (This story was also in *Kamana One*). Why should you do it again? There are several reasons. It's important that you continue to think about that story, where you fit in and where you want to fit in. Although it probably wasn't many weeks ago that you did this the first time, a lot has happened since. Do you have any idea how many times we have heard the same exact stories from Ingwe? He is not absent minded...he does it on purpose because he knows we still have something to learn from them. Maybe it was different from what I had to learn the last time, or maybe I just hadn't gotten it yet. He has a skill for seeing what lesson someone needs and telling them a story that holds that lesson if the listener is willing to look into it. It's part of the oral tradition of his people.

Martin and Sean is that kind of story. Just do it. It will only take a minute. In fact, don't let it take any more than 20 minutes or so. Enjoy...

MARTIN AND SEAN

by Jon Young

Martin and Sean lived in the same town, in the same neighborhood. In fact, they went to the same high school, and even walked the same path to get there—yet they hardly knew each other. They may as well have been living in two different worlds.

In Sean's world the alarm clock went off at a quarter after seven. Then the day would start again at 7:25, and at 7:35, or until his mom nagged him out of bed. Actually, the day didn't really begin for Sean until after he took his shower. Even then he would have just enough time to eat his pop-tart while he rushed down the path, across the bridge, through the woods, and finally on to school. Most mornings, he barely made it to class on time.

Down the block from Fox Acres where Sean lived, there was an old run-down farm house. The little patch of woods in the back was all that was left of the beautiful large farm that once contained apple orchards, cattle, sheep and acres of fields. This was where Martin lived with his Native American grandmother, whom he simply called "Grandmother."

In Martin's world there was no alarm clock to jar him from sleep. In the morning, so early that there was not even a hint of silver in the east, Martin would hear a soft voice, "Come on grandson, up." No matter how tired he was, he knew never to go back to sleep after Grandmother had called him. Grandmother had told him many stories about when she was young and how her father always got up with no alarm. So before the first light, Martin would begin his day.

As his grandfather had done before him, Martin would jump out of bed and go outside, sometimes even in his bare feet, to greet the day. He would hear Grandmother singing in a language he did not understand, and sometimes his mind would wander to the baseball game or a test he had that day.

When the first pale light appeared in the East, Grandmother would say, "Now listen—the Great Horned Owls will be flying off to sleep. Can you hear?" And she pointed them out. "You hear that sound? That's the mockingbird greeting the dawn. Soon you will know the voices of all the birds that have sung their song since the beginning of time."

She always told him things like that.

"Never just walk right into the woods; instead you stand on the edge and watch. And when you feel it is proper to go in, then you enter the woods, but always with respect, because you are walking among your elders when you are there among the trees."

When he crossed over the creek on the same little bridge that



Sean used, Martin stopped to say a special thank you to the waters as his grandmother had been taught when she was a young girl. Martin took his time walking through this special place on his way to school. He knew where the red fox made its den, where the old great horned owl hunted by night, and which tree at the edge of the park it roosted in by day. Every morning, he ate a few dandelion leaves because Grandmother had taught him that they were good for his blood, and sometimes on the way home from school he stopped to gather medicinal plants for her.

One day, in Environmental Science class, Mr. Smith showed a film on river otters. After class Martin went over to his teacher and said quietly, "I know where a river otter is living. I pass her tracks every morning, and I've seen her playing in the creek."

Sean overheard him and laughed. "That's impossible. There aren't any river otters around here. I walk through those crummy woods every day and the only things in there are some squirrels, sparrows, and garbage tossed all over. The only animal in the river is maybe a river rat."

"I think you saw the muskrat that lives there—but there's more. There are all kinds of things, like the otter and a fox and owls and...."

All this talk from Martin, trying to make those woods seem like a real forest, was getting on Sean's nerves. "Oh sure, and I suppose there's bears, mountain lions, and an Indian tribe living there, too!"

"Be careful what you say," Martin warned him.

"And what are you going to do about it?" Sean demanded.

"Gentlemen!" Mr. Smith interrupted. "Good scientists don't fight. They experiment and observe. The way to settle this is with careful observation and agreement on your results. I want you two to work out the problem and let me know what you learn."

Martin got a funny look on his face. "All right, meet me tomorrow at dawn on the wooden bridge."

That next morning in the darkness Grandmother woke Martin up a half hour early. As he dressed, his heart was beating a little faster than usual. "Finally there is someone to share my woods with," he thought.

He slipped out the door and walked softly to the little creek, listening for the first bird songs and for Sean's footsteps coming through the forest. But Martin didn't hear anything except the owls, and he thought, "Sean must be here already, and he's hiding somewhere waiting to scare me. I'm ashamed of myself for letting him get here ahead of me!" Martin got down on his hands and knees and looked around. He couldn't see Sean, but he found



a little thicket of spice-bush to hide underneath and settled in to wait. “Well, I got past him anyway. When the light comes, I’ll find him.”

As the eastern sky turned silver, the horned owls quieted their calls and the stars faded into a morning so brisk Martin could see his breath. One bright star still shone in the east and the brightness of false dawn came, bringing the birds and their morning chorus. Still no sign of Sean.

Chattering robins alerted him in time to his old friend the red fox as it moved across the hill and disappeared into a thicket. A crow called out a warning as a large shadow passed overhead. It was the old horned owl flying toward the far end of the park where people never walked. Martin once followed the bird and discovered that by day it sat up in the tall Norway spruce just beyond the old farmstead. Still, there was no Sean.

At that moment, Sean’s alarm went off. Sitting up in bed he remembered he had to meet Martin. “I’ve got just enough time—the sun’s not up yet.”

He jumped into his clothes, not even taking his wake-up shower. He threw on his boots, ran down the sidewalk and tramped into the woods.

Still sitting in his secret spot, Martin heard the robins’ alarm calls as they flew toward him. Then he saw the grackles and blackbirds all flying from the same direction. “Must be Sean,” he thought. Four minutes later he heard heavy footfalls come down the trail and across the bridge.

“Hey, where are you going?” Martin asked from under his spice-bush. Sean almost jumped out of his skin. He looked around but couldn’t see anyone.

“What the heck are you hiding for? Where are you?” Sean scoffed.

“I’m in here. Shh...with the racket you’re making you probably scared everything away. Come on down here anyway.”

“I don’t want to get under there. There’s ticks, and I don’t have a hat on; besides, it’s dirty.”

“Don’t worry, I come here every day. It’s fine.”

Sean reluctantly joined Martin in the thicket. “So where’s the otter? I don’t see any otter. I came through the woods...there’s no otters here!”

Martin motioned to Sean to be quiet. Then he told Sean everything that had happened there that morning—about the owls, the fox and the robins.

“You’re crazy!” Sean laughed.

“I don’t think you’re going to see anything, thinking like that,”



Martin said.

Suddenly there was an explosion of rasping bird calls at the edge of the woods. Silhouetted against the newly risen sun was a red-tail hawk being ganged by crows. Its breast was shining white in the dawn light, its wings outspread against the wind. This hawk was an old friend. Martin knew this bird, as well as his mate, by sight, and he could tell their war-cries apart. He knew where they nested and that they liked to hunt mice and voles in the field behind his old barn. He had even given the hawk a name, "Harvey."

Sean's eyes almost exploded from his head. "It's an eagle! It's an eagle!"

Martin just looked at him, surprised, and shook his head. He didn't quite know what to make of this guy. One minute he was dead certain there could never be an otter here, the next he was jumping out of his skin over a common hawk. Martin was a little puzzled, but he was pleased that Sean was excited.

"Why don't you come here again tomorrow, but this time come at dawn."

"I thought this was dawn."

"No, dawn is when the darkness ends and the light just begins."

"Are you crazy? I am not getting up that early."

"Do you want to see the otter?"

After a week of trying, Sean finally got there in the darkness before dawn. He heard the owl for the first time as it silently lifted off its hunting perch and headed home to the spruce at the edge of the old farmstead.

Martin introduced Sean to "Harvey" and its mate, and Sean learned the difference between a red-tailed hawk and the only other large raptor he had ever seen, the stuffed golden eagle at the museum. One day Sean tumbled out of their secret hiding spot under the spice-bush because he saw a fox. He jumped up and down, tugging on Martin's sleeve, "Up on the hill, up on the hill!"

Martin had to calm him down. "It's the red fox that dens up over on the other side of that hill..."

One morning about three weeks later, after Sean had learned to relax with all his new experiences, the boys heard the startled calls of the wren in the thicket. They caught a glimpse of something shiny and bejeweled in the golden light of dawn. The light hit just right, making the wet fur glow as if lit from within. Something sleek and brown crossed a mossy log from the banks of the spring and investigated its way into the thicket. Sean only



saw the movement of the brush as the thick, dark, tapered tail disappeared.

On hands and knees, the boys crept carefully up to the spring.

“Look! A gift,” Martin exclaimed.

There, in the wet sand, was a perfect set of tracks. Martin pointed out how crisp the prints were, the shape and size of each foot, and showed Sean how there were signs of webbing between the toes. Sean carefully sketched the tracks and together they ran back to Martin’s house. Breathless, they tore open the field guides and found the section on tracks. Sean was speechless as he realized he had glimpsed his first otter, right in his own backyard.

Now, when Martin goes into the woods early in the morning, he often finds Sean already there, motionless, under the spice-bush. Sean no longer jumps up yelling and screaming at the sight of the red fox, and he has even learned to tell the large female owl’s call from that of her mate.

Sean has started to learn the lessons of Nature. Of course, some of the lessons, like the ones that the poison ivy and yellow jackets teach, are uncomfortable, but Martin is there to show him how jewelweed and plantain can remedy these and many other problems. Sean is also learning the ways of the Earth, of plants, mammals, and birds, from Grandmother. In fact, he spends so much time with her and with Martin, that she has begun calling Sean “Grandson.”

Take a few minutes for your reflection.



MARTIN AND SEAN REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____



Now, here are some other little tips to get you ready for finding your Secret Spot. Some of them you have already read once in *Kamana One*, and others will be new to you. Please read them *all* carefully. The repeats are there for a reason and it's important that you pay them the attention they deserve. Is it safe for me to assume now that you understand these lessons grow as we do? Do you know, now, that the more we learn, the more we can absorb and learn from these lessons?

*Learn to bear voices in the wind, music in
mountain streams and birdsong...*

–Ingwe

ON OUR WAY TO FINDING OUR NATURAL HOME

by Jon Young

In the story of the two young people, the one who has a strong connection with his grandmother is connecting with Mother Earth. Grandmother represents that connection as well as a feeling of nurturing and being nurtured. In the story, Martin and Sean share the same trail through the forest, yet their paths are worlds apart. In Martin's world there are owls, foxes, otters and hawks. For Sean, this world of green contains only garbage and a few birds that are always flying away from him.

The difference between these two worlds is largely based on the native practice of rooting deeply with one place, of learning to slow down, to be free to dream and to drink in the feelings and sensory gifts of nature. It is also a reflection of the very different experiences that have shaped the two boys' consciousness and their ability to perceive the world.

Many people who have come to me as students have started out very much like Sean, only to become native in their awareness and skills after a time. One of the best gifts I have to offer is that I have seen certain successes over and over again in my mentoring of naturalists and trackers. There are certain common traits among people who become masterful in their abilities to read the language of the birds, develop good instincts, learn survival skills, excel in their understanding of the uses of plants, and learn the language of tracking. One essential practice all these people share in common is the practice of connecting with one place in nature deeply and regularly.

The Best Teacher is One Place



People who know me well have heard me give this same answer to many different questions—not because I am losing my train of thought, contrary to what some might say, but because there is truly only one good answer to the many questions about the deep learning of naturalist skills. The foundation is the same for all:

What makes a great naturalist?

What makes a great tracker?

How did they become “natives”?

How did they become good teachers?

How did they become good storytellers?

How can we become great outdoor instructors?

How can we learn to understand the language of the birds?

In one way or another, my answer as always contains something of the following:

“Find one place you can get to know really, really well. This is the most important routine you can develop. Know it by day; know it by night; know it in the rain and in the snow, in the depth of winter and in the heat of summer. Know the stars and where the four directions are there; know the birds that live there, know the trees they live in. Get to know these things as if they were your relatives, for, in time, you will come to know that they are! That is the most important thing you can do in order to excel at any skill in nature. Nature and your own heart are your best teachers, but your body, mind and spirit all have to attend class and do the homework. There is no replacement for this experience!”

One of the most critical elements in the routine of visiting a single place and getting to know one area well is really just taking the time to listen to the wind, to check in with your heart—that is, your feelings—and allow yourself to just be.

Another important element in this experience is that of reaching out with your senses, not simply to look and listen, but to really explore, to touch, to taste, to feel. In Field Exercise Two, we will examine a method that could help you in this experience.

On Your Way to Finding That Special Place

There is a great deal to learn about nature, but it must be approached in a specific order, so that we can gain the proper skills and proficiency, and build each new skill on the ones already learned. Our brains must have time to adjust to new patterns and ways of seeing, hearing and behaving. Like a walk in the woods when it is a gorgeous day and you want to drink in its many beauties, this work must be done slowly. Don't rush. Take your time. While on your way to finding that special place, walk



a little while and then stand still for a bit, only proceeding after you feel at ease with the place you are then in. Use your feelings to direct you. Above all, be comfortable.

Next, I will share with you some skills for walking in the woods that will help you move quietly, peacefully, safely and efficiently. You will recognize these tips from *Kamana One*. Please take the time to read them again. They will help you on your way to finding a special place that you can call your own.

JON YOUNG'S TIPS FOR GOING INTO THE WOODS

The Way of the Fox

Have you ever sat in a park and just watched the visitors? You might have noticed that many of them never look up from the ground and that they almost slam their feet against the ground when they walk. Their heads move about on their shoulders because their bodies lean slightly forward as they walk, and they rise on their toes with each step. If there are several people together, they tend to talk to one another rather loudly, since the noise they are making as they tramp along is difficult to hear over. People look down at the path to avoid obstacles. Most animals and birds hide from this commotion, or run for dear life.

From the many talking circles I have lead, I have learned that people believe that if they don't look where they're walking, they will trip. This may seem logical, but it assumes there is only one way to walk. Actually, there are many. I find that people usually do realize that when they are looking down, they are not really paying attention to what's going on around them, but are thinking about other things. Their minds are busy and their senses are only alert to the most obvious signals. For them, the world is like Sean's—they only see garbage, tree roots, and a few crows, which are always flying away.

Our logo for Wilderness Awareness School is a red fox, gazing at you with "soft eyes"—unalarmed, unconcerned—simply aware of your presence. This is the ultimate goal of every student of nature—to catch a red fox unaware, and to be so at ease in the wilderness that the fox does not bound away in alarm. Foxes are some of the most acutely aware creatures in the forest. They have to be, for their lives depend on it. Their meals are tiny and quick, and those who prey on the fox are big and mean. When a fox walks along the edge of the forest, he's certainly not looking at his feet, or chatting with his mate about whom they saw at the water hole last night.

It is a simple matter to improve our ability to see wildlife by



giving some basic thought to our conduct in the field. In order to really see and feel the woods for what they are, you must enter them quietly. Pay attention to the noise that you make with each footstep. After you become aware of how loud you are, it is easy to move with more stealth. Native people tell their children that they should walk as if they were walking on the face of their most revered elder. Indeed, her name is Mother Earth. After doing this for even a little while, the next time you are in the woods with people who are unaware of the commotion they create, you will be astounded at the amount of noise you yourself once accepted as “normal.”

When Two or More Go into the Woods Together

Nature is best experienced while alone with your own knowledge, awareness and senses. But if you are at all uncomfortable in the wilds, in the beginning it is a good idea to go with a good friend. There are times when human companionship out in the big new world of Nature is very welcome, but this sets up some dynamics that require special effort to tame if you are to have a meaningful experience in Nature.

When we are with others, we tend to subordinate our personal focus to that of the group experience, and most everyone’s feelings and needs are compromised for the sake of the whole. This can prevent many interesting things from happening. The unavoidable need to communicate results in sounds that not only alert the wildlife to your presence but also can interfere with your own ability to hear sounds and signals from Nature. If you need to go with others, be certain to communicate to your group beforehand your intentions of blending in with the natural world and seeing as much as possible.

If you feel the need for a companion in the forest or wild places, choose a friend or a child who shares your desire to learn and go with them to interesting places. The drive there can be more pleasant as you share conversation about special moments you’ve experienced in the natural world. Enjoy one another’s company on the drive, but once in the forest, learn to be alone, even when you are with the person. If you do choose to travel with someone else, be sure to discuss with them what follows.

These are certain things which can really improve any experience in the woods for all of you and help you to remember it in a very special way. Just as Sean discovered that Martin’s patch of woods held wonders of which he was totally unaware, you will discover that if you communicate these few simple rules to your companions before venturing into the woods, you will have an entirely different experience than if you do not. When people



experience things together in Nature, strong bonds of friendship often result. It is the quiet times that often are the most clear in our memories—a glorious sunset, a flight of swans or a lone eagle soaring over a singing river fed by snow-capped peaks. These are nourishment for the soul.

Be Comfortable

From many years of mentoring people in Nature, I have learned that it really pays to let people experience things at their own pace, and at a level or intensity with which they are comfortable.

If rain or cold are problems for someone just starting to develop their naturalist skills, these concerns must be honored and addressed. Don't push yourself or your companions too hard in the beginning. You may run the risk of turning off your interest altogether. I have seen this happen with young people whose entire childhood was spent with a manicured lawn and one poor, scraggly maple tree. I have also seen it happen with adults who have backgrounds completely lacking in wilderness experience.

These people displayed discomfort in their body language and in the things they said, yet the group leader felt it necessary to force them to experience the wilds on his terms, believing that in the end it would be "good for them." While I agree it is good to push people to stretch their limits and self-knowledge, I never push beginners. I allow them to build one good experience on top of another, working at their own pace.

If you are uncomfortable, afraid, cold or anxious, simply slow down and warm up! Don't set your goals too high and most of all, enjoy yourself. Over time you will find that the things you originally thought were barriers have become welcome challenges or even blessings. This will start to happen quite naturally as you gain experience, extend your comfort zones and pattern your brain on things which will soon become familiar.

Finding Your Natural Voice

Each of us has our normal speaking voice. For some, it is soft, soothing, quiet; for others, our voice is full, deep, or sharp, and carries a great distance. One of our staff is a slender young man, with a young, almost angelic face which lights up like a Coleman lantern whenever he talks about Nature. Despite appearances, Warren's pleasant voice carries for miles. Needless to say, he has learned to speak in quiet tones in the woods, but you can guess who is frequently called upon to deliver the Thanksgiving Address at our gatherings. It is important for each of us to do a reality



check on our normal speaking voice, to find out just how much modification might be necessary for trips into the field. A tape recorder or a really honest friend is a great help with this.

Besides our usual speaking voice, each of us has a slightly louder one that we use if the person we are talking to is a little hard of hearing or across the room. That is the voice I often hear people using while they are in the field. The wind on their ears, the rustle of their jackets and the sound of sticks, twigs and the like being demolished underfoot cause them to become somewhat hard of hearing, so they raise their voices. On the other end of the spectrum, a whisper works well to keep your presence low-key in the forest, but it also requires that you stop walking and speak to each other while standing quite close together.

Fortunately there is a voice that is half-way between our normal speaking voice and a whisper which works very well in the wilds. I call this “half-voice.” You will notice that the sound of a half-voice does not travel very far in the forest. We instinctively recognize this voice, and quite naturally fall into using it in the field, once we recognize what it is. This is the volume and quiet tone so prized and cultivated by young ladies in the best “finishing schools” during the last century.

Half-voice glides along on an even note, never straying so far from baseline as to betray itself as an unnatural intrusion into the natural surroundings. After a time, you may reach a point where you will need to ask your children to use half-voice around the house. Your ears will have become tuned to the quiet tones of the natural world, and the harsh, jarring sounds of modern living may become unpleasant, if not downright uncomfortable. Half-voice allows you to tune in to small, unobtrusive sounds and still communicate at the same time.

The 15 Second Rule

Having had a lot of experience with groups of people out in Nature, I have found that “The Fifteen Second Rule” is also very useful. People may tend to talk incessantly, especially if they are in a setting that makes them slightly uncomfortable. The orientation process for groups traveling in Nature includes a brief training on the prevention of too much talking. Try this: before anyone speaks, they must first wait fifteen seconds to see if what they had to say still feels important enough to break the silence. This obviously needs to be compromised in the case of emergencies or the need to look at a bird or animal. This is where non-verbal communication comes in very handy.

Learn to Speak with Your Hands



Something that works well with a group is to have people be alert for hand signals and to listen for a quiet snapping of the fingers. That way anyone can alert the entire group to something interesting, without alarming every animal in the neighborhood. Groups can actually sight more of the elusive wonders of the natural world if the group is first trained to follow these few basic guidelines.

Many pairs of eyes can see much more than one individual. Just think about how much more difficult it would be to stalk up to a herd of deer than it would be to stalk up and touch a lone doe. Every time she put her head down to take a mouthful of grass, you could stalk a couple of steps closer. But the chances are very slim that the entire herd would all put their heads down to feed at exactly the same time.

It is also true that people in the front of the group tend to see things that are down low or to the front of the route of travel, and the people in the back tend to see off to the sides and above. Often, it is only the people behind the leader who see the deer sneaking away, or the owl blending with the tree branch.

Children in Nature

If you are going to be traveling with children, have a meaningful talk with them before you start off. Get yourself down on their level by kneeling or squatting. It is even a good idea to position yourself so that your eyes are slightly below theirs and you can look up at them. Speak softly and kindly while looking directly into their eyes, and explain the need to be quiet and alert. Explain that they are in the private home of animals, birds and very old and special plants and trees. Children innately know this, and will usually respond with wide-eyed interest. A bracken fern that hides a bright green tree frog or a mouse scurrying through dry leaves is enough to send children into screams of delight. You may need to stop occasionally to reinforce these points of woodland etiquette.

If children become whiny or complain about the experience, make the hike a short one and give them a good adventure. They will learn to equate the experience of Nature with good feelings, and you can build on this foundation, even with children who seem difficult, fearful or even repulsed by the out-of-doors in the beginning. Nature is what we were designed to experience. We are, after all, natural beings, just as the robins, the garter snakes and the raccoons are. Our bodies have deep memories and easily respond to the patterns of the natural world.

Clothing



Whenever you venture into the woods, your experience will be greatly enhanced by wearing the appropriate clothing. Comfort is of primary importance. It is helpful to wear layers that can be added or taken off according to your body's needs. Soft materials such as fleece, chamois, flannel and wool are excellent for sound absorption and do not create much noise themselves. Avoid nylons and other synthetics which give off a loud, scratching sound when brushed against twigs or branches. These sounds are foreign to the woods, and a dead giveaway that a human animal is afoot. Give things the crinkle and fingernail test to decide how appropriate they are.

Whatever your personal beliefs about hunting, brain-tanned, smoked buckskin is an extremely practical material for clothing to be worn in the woods. It is with good reason that since before the beginning of recorded history, natives from all corners of the globe have gratefully used the hides of animals to protect their own. Buckskin clothing is made of a material which itself came from the woods; it is naturally warm and water repellent, and unbelievably durable. Jim Riggs, a legendary modern-day mountain man, claims to have one set of buckskins that has served him continuously for over 20 years! He even throws them in his washing machine (once a year or so).

Choose natural colors and patterns that blend in well with the surroundings. Think about where you are going, the season, snow and light conditions, and dress to match. Become like the chameleon that changes color and pattern to exactly match its surroundings. Think about how the trunk of your favorite alder tree, the grasses in the meadow, or the spice bush in Martin's thicket are dressed.

Use colors such as black, dark browns, grays or greens if your area is a forested one. These are what we call "earth tones." Other dark colors are also effective in a pinch. Bright colors and whites reflect light and call attention to the wearer in this type of cover. In desert or dry grass, light tan to white could be the proper choice. Dark colors against bright colors create "flash patterns" which are like flashing a warning beacon when you move. It is not necessary to dress in camouflage. If you think about it, some of the animals that are the best at the game of hide-and-seek are large and brown, such as the deer. They use stealthy movement and awareness to become all but invisible.

Become the Cat



As we begin our journey into the world of Nature, we must become like a house cat. After leaving the security of its home, for the first few moments, the cat sits quietly on the porch. It waits in the shadows, allowing its hearing and eyesight to adjust to the darkness and subtle sounds of the night. When the cat was inside, the unintelligible din of the TV drowned out all other sounds. The odors of stale french fries, toilet bowl cleaner and perfumed kitty litter combined to create a chemical soup that roughly assaulted the feline's senses. Out here in the night, there are subtle scents on the breeze, and tiny feet scurrying through dry grass demand investigation.

For the time being, be like this cat as you enter a new world—the world of Mother Nature. Up until now, you may have experienced life largely in the world of buildings. They have been your safe place. You are now leaving this familiarity to venture into a world of new sights, new sounds, new scents, as well as new feelings and emotions. There are many treasures waiting to be discovered. To gain their riches you must be prepared, and you must learn to pay attention. Allow yourself some time to adjust to your new surroundings.

When the cat finally ventures off into the night, it skirts the edge of the lawn, staying partly in the shadows of overhanging bushes and flowers. It pauses often, ears turning from side to side, checking for new sounds. The pupils of its eyes are now fully round and black, and the cat stops to peer out from under the cover of a clump of trailing daylilies. As it stalks out from under the long, slender leaves, the cat places its feet gently upon the ground, a small hesitation before fully committing its weight to each step. Although it is fully alert, the cat glides like liquid across the dark grass, each step, each turn of the head, each flick of the ear blending fluidly, comfortably into a whole, balanced motion.

This is the way to enter your new experience in Nature. Walk as if an elder walked at your side. Speak in quiet, respectful tones. Be watchful; listen to everything; blend in to the background; go slowly; be patient. Become the cat—there will be plenty of time to learn how to dream with one eye open.

A Few Helpful Hints

Always notice the sound patterns of the land around you. When it is noisy, you can get away with being somewhat noisy yourself. When your surroundings are very still and quiet, you must be the picture of caution and as quiet as the proverbial church mouse.

Try not to stare at animals or walk directly towards birds or other wildlife. Give things their space. Be alert to the calls of birds



around you and whenever possible, do not disturb them, or they will sound the alarm.

Try to travel so the wind is in your face. This will improve your chances of seeing certain wild animals that are alarmed by human scent.

Always pay attention to the direction of the sun, flowing water, and any significant landmarks. If you happen to venture a few yards off the trail and lose sight of it, it will be very useful to know whether that dead snag that looked like a bear was on your right or on your left.

Be aware of the four directions—in time, this will help you to develop a good sense of direction.

Remember, when you are in the wild places, you are a guest in the home of the resident animals and plants. Be respectful.

The Most Important Secret of All

When thoughts are translated from one language into another, at times it is difficult to convey not only the meaning, but the imagery and feeling of the words. When I think of the word for what we will do next in our apprenticeship with nature, the best term I have found is in a book by Forest Carter called *The Education of Little Tree*. The name of the concept is “The Secret Spot.” However, the word “secret” loses a lot in the translation. Read the book some day—you’ll see what I mean.

The loss is more than just a difference in grammar. There are differences in cultural references and imagery. Our modern-day technology-based society has become so separate from the natural world that there really is not even a concept in our language for this experience. There are no words for this experience, only images. The Secret Spot is about finding a place that feels very special to you, a place that feels like “home,” a place you can’t wait to return to, a place that you would rather spend time in than anywhere else. It is about going there and becoming a human-being, rather than being a human-doing. It is about adopting a place in nature as a cherished relative. It is also about our souls and about finding a connection with our deepest center. Perhaps for you, “secret” will mean “special to me alone.” Go to your Secret Spot alone.

Next, we will help you find your own Secret Spot.

What follows is the real heart of this process. Read and re-read it. Make notes if you have to, but really pay close attention to the process depicted in this section.

ON FINDING A SECRET SPOT

by Jon Young



...Recent bio-information findings reveal that human awareness does not spring full blown from the biological machinery of the brain. Before it can begin to organize the world, the brain must first organize itself, yet this is a feat it performs brilliantly and automatically, like everything else it does: from experience.

...The fundamental workings of the mind, the so-called wiring of the human computer, are determined by experience. During the first years of life, the infant brain establishes the basic information-processing pathways that govern its perceptions throughout life.

What an individual sees, hears, senses, etc., the manner in which he or she experiences the world, is determined by these first experiences. Yet even as these basic perceptual faculties are developing, the child's awareness is being shaped by his parents and others in the modes of perception of his culture. Different cultures perceive the world in different ways, seeing different shapes, distinguishing different colors, and ignoring different things as well; and a child's awareness can only expand within the social context of his first shared experiences and relationships.

Later, more complex and sophisticated capacities evolve, such as thought, language, and imagination, all of which grow and develop in response to further childhood experiences.

—Flo Conway, *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change*

One of the goals of my teaching is to simulate the way in which indigenous people from all over the world learn about their local environments. One thing that these various people have in common, no matter where they are from, is that they know one geographic area well, and one specific place *very, very* well.

The closest equivalent in our modern, high-tech world is the way that we get to know our favorite mall, or our own home. Most of us can close our eyes and visualize where everything is in our own house. In our imaginations we can take a journey through the house as if we were really there. Eventually, you will come to know one single place in nature equally as well.

Naturally updating our brain

It is my belief and experience that the brain *does* transform itself—no matter what our age—especially so if the input is from nature. It seems that our senses, our awareness, and our ability to absorb information are all pre-designed to work particularly well with input received from the natural world. As the above



excerpt from the book *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change* explains, our brain creates itself from the environment around us. This is part of our adaptation to life on earth.

Animals are uniquely suited to *their* own environments. They have to be—it's in their job description, which is simply to stay alive and to pass on their genes. Their colors, behaviors and physical forms are designed to work in harmony with their niche, or specific place within their environment. The pride of lions lying in the shade of an acacia tree blends in perfectly with the gently waving, tawny grasses on the savanna, and the leopard's spots make her nearly invisible against the dappled forest floor. Have you ever wondered what on earth the zebra was thinking when he decided on black and white stripes? These incredible “flash patterns” stand out against the muted colors of sand and grass like neon signs vying for your attention in an arcade. How could the zebra have made such a “mistake”? And, more to the point, having made it, can he survive?

Human beings were once an integral part of their natural world, just like the lion and the leopard. They were adapted to, and therefore reflective of, their environment. But lately, people haven't had much need to use the faculties that are reflective of their place in nature. This has led people in modern settings to pattern their lives after parts of their current environment, to the exclusion of what was once natural and common for all humans. Video game, anyone?

Nature is a complex and constantly varied system, yet human beings are designed to receive and process information from this source in a very efficient manner. The way our senses work with our brain is part of the package that is a reflection of our ancestral connection with the natural world. The brain, though it complains somewhat, can easily learn to perceive subtle elements in nature with amazing clarity. It simply takes a little time for the old gray matter to pave some new roads, or uncover ancient ones. This paving of new pathways is what we call “brain patterning”; this is how the brain creates its own networks.

As we begin to reclaim our natural faculties, we should be prepared to experience a certain amount of culture shock. When we first venture into truly wild places, we may feel that we are as conspicuous and “unblended” as the zebra appears to be. This is due to the need for our own patterns of thought and consciousness to “stretch” to include new stimuli—stimuli from nature that take forms which are sometimes a bit outside our modern-day comfort zones.

The practice and experience from this chapter, called the “Secret Spot,” will actually build a new but very old comfort zone



for you. You are asking your brain to do something it is not accustomed to doing—perceive the natural world on its own terms. You may sometimes feel uncomfortable, but be patient and have faith; this feeling will fade in time.

Children are Still Building Their Own World

The early years of human development are the most formative. Perhaps your own childhood may not have contained as much patterning from experience of the natural world as you would like, but there are children all around you today who could benefit from your realization of the importance of this in *their* lives.

Encourage the children you know to find a natural place they can bond with. All the “natural born” naturalists I know, or know of, had this experience of forming a deep and lasting connection with a natural place when they were young children. Ingwe grew up completely at home in the wilds of Kenya; Tom Brown, Jr. roamed the Pine Barrens of New Jersey as if they were an extension of his back yard—which indeed they were; as a child, Jim Corbett, the legendary Shikari, or big game tracker, who was held in high regard by both the natives and the British government for his extraordinary knowledge of the land, roamed the foothills of the Himalayas near his home in India.

This one thing alone will make an incredible difference in the way your children bond with the natural world. The only role you need to play is one of encouragement and support, asking good questions and creating opportunities for them to experience their special place.

Quality, Not Quantity

Practice makes perfect, right? The more we do something, the better we become? This may be true for some things, like shooting baskets at the gym, or baking the perfect loaf of bread, but when it comes to awareness, we should think in terms of the quality of our experiences in one place, not the quantity of places we have experienced.

Some of my students have told me that they have lots of experience in the out-of-doors. They have visited every national park and scenic area for several states in either direction. On the surface, this seems like all that would be necessary to build their awareness of nature. Though a lot of time outdoors, in a variety of locations, is a form of “practice” in getting to know nature, by “spot surfing” we miss a very important part of our awareness experience. This can take the *quality* out of our outdoors time. If we are constantly on the move and always thinking about where



we're going, we never really experience the place where we are, right at that moment.

This is really quite common. Watch people at a bus stop, or sitting in a doctor's waiting room. Their feet tap, their fingers twitch; they get up and pace back and forth, they sit down, absently turn the pages of a magazine, glance at their watch, flip open the laptop; their eyes have a glassy, far-away look, and the receptionist has to call their name twice before they respond. They are present, but unaccounted for—their body is receiving sensory input from their surroundings, but their awareness is in the next time zone.

Perhaps our inability to sit still and our constant need for new experiences are due to the way we have been patterned on our modern lifestyles. Think back over your life up to now. Were there situations in your early, formative years that caused you to move around a lot, to go on to something new, without fully exploring the old? There is a patterned tendency in our world today to change our location every couple of hours, to change cars every other year, and to change the channel when we get bored. Most people probably never thought of doing things differently. Change has become the norm.

But the rhythms of nature are different from the rhythms of modern life. The experience offered in this chapter is really very simple, yet at the same time it can be quite difficult for the modern mind. It represents a change in our rhythm and our expectations for the moment. Speed and constant change are well ingrained patterns in our lives. It will take some practice, and it will take substituting new habits for old, but it can be done.

Be prepared to slow down. Learn to match your internal pace to the pace of your natural surroundings. Remember, “quality” and “awareness” are the key concepts here. You can only be aware if you are experiencing what is happening around you right at that moment. This can only happen if you are aware. And the quality of your awareness is directly related to your ability to sit still.

Be Prepared to Pick Just One Place

It is good for us to sit still and to let our instincts guide us. It is good to let things motivate us from within when we are in the natural world. That is the Way of Nature.

-Jon Young

It's time to start thinking of a place near you that you can visit frequently and become very well acquainted with. This will be



one place that you get to know *really, really* well. Not so long from now, this place will become a mirror to your inner workings as well. You may experience many feelings that perhaps you haven't felt since you were a child.

Be cautious of the impulse to say, "I have lots of places that I go to." The quantity of places you visit is not what is important here. If you have too many "special spots," you will never get to know any one of them deeply. Instead, you will find yourself spending all your time going from one to the other. Many people I have taught have told me that they have many spots that feel good to them. They go to the mountains to hike, to the park to run, and they ride their bikes all over.

"Do you know that place well?" I ask them.

"Oh yeah, I mountain biked there a few times! I know all the trails."

Then I ask them what kind of birds they see there, what medicinal plants grow by the side of the bike trail, and what sort of trees they ride through. I hardly ever get an answer, let alone a correct one. That is a very different perspective from what I mean by the deep awareness experience of really knowing a place.

Think in terms of becoming so rooted and so familiar with one spot in the wilds that you know it as well as you know the bedroom or kitchen in your own home. If I have anything to do with it, you will know your chosen place even better than you know your own house, for my goal is to build awareness on many levels and to increase your skills as an observer of nature and of life in general. I know you will appreciate this gift, as I have, and as have many others.

An Ancient but Overlooked Practice

The concept of finding a Secret Spot as a place to "anchor" our awareness is well known in many cultures around the world. It seems that people don't really think of this practice as anything out of the ordinary. It appears to be a very minor thing, but this practice of being alone in nature has had profound impacts on history. Think of the heroes of world religions and mythology who have spent time alone in the wilderness: Moses, alone on the mountain, receives a world-changing communication; Jesus, alone in the desert for 40 days, overcomes the demands of the physical body; in Norse tradition, Odin, the chief divinity of the Vikings, hangs by his foot for nine days from the World Tree and receives the gift of the runes.

I have taken the name "Secret Spot" from a book called *The Education of Little Tree* by Forest Carter. It is about a Cherokee



boy growing up with his grandparents, and being nurtured in his awareness of nature by these elders. There are a number of excellent passages about the boy's experiences at his "Secret Spot." Little Tree's experiences are similar in many ways to what I practiced under my own mentor's guidance. Some form of this same practice probably existed in most indigenous cultures around the world.

Follow Your Heart. Alone.

I've given you a number of tips for making your trip into the woods with other people a more meaningful experience. Companionship on general outings and camping trips is wonderful, but your "Secret Spot" will be reserved for you, alone. It is important that you search for this place and visit it by yourself.

As discussed in the last section, whenever we are with other people, our thoughts, decisions and actions are dramatically influenced by their presence. The consequence of this "compromise" is that we learn to ignore our feelings. Although feelings can be very subtle, and seemingly unimportant, they can lead us to the right place at the right time. Tiny feelings can completely alter our perceptions—and our life paths.

Life-changing moments happen quickly, and are often introduced to us quite subtly. If we are alone, we will have the opportunity to hear the still, small voice within us. By practicing going to our special place alone, learning to walk alone in the wild places, and learning to be comfortable with our own feelings, we begin to walk our own path in life—we learn to listen to, and to follow, our hearts.

Realizing Your Feelings

There is a thread throughout this book about developing more sensitive "feelings," about finding that special place that becomes an important symbol of this journey to instinctive awareness. This journey is part of your life path and consciousness.

An unavoidable side effect of this kind of instinctive and deep sensory development is that you may find yourself growing in ways you did not expect. You may find strong feelings coming up. You may feel a sense of powerful grief for the losses that you perceive occurring all around you in the natural world. This may include realizations about your fellow humans as well.

I have had students tell me that just saying the Thanksgiving Address on a regular basis has opened deep wells of grief they did not know they carried. That is all very normal. Allow yourself to experience these new feelings, but know that you do not need to



hold onto them forever. Just move gently through them and realize that there are many people in the world who share them with you. Peace of mind will come as you become comfortable with your new perceptions. Eventually, your comfort zone will stretch to include this new awareness. In Field Exercise Four, I will talk to you more about the effects of deepening awareness and grief.

PARAMETERS OF A SECRET SPOT

The Basics

Though your choices are limitless, your goal is to find a specific point on the earth, preferably in a reasonably natural state, that you will visit as often as possible. Choose this place carefully, as you will be investing a lot of time and energy in it. There are some parameters which need to be considered and balanced against your daily needs, such as local conditions, your schedule, limitations and personal preferences.

If at all possible, choose a natural area that includes diverse habitats, including water or wetland features; naturally maintained meadow or natural lawn; thickets and edges; forest or trees; and a place where you can find some privacy. While not everyone will be able to find all these conditions in their neighborhood, the more of these you can include, the happier you will be in the long run. Visiting the same place every day for a year is a major commitment, as you will soon find out.

There is a way to find this place using your sixth sense right from the very beginning. This is an important step in choosing your Secret Spot. More details on how to do this follow. A good book to refer to is *The Other Way to Listen*, by Byrd Baylor, which is actually a children's book, but captures the feeling of this experience marvelously.

Specifics

Following are each of the parameters and situations to consider when selecting a Secret Spot. Read through these and digest them. If you have a challenging situation, see the end of this section. Then, finally, read carefully through the sidebars and sections on using your instincts. You will then be ready to help your Secret Spot *find you*. Take your time...this too is a process.

Convenience

Your selected place should be somewhere that you can walk to



easily. If you must drive, it should be no more than a few minutes away. This is important, because you are going to be visiting this place for 5 to 105 minutes *every single day for the next year or two*. **Over the past 10 years of mentoring naturalists, I have found that those students who select a convenient Secret Spot are the ones who actually use it, and there is a huge difference in their development.**

Don't think of this as a limitation. Your Secret Spot isn't the only place you'll go to. **You can go tracking at your other favorite places anytime, but you should visit your Secret Spot every day. So, above all, it should be convenient.** Many of our best trackers have Secret Spots right in their back yards.

If you have a *really* favorite area you simply must use that is a long, long walk or a bit of a drive from where you live, you are not likely to get there very often, and the whole purpose of this experience is then undermined. But don't despair; you can still have your cake and eat it too, if you simply *must* (see "Managing Two Locations").

Access and Safety

Feeling secure and comfortable is important. Your place may actually come to symbolize "peace of mind" for you as you pattern your awareness there. It will become an Anchor Point and a symbol for the whole of nature. Therefore it should provide you with true security.

If possible, you should have access to your Secret Spot twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. If it is in a park that closes, make sure you have a place to park your car so you can walk in after hours without getting locked in.

At some point you may want to visit this place in the middle of the night. Some adventurous people in this program choose to do these kinds of things, and that is definitely not discouraged. In some areas, it is easy and fun to spend a night at your Secret Spot on a regular basis. This is a great situation, especially if you can enjoy a little campfire there.

Be mindful of safety, especially in settled areas where certain people are less than balanced in their approach to life and prey on the unaware or seemingly helpless. It may be necessary to avoid certain places altogether for this reason. Learn to trust your gut feelings about things, and heed the advice of the locals.

General Thoughts On Size and Anchor Point Location

Since you want to approach your spot from many points of view and directions, you should locate your actual Secret Spot in

The NUMBER ONE thing to consider when choosing a spot...

We are about to talk about all the ideal parameters for finding the perfect Secret Spot. However, when all is said and done, the most important thing to keep in mind is sustainability. Will it be a place you'll actually visit every day or every other day? Is it convenient?

For some, a 10 minute drive is sustainable, for others it needs to be 3 minutes from their front door. Know what is sustainable for you and choose a spot that you will actually visit regularly.

If you live in suburbia or the city, you may choose a second spot you visit occasionally in a more wild area. However, the number one qualities for the spot you practice most of these exercises in is CONVENIENCE and SUSTAINABILITY.



an area of considerable size. If things were ideal, you would fall in love with a place in the wilderness that had no “boundaries” to the natural area around it. Hardly any of us is blessed with this ideal. Just do your homework, and then do your best.

How big is big enough? Ten acres would start to feel really small after a few visits, but would do in a pinch. One hundred acres with your Anchor Point near the middle is ideal.

The actual “spot” is what I call the “Anchor Point.” A routine visit to your Anchor Point (your actual Secret Spot location) will include an exploratory walk through the natural area surrounding your spot and finally, a stop and extended visit at your one chosen place.

Check the Maps

When looking around your neighborhood for this place, get your hands on some maps of your county and do an “aerial search.” You will be surprised at the number of little lost places and parks that don’t get much attention. You may discover the perfect place in a school yard, a “green acres” easement, a pipeline right-of-way or other undeveloped areas right in your own neighborhood that you never knew existed.

Look carefully at your maps within a certain radius from your most likely point of embarking on your visit to your Secret Spot. Decide whether you are more likely to visit in the morning before you leave for work or school, or whether you would stop by on your way home, or even make a quick lunch hour visit to your spot (remember, this has to be every single day). Begin your search from that point.

The maps you use should include waterways, wetlands, natural features, parks and settlements. Most county maps, especially those used by real estate agents, are perfect for this purpose. If you pay attention to your gut feelings during this process, you could save a lot of time!

Diversity

There are certain features you want to have in your study area. In an ideal location you should be able to find most of the following things:

Water

A stream, pond or wetland is preferable. Streams are a great source of resources for many life forms. They also represent a



transition zone between wet and dry environments. All this adds up to a productive location from the point of view of naturalist learning. A stream or a pond is the best. Wetlands are fine, if it's all you have. Puddles? Well, why not—in a pinch.

Those of you in the desert may want to look for a hidden watershed somewhere in the hills or among craggy rocks where water accumulates at least several times a year. This would also hold true for people living in seashore environments where fresh water is at a premium. The fresh water pools and wetlands are like an oasis in both dry and salty environs.

Meadow

You should be able to find a meadow or grassy area such as a naturally treated lawn or a not-so-busy roadside. Lawns, if they are mowed but fertilized with natural products, and pesticide-free, can be a highly productive location. This is especially true when all kinds of wild plants are allowed to co-exist with the grasses. When such a lawn is up against a border of thicket or forest, the area can border on the realm of “amazing” for a Secret Spot area.

Forest

You really need to find some forest, and the more kinds of forest that you can find in your area, the better. Look at the age of trees, their sizes and the varieties. Try to select an area with many old trees mixed with young ones. Shrubs, thickets and a variety of different kinds of trees, including both evergreens and deciduous trees is a good combination. A lone tree in the midst of a meadow is also a great site for many reasons, but try to select a varied forest situation when choosing the larger area surrounding your spot.

The Bottom Line is Diversity

A place where an organic garden meets a lawn which meets a forest with a stream running nearby would be an ideal setting, as opposed to thousands of acres of pure unbroken, second-growth, single-species forest. That would not be so great for this particular exercise. We are emphasizing diversity of habitats.

Privacy

Try to choose a place that affords you some time away from the busy pace of modern life. Choose a location that is not on a



main trail and is away from the “flow of human traffic.” Take the hardly used trails when looking around the potential area. Step off the trail and follow a creek bed, or a forest edge. Follow a game trail and generally explore the “back country” features. Keep in mind that you should tread lightly and move gently as you move through these sensitive environments. Remember the house cat and how it moved into strange surroundings.

Your ultimate Anchor Point should offer you an “invisible advantage.” This means that if you were dressed in natural or dark blending colors, and if you were sitting relatively still, other people on the trails in the area would not be likely to see you. It wouldn’t hurt if you could see them, however, since you will probably feel safer in a location that allows you to see approaching or passing people from a distance without being seen. At the same time, keep in mind that you want an unobstructed view of the area above and around you. There is a balance to be struck here. That is why you should take your time in choosing that “perfect” spot.

How Do You Feel?

The final characteristic of your Secret Spot is that it must *feel good to you*. After you have considered all of the requirements, read through all of this material, used your instincts to guide you there, and finally found that potential Anchor Point, do the final test:

Sit at your chosen spot quietly for awhile and see how it feels to you. Look around; introduce yourself to this place, as if you were speaking to a council of elders. Tell the trees and the grasses, the birds and the waters why you are there, and ask them to tell you if this is the right spot for you. Become very aware of your surroundings and the feeling you get in your heart as you are there. It is important that you feel comfortable, and welcome.

Be patient in the process of finding this place. It will probably take longer to find it than it will take to visit it later on. Just follow these guidelines and your instincts, and your efforts will be well worth it. Make sure you smile while you’re out there—you must have fun!

What if You Want to Change Spots Later?

This is also a balancing act to anticipate. If you *really, really, really* find the best of all possible locations after you have committed to an Anchor Point, should you change locations to the new one? Beware of this tendency!

If this is really true and you find yourself saying this every time you go out there, then “yes,” go to the newer and “better” location. I wouldn’t do this more than once, and definitely not after



the first few months have passed. I have known some people to change spots continuously. Once again, they have fallen prey to the patterns of thinking of the modern world, and have defeated the very purpose of choosing one special place. It is necessary to make a commitment, and ultimately it is your own heart that will reveal the best choice to you.

City Living and Frantic Schedules

I can hear someone out there saying, “Well, just great! I spend two hours a day commuting, work on the 52nd floor of the High-rise Office Tower, right in the middle of Metropolis City, and I don’t get home till long after dark every day. So I guess I can’t do this.” You may feel that living in the city or having a really busy schedule prevents you from having a Secret Spot. Please, please do not give in to the “urban frenzy” so easily. There are ways around this.

For one thing, all of the things that you do at your Secret Spot are based on sensory awareness and prompted attention to certain details. You can still do this wherever you are. Even on the 52nd floor, there are windows. You will be absolutely amazed at the amount and variety of wildlife that lives in these skyscraper canyons. Pigeons, crows and seagulls thrive in the urban environment, as do squirrels, rodents, and even the occasional coyote.

Wildlife and awareness are where you find them. It is also possible, and even practical, to find a beautiful place that suits you in every way, that you visit only once a week or so for several hours. You will still have a very rewarding experience in nature. Read the next section for suggestions on how to use two locations.

Managing Two Locations

When you find that there is just no way to cover all the bases at one place, or if you are too busy to get to the best spot often, although it’s not the ideal situation, you can find success by using two locations. Divide your priorities into two basic categories: one is for sensory development, the other is for naturalist awareness. At both locations you will practice both priorities; however, your expectations will be different at each location. This has worked very well for people who find themselves challenged by time or by setting.

At your local place, focus your attention on sensory development. Choose a local spot that is convenient in the extreme. You should be able to walk there easily, on a moment’s notice, feeling safe and comfortable, or you should be able to drive there in a few moments with equal peace of mind. Those who spend less than



five minutes getting to their spot are the most likely to go every day. A local park, your backyard, a small greenbelt, a school yard, a river bank or any other small slice of nature with some view or redeeming natural feature is all that is needed. It might even be a particular stretch of freeway where you know a hawk hangs out.

Your chosen spot, on the other hand, may be an hour or more away on foot or by car. This place, however, should have all of the parameters listed above. At this location you will work on various naturalist training skills and emphasize the study of things that were missing at your “local spot.”

Practice both at both locations. This means you should pay attention to naturalist details in your convenient spot, while focusing on your *sensory training*. Pay attention to your sensory training, but focus on *naturalist skills* at your chosen Secret Spot.

Places to Avoid

There are many common-sense things to avoid when choosing your location. One good rule of thumb to remember is that if it *feels unsafe* or dangerous, it probably is! Use common sense and pay attention to your “gut feelings.” We can’t stress this enough.

Generally avoid *power line right of ways*, as they are often sprayed with toxic chemicals, as are *railroad grades*. Both can be a source of unnecessary electromagnetic energy emitted by the power lines.

Flood plains are just what they are named for. In some seasons and during certain weather patterns, your Anchor Point may need an anchor to keep from washing away! Think this one out and study the landscape for clues to flood levels. Check with the locals if you are not sure.

Places close to *highways and airports* can cause distraction due to the noise. But if you have no choice, use what you can get.

Avoid “*party areas*” where there is evidence of frequent and disrespectful use of the land. This evidence might include lots of litter, beer cans, bottles, broken glass in abundance, junk piles and spent ammunition shells. Later on, you may choose to adopt such an area, and do a little “native re-education” of your own, but for now, you are looking for serenity, not confrontation.

Avoid natural areas that are known to harbor lots of poison ivy, poison oak or poison sumac until you really get to know the local variety. Your quiet sit will be a good deal more peaceful if you aren’t a mass of itching rash! Also find out about local ticks and other potential hazards.



General Guidelines

Be cautious and alert until you develop skills of awareness and naturalist abilities that can help you to avoid danger. Think and feel before you enter a wild place or make contact with wildlife or strangers. Be like our house cat in this respect. It is better to be low key and to blend in invisibly for a variety of reasons.

What Do You Do When You Get There

The specifics of what to do at your Secret Spot are actually part of the subject of most of the rest of this book. Let's just say you will develop some basic routines that you will build on as you go along.

Now, let's get down to the fun part.

Finding Your Place Instinctively

When you search for your Secret Spot, it is important to engage your instincts. Our instincts are the earliest, deepest part of our subconscious mind. They developed as our far distant ancestors patterned themselves on their often hostile environment. Saber-toothed tigers, giant cave bears and other hazards waited around every boulder and tree. In order to stay alive, our progenitors developed deep awareness abilities that went far beyond the "normal" five senses. What today we call "intuition" or "sixth sense" was, to our ancient relatives, an ordinary tool absolutely necessary for their day to day survival.

Have you ever experienced the hair standing up on the back of your neck, or on your arms, for no apparent reason? Do you remember feeling your ears twitch in response to some unheard noise? These are some of the physical remnants of a time when human beings were the hunted, as well as the hunter. Our "gut feelings" and flashes of insight are also just such a remnant, and grounded just as firmly in sensory awareness. However, the stimuli that feed this awareness are so subtle as to be below the level of conscious perception.

In our distant genetic past, these subtle inputs from the surroundings would have been perceived through the subconscious and then fed to the conscious mind in the form of visions, small voices, feelings, or dreams. By constantly paying attention to these subtle messages, our ancestors would have been able to discern danger lurking around the next corner without directly seeing or hearing it.

With practice, we, as "modern cave-dwellers", can re-forge the pathways in our brains that allow us to digest subtle input from the world around us and translate it into conscious awareness. And we can start by making use of our "sixth sense" to find our



Secret Spot. I have seen again and again with my own students that this is not only possible, but even quite simple. On some level of awareness you already have knowledge of this place. You “resonate” with it. It is literally “calling” you right now. Through the use of your feelings, some simple meditation and visualization, you can access your ability to “hear” the voice of your Secret Spot.

Sometimes it’s necessary to go out on a limb, take a chance, make a leap of faith. There is little in the way of hard scientific evidence to establish a logical explanation for the workings of intuition. There will always be some aspects of nature that our cultural and scientific leaders have not yet explained.

Modern physics, however, is beginning to hit this area now, and if you want to look further, there are many great books on the subject of quantum physics. There are models to explain some of this. Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle has been around for many years, but scientists are just now looking at it in a new light. There is now scientific evidence that things are not always what they appear at first glance!

Later on, you will see that our ability to sense electromagnetic impulses goes way beyond the use of our eyes to detect light energy and our ears to detect sound vibrations. If you are at all skeptical about the possibility of this, as many are, that’s fine too. Just allow yourself to play with this and don’t worry about proving anything. Use this as a fun experiment.

Have you ever thought of a friend, and then suddenly the phone rings and they are the one calling you? This is just one of many, many common examples. Remember these experiences when your thinking mind begins to question.

Listen! Can you hear?

There is a sense inside all of us that speaks to our mind’s eye. Our mind’s eye has the power to translate feelings in the form of energy into specific images or other internal sensory forms which we can then interpret with our own conscious thought processes. Your Secret Spot, that special place you will find, is calling you right now.

This “calling” experience can take many forms. I have lead many workshops and circles and have observed this phenomenon again and again. In the normal workshop scenario, I work with people from all walks of life. I prepare by telling various stories and sharing examples from ordinary people. Then I lead the following exercise.



Exercising Your Sixth Sense

Take yourself to the general area you have chosen by map or experience, where you have a good feeling. Scout around the place a little, walking around the whole general area that you feel might work for you. That's enough for the first visit.

Go there again with the conscious intent to help your special place find you. It is helpful to wait for the day that “feels” like the right day. Allow timing to guide you.

Once in the general area, leave your car and find a comfortable and relatively private place to begin your search. Allow yourself to relax and just get comfortable where you are sitting. Close your eyes for a moment and ask out loud, “Where is the local place that is calling me now?”

It is important to specify “local.” If not, you may be called to the mountains many days journey from your home! So specify the one that is near enough to your house that you can easily walk there yourself.

You may have a sudden flash in your mind's eye of a color, or of a place you know, or may not know at all. You may see trees, rocks, water or some other landmark. You may get a simple symbol or shape. Or you may just get a feeling or hear a bird song in your mind. Whatever it is and no matter how subtle, just tune in to it. And, for goodness sake, remember it.

Next, you must determine what direction it lies in. Do this simply by asking yourself, “Which way is this place from here?” You will get a quick impulse that it is this way or that. Note that down as well.

The Secret Spot Routine

Once you have established your Anchor Point in the area you feel suits you best, the routine is to walk in from various points and at various times of day. Get to know the surrounding area casually and according to your feelings.

Don't get in the rut of always choosing the same path. Some days you may want to jog in quietly, other days you may literally crawl in on your hands and knees—whatever suits you. Just think about all the different possible approaches to the Secret Spot you have chosen and get to know them all. Some of the greatest discoveries await you there.

The most basic routine is:

- 1) Choose a different route in each time you visit.
- 2) Visit your actual Secret Spot Anchor Point *each* time you go to the area.



We highly recommend Jon Young's *Advanced Bird Language* audio series for secret spot awareness development. It trains you to really read the "concentric rings" of nature. This accompanied by the Kamana program are a perfect fit!

- 3) Sit there for as long as is practical and practice sensory exercises.
- 4) Work on naturalist awareness skills as are laid out in the rest of this book.
- 5) Chill out.
- 6) Get to know the trees, plants, insects, birds and other natural and unnatural neighbors around your Anchor Point, and allow them to know you.
- 7) Dream, dream away.
- 8) Eventually, quietly leave.

There you have it. I'd like to share another Secret Spot story with you. This one is from a good friend of mine, fellow Wilderness Awareness School instructor, and the first woman to graduate the Kamana Program.

THE SECRET SPOT I CALL HOME

by Doniga Murdoch

I feel so much thankfulness towards you, the Kamana student. I've learned over the years how much this program has affected my life in such a positive way. Some lessons came right away, some took until after I finished the program to learn. The whole Kamana Program was a major catalyst in my life. It started when I was a rebellious teenager, running away from home, wanting to live outside in the woods way more than in a house. I longed to be close the Earth, but did not know how to achieve that. I was led to Wilderness Awareness School and started the Kamana Program right away. I remember the first visit to my Secret Spot... in my mind I can still go back to that moment and remember it in detail.

I read Field Exercise One and right away a place popped into my mind. It was a place I had not been to since I was young. My mom used to take me fishing there as a kid. I knew that this was the place and that it would teach me much. When I went down there I was greeted by so much life. I was met by three raccoons who looked at me curiously, one of them trying to get closer for a better view while the other two kept pushing on. There couldn't have been a better sign that this was the right place for me to be. I found a place to sit, but was soon distracted and did not stay for more than five minutes. It interested me more to walk around, climb trees and keep myself caught up with my busy mind.

As time went on I found myself going to my Secret Spot more and more. I would think about the place all the time, wondering



what the raccoons were doing and the coyotes and deer. Soon I started going there every day, each day discovering something new. I started to sit longer and longer, practicing the awareness exercises. It was the times when I had sat a long time and just as I was getting ready to leave that something amazing would happen. I would get up extra early so I could go down and watch the beaver feed or the muskrat building a lodge. Sometimes I would catch a glimpse of the coyote out in the field hunting for voles or the deer feeding peacefully on the grass. Even though my whole day at school was spent in the woods, I would still go home and go to my Secret Spot.

It became a home for me, like a sanctuary. A place I could go to and cry out to the trees. My Secret Spot became so alive after all the time I spent there. It was like the Earth was wrapping her arms around me and slowly showing me her secrets, as long as I stopped and was patient and thankful. I started to sit still for longer and was experiencing so much awareness as a naturalist and awareness of myself. Going to my Secret Spot helped motivate me to hit the books and research. The experience of going out and absorbing the life flow of all this Creation and witnessing the pure ecstasy of the natural world makes researching so much more meaningful.

Recently, as I was riding in the van with Jon Young, I was reflecting back to the time I had immersed myself in the Kamana Program. It was my drive in life. I would stay up until I had gotten so many journals complete. When friends would ask me to go places I would always stay home and work on Kamana. As I was telling this to Jon, he asked me, "When in your life have you felt the most content and energized...like everything on your path was going in the right direction?" I said to him, "When I am practicing all the things I have learned in the Kamana Program, especially the Secret Spot. That's when I am the most content and the most guided in my life." Each lesson that I took from the Kamana Program helped me to become who I am.

After going to the same spot for a year that place started to accept me. I had figured out where all the birds fed at the different times of the day and I would walk far enough away so as not to alarm the birds. I always knew that I had done a good job if I got to the pond and the beaver was still swimming around. It took me a long time to figure that out. For some time I would get almost there and hear a loud slap in the water. I knew I had not been invisible enough. The Secret Spot not only helped me to become a good naturalist, but it helped me to walk in a sacred way, respecting and loving all of life. Still, to this day, I go out and I sit at my Secret Spot every day. Every morning when I go



there I am reminded of all the beauty that surrounds us and am rejuvenated from this source of life.

A WORD FROM MATT WILD

by, well...you know

Hi again. It's me. There are a couple of things I want to say to help you avoid some of the troubles other folks have had finding and maintaining visits to their Secret Spot. Jon stresses the importance of diversity at your Secret Spot and, yes, that is very important. **Even more important, however, is that it is close to your home.** Why? Because that's the only way you will actually go. I can't even tell you the number of students, myself included, who have picked Secret Spots too far away from their home because they met all of the other criteria. This is a *huge* mistake and always proves to be a costly one.

All of the other things Jon mentioned are extremely important. But the simple truth is that if you don't go there all the time, it isn't really a secret spot. It is the part about *regular visits* that is most important. If you don't pick a place that is extremely easy and quick to get to, you won't go. It seems like, no matter how excited and inspired people are, having to drive or walk far to a secret spot can really get in the way of regular visits. By far, I mean any more than 15 minutes. For most students, more than 5 minutes becomes a challenge.

You may have the perfect spot picked out already, with a bear den nearby, that is full of wildflowers in the spring. But if it takes 20 minutes to drive there and another 15 minutes to walk in, you won't go. Trust me. We're speaking from experience when we suggest your backyard. From my front steps, a six-year-old could hit my anchor point by throwing a stone. It's not nearly as beautiful as other places I'd like to visit, but I go every day. Keeping it close means I learn more about my yard. Also, any time I have a 10 minute break between my daily tasks, I can go sit and get grounded there. It keeps it part of my daily life.

Of course you've heard people say, "Out of sight, out of mind." I used to think that was just laziness. Now I believe that if people have been saying it for hundreds of years, then maybe there's some truth to it.

All of those other places that I like to go visit, I call my tracking spots. Yeah, I still go when I can. I keep "Secret Spot" type maps of them. I practice my awareness skills there and have a lot of fun. I still feel a strong connection to these places and I miss



them when I haven't been for awhile. But, when it comes down to the most important part of my development as a naturalist and a tracker—my Secret Spot—I don't put any hurdles in my way. I highly recommend you do the same. Take it easy on yourself and make it easy to succeed. Keep it close to home.

While we're on the topic, I'll tell you one other thing to drive the point into your consciousness. Think back to *Kamana One* for a minute. Do you remember that story I told you about the gray fox I discovered in my backyard that snowy day? Do you also remember the story about the old buck that eluded me on that organic farm where I used to sit with my back against the stone wall and watch the Red-Tail? I had made the classic mistake of making my Secret Spot too far away from home. The farm was so beautiful and diverse. But it really was a pain in the neck to go there, and in time, everything became a good excuse not to go. "It's raining so hard. By the time I get there I'll be so cold I won't be able to enjoy myself." Or, "It's not really safe to be riding my bike on the road after dark, and how can I burn fossil fuels and pollute just so I can go and sit in the woods?"

The Farm was my Secret Spot and, slowly but surely, I was going less and less. After Jon Young set me straight about the Secret Spot exercise, for the umpteenth time, I decided to make my backyard my Secret Spot—right next to the compost pile. I know I told you about my backyard in *Kamana One*, but let me really stress here that I thought it was a lame, lame place. I really felt like I was selling out by making it my Secret Spot. Wallowing in self-pity for not going to the Farm more often, I stubbornly refused to go sit in my backyard. I kept trying to motivate myself to go to the Farm.

It wasn't until that fateful day when I discovered the gray fox was using my backyard that I kicked myself hard enough to come back to reality. I had missed a gray fox visiting it almost every night. Please learn something from my mistake and make my foolishness worthwhile. Jon still picks on me enough about it.

Well, you have everything you need to get started, and it's time for you to fly. Here are a couple of quick reminders to go over, some questions for you to think about, and then you're off. Isn't this exciting?

SUMMARY: FROM MAP TO ANCHOR POINT

In setting out to find your Secret Spot:

1. Read and review this section.



2. Digest all the parameters, routines and “instinctive” methods to consider.
3. Get out and scout around the possible areas a few times to narrow down the choices.
4. Wait a bit longer and reconsider all you have read and seen.
5. Wait until the time *feels* right. Don’t rush.
6. Drive or walk to the general area.
7. Follow advice for finding your spot instinctively.
8. Get the Anchor Point of your Secret Spot pinned down.
9. Explore and get acquainted with the area.
10. Begin your visiting routine, and *enjoy!*

Spend a couple of days exploring not just on trails, but off trails, and not just exploring, but following your instincts. Get to where you have just about pinned down your Secret Spot’s actual Anchor Point. You may want to start any preliminary mapping in pencil, for after exploring some more you may choose to change your actual Anchor Point. If you are going to change your Anchor Point, it is better to change now before you get too far into the routine. So take the time and *really explore*.

Also pick at least three different maps to “bird’s eye view” the area you have chosen in the larger context of the region. Use at least one county map. Use one state map that shows the overall location of your chosen study area. Pick a third map that shows some detail of this place. Page 61 gives more detailed instructions on selecting maps.

Read the questions below now, but do not answer them yet. Take a week or so of exploring and considering where your Secret Spot will be. Then, and only then, come on back and answer these questions. I’m just giving you a little sneak preview so you know what to look for.

1. Read the italicized quote from the book *Snapping* at the beginning of this section. Has your brain “patterned” on nature-made or man-made influences?
2. Think about the section “Quality not Quantity.” Has your experience been more of “quality” or “quantity” with respect to the kind of outdoor experiences you have had?
3. How do you feel about “anchoring” to a single place?
4. How convenient is the place you are considering? Describe the amount of time in driving and/or walking you must spend to get to this place regularly.



5. Do you have 24-hour access, seven days a week to this place?
6. Do you feel safe at this place? Describe the neighboring area in terms of settlement and population.
7. How big is the natural area surrounding your chosen spot (acres, blocks or square miles)?
8. What are the three maps you are using to “site” your Secret Spot area?
9. Is there water in the area of your Secret Spot? What is the water? Describe it (pond, stream, puddle, river, marsh, etc.).
10. Is there meadow? Describe by size and general look.
11. Describe the forest type around this place.
12. Talk generally about the variety of plant communities and wildlife in the area you are considering.
13. Is this a place where you feel you will find privacy when you are at your chosen Anchor Point? If yes, then why? If no, why not?
14. How do you “feel” when you are at this place?
15. What is your schedule like and how do you feel this routine will fit into your life?
16. How much time can you see yourself *realistically* giving to this activity each week?
17. What is your response to the idea of finding your place instinctively?

**RE-READ THIS SECTION,
CLOSE THIS BOOK AND DON'T COME BACK
UNTIL YOU HAVE CHOSEN A SECRET SPOT
AND AN ANCHOR POINT...
and don't forget to have fun!
SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU,
NOW THAT YOU'VE CHOSEN YOUR SECRET SPOT**



ATTENTION:

It is not uncommon at this point to have questions about choosing the right spot. We encourage you to contact Student Services by phone if you need clarity (see your Registration form for the phone number).

We can help make this process a lot easier for you.

Besides, it gives us a chance to know each other better.

Please answer them in the space provided. Don't take too long.

1. Read the italicized quote from the book *Snapping* at the beginning of this section. Has your brain “patterned” on nature-made or man-made influences?
2. Think about the section “Quality not Quantity.” Has your experience been more of “quality” or “quantity” with respect to the kind of outdoor experiences you have had?
3. How do you feel about “anchoring” to a single place?
4. How convenient is the place you are considering? Describe the amount of time in driving and/or walking you must spend to get to this place regularly.
5. Do you have 24-hour access, seven days per week to this place?



6. Do you feel safe at this place? Describe the neighboring area in terms of settlement and population.

7. How big is the natural area surrounding your chosen area (acres, blocks or square miles)?

8. What are the three maps you are using to “site” your Secret Spot area?

9. Is there water in the area of your Secret Spot? What is the water? Describe it (pond, stream, puddle, river, marsh, etc.).

10. Is there meadow? Describe by size and general look.

11. Describe the forest type around this place.



12. Talk generally about the variety of plant communities and wildlife in the area you are considering.

13. Is this a place where you feel you will find privacy when you are at your chosen Anchor Point? If yes, then why? If no, why not?

14. How do you “feel” when you are at this place?

15. What is your schedule like and how do you feel this routine will fit into your life?



16. How much time can you see yourself *realistically* giving to this activity each week?

17. What is your response to the idea of finding your place instinctively?

NOW WHAT?

So what do you think so far? Before we go any further, I need to make it clear that you should *not* be reading this unless you have your Secret Spot and Anchor Point chosen. And I don't just mean that you know where it's going to be. You should only be reading this if it is established and you have hung out there a little bit and explored.

What follows is a series of mapping exercises that we'll have you do. I know that, for some folks, mapping isn't very exciting, but you already know how I feel about them. If you are one of those people who doesn't like to do them or doesn't see the point, you're just going to have to trust me on this one, OK? I wouldn't steer you wrong.

Developing a bird's-eye view and learning to map is crucially important to your development. Mapping, like many other skills of this type, takes time to learn and keeps teaching students of



all levels. The more you put into it, the more you'll get out of it. Don't be afraid to get dirty on this one, alright?

Now, because I know some of you aren't liking this idea very much, I've made it very simple. Here's a brief overview of what to expect. Over the next six to ten days you will be drawing maps of your Secret Spot to include: The Master Map, Trails Map, vegetation, topography, hydrology, soils and rocks. You'll do them in the order they are listed. Don't worry, more details follow.

I suggest that you treat it like the Morning and Evening Sessions of *Kamana One*. You are free to do it however you like, but I think you'll get the most out of it if you break it into sessions for yourself. I recommend the following: Day One is for the Master Map; Day Two map the trails; Day Three do your vegetation maps; Day Four record the topography of your Secret Spot; Day Five tackle the hydrology mapping; Day Six do rocks and soils; and on Day Seven, well, rest.

How are you going to break this up into mornings and evenings? That's the easy part. It takes quite a bit of time to get used to looking at things such as topography and hydrology. If I were you, I would read the description of the mapping exercise in the morning and practice using your eyes in that way for a day, then do the maps in the evening or even the next morning. Of course, you won't become an expert cartographer in one day of practicing each. Remember to have a good time and see what you can learn. You are not going to make the perfect map on your first try. Just do the best you can and you can, and we'll build upon it in the many months to come.

Now, read all that follows and then find a way to fit it into your next week. Give us a call if you have any questions.

Official Maps of Your Chosen Area

Take the three maps you have used to "zoom in" on your Secret Spot area and photocopy the section of the map that pertains to your area. Circle the area of your Secret Spot and put an "X" over your anchor point. Do this with 1) a state map; 2) a county map; and 3) another regional type map, preferably showing even more detail (such as the one you find at the park's headquarters that shows the trails). Hang on to these and you'll be sending them in to us in a little while.

Hand Drawn Maps of Your Secret Spot

Here are some things to help you do some preliminary explorations of your area from several different perspectives. In order



to complete this section, you must read through the following text and follow the instructions listed.

Follow these guidelines to make maps of your Secret Spot. Draw these maps on the Field Journal Pages on the enclosed pad. See the end of this section for examples by Jonathan Talbott (pages 68-73).

MAP 1: THE SECRET SPOT MASTER MAP

This is the first map you will draw, and it will be a reference for all other maps you draw in the future. It is likely that you will encounter situations that will make the mapping a challenge, and it is also likely that you will want to change locations after this exercise, so my recommendation is to make this first map a fast sketch in pencil. This map will be your “Master Map” for your Field Inventories (starting with Field Exercise Three). You will get to know this map better and better, and refine it several times, as you will re-draw a quick version of this map each time you create a new Field Inventory.

Keep This Map Simple and Uncluttered

For an example of how much detail to include in this map, see the map by Jonathan Talbott on page 68.

This first map will contain:

- 1) Anchor Point
- 2) Circle of 200 paces in diameter (100 paces from Anchor Point to edge of circle in any direction).
- 3) Four cardinal directions marked
- 4) Major land features to help locate directions and edge of area

Walk out 100 paces from what you feel is your Anchor Point, and prepare to outline the area by walking a circle with the Anchor Point as the center. Using normal walking paces, not baby steps, the area should be approximately 200 paces across in full diameter.

By walking 100 paces from your Anchor Point in any direction you will land on the edge of your circle and the edge of your study area for this part of the program. This circle becomes the object of your Nature Awareness Trail Field Inventories for the rest of this year of study.

Don't worry if you feel you can't quite get it at first. Just keep working on it and you will figure out how this is done. A helpful hint is for you to imagine yourself soaring above your place and looking down on it with “eagle vision.” Use your mind's eye right from the start!



Use a compass (or the sun at noon which will be very close to due south, or the north star at night), to help you locate the four directions as seen *from your anchor point*. Stand at your Anchor Point, hold a compass in your hand and look to where the needle is pointing. The needle will be pointing to Magnetic North.

In your area you must adjust the compass so that the North indicator on the numbered wheel of the compass is pointing true north. This is called “declination.” Every area has its own declination adjustment. Where I lived in New Jersey the needle pointed 12° or so West of True North. Here in Washington where I am living now, the needle actually points 22° East of True North.

The reason for this is that the actual Magnetic North where the needle is pointing is *south* of the true North Pole. You can find out declination from a local engineer, environmental consultant, a library, a Scoutmaster, or by reading a topographic map. If this is really hard for you, call us at the student line. If not, rely on the North Star on a clear night, or the sun at it’s highest point. You can be approximate for now and adjust the whole thing later.

Once you have located the four directions, pick a tree, rock, or distant landmark that represents each direction and draw a little symbol on the circle that represents the four directions of your first map. **Remember, north goes on the top of the page.**

Place on this map any major land features that will help you orient yourself and recognize your boundaries. On a piece of Field Journal paper, mark an “X” at the center of the page to denote your Anchor Point. Then mark the circle using up the entire page.

MAP 2: THE “TRAILS” MAP

Sketch your Master Map on a Field Journal page, and on it record trails of wildlife and people. You can leave out the ant trails. Start with rabbit-sized creatures and up.

On this map you will approximate the trail patterns at your Secret Spot. These trails should be sketched in pencil in a very simple way to indicate where you think people trails and various animals trails wind through your study area. Keep it *simple*. (See Jonathan’s example of how simple it is!)

Animal trails are everywhere. When you learn to recognize animal trails you will begin to notice them in many places. Trails come in many different shapes and sizes, and are used by a wide variety of animals. Often a trail is made by one animal and is used by many others.

For now, we are not worried about who made the trail or who is using it. I just want you to note the location of trails around your anchor point. If it looks like a trampled down area that runs in a



line, it is probably a trail. With snow on the ground, trails appear as visible lines running along the landscape that go under brush and around rocks, and they may have many footprints on them. Notice that some trails are not always used. Do not worry with details about the type of tracks present or any other identification concerns other than your *opinion* of the probable existence of a trail.

One way to recognize a trail is to imagine yourself the size of an animal that would fit on what you think is a trail. Some are small enough for voles or mice, others tall for deer, others wide for bears, or small and wide for groundhogs. Pretend you are the size of the animal, get your face down to the level of the animal's face to see if you see a tunnel through the landscape. If so, it's a trail.

One other note on trails—they can be many hundreds of feet long, or they can be as short as a few inches depending on their purpose. Keep that in mind.

Dens

You may find places where marmots, groundhogs, mountain beaver, foxes, bobcats or coyotes like to den. These animals prefer southern exposures, as they receive the most sunlight in the cold of winter. Notice such things as freshly dug burrows, especially in southern exposures, and especially in the more remote places in the forest.

These are likely to be the places where the fox pups and coyote pups and the kittens of the bobcat will be playing in spring. Note these places but please don't disturb them, especially if you see fresh signs or tracks. If disturbed, the animals will move and we don't want to disrupt the lives of these denning creatures. So if you happen to spot them, note them on your map and then leave them be. Later on, you will learn tips on how to observe the pups without disturbing the dens.

Sketching Trails on a Map

Make a fast bird's eye sketch of your study area. Use your Master Map as a reference to make a new map of this area. Now draw in the animal trails you have identified. You do not have to indicate what type of trails you find on this assignment, just sketch lines where you think they are relative to your anchor point and the other landmark features you have drawn for reference. Well worn trails should be drawn in with heavy lines, and more subtle trails should be drawn in with lighter lines.

Important Note About Seasons



When you look to the animals such as the deer and the fox and see how much they are suffering in the month of March, you realize what the year's end is really about in nature. During this time of year, the stored reserves for life are mostly depleted. These reserves include vegetation, nuts, seeds, buds, and berries left over from last year, and even the animal populations themselves.

The new growth of plant life and the increases in animal population due to spring births are still just around the bend on the circular road of the seasons. This is a time of scarcity and the animals are under a tremendous amount of stress. This is truly the year's end. It has nothing to do with calendars. Every part of the world has its highs and lows.

During this time of year that is so difficult for the animals, it is easiest for you to find trails. The trees and vegetation are mostly bare, providing you with an unobstructed view of the forest floor. The forest litter that was fresh in the autumn has now been weathered and trampled for a full season, leaving clear trails. These trails are still visible well into April, and though they are still present and well used as the year progresses, they become hidden by the full vegetation and will be more challenging to find.

Seeing Trails

You may not think that you have seen any trails, or you may be seeing them all over the place. Trails truly are everywhere. What you are looking for is a slight discoloration of leaves and vegetation on the ground. Trails will appear matted down whereas the surrounding forest floor will have leaves with corners sticking up, or leaves leaning against other leaves and vegetation.

The difference can be very subtle and it may take a careful eye to discern an animal trail; however, once you know what to look for and where to look, they become obvious. Look where animals would choose to pass through an area for easy travel. Such places might be through or around brush, around rocks, at the edge of fields, along creek sides, behind fences, or in places normally hidden from the view of humans. It helps to get on your hands and knees as well! **Don't be afraid to get a little dirty during this exercise.** When you have finished locating some of the major trails through your area, mark them on the map.

MAKING FEATURE MAPS



LEARNING THE LAY OF THE LAND

Animal trails are subtle features within the lay of the land. Now I want you to learn about other subtle features of the terrain, as well as the overall geography of your study area. Your next assignment is to wander all around your landscape over the course of a few days and take inventory of the physical features.

Summary For Sketching

When sketching the lay of the land onto your Field Journal pages, be sure to use a fresh sheet for each separate feature. In this way, they won't get too cluttered. If your first few are accurate, you can use them to help you figure out where other things on the map are. For instance, "Oh, I see. That vernal pool is just about 20 meters west of the highest point on that hill. I wonder if vernal pools are always on the west side?" Then, when you get home, it will be that much easier to map your hydrology.

Map 3: Vegetation

On one map sketch the vegetative features such as pine needles, maple leaves and oak leaves. (See Example.)

Map 4: Topography

On another map sketch the topographic features such as hills, hollows, hummocks, dips, ravines and gulches. (See Example.)

Map 5: Hydrology

On another map sketch the streams, creeks, springs, ponds, and pools. (See Example.)

Map 6: Soil and Rocks

On another map sketch the rocks, sand, mud, clay, and loamy soil. (See Example.)

How Well Do You Know Your Study Area?

I am always surprised to hear from people about their experiences very close to a familiar trail in a familiar patch of woods. While venturing from the trail to do a little investigating, they are startled to realize there is a creek just over that little rise, or a huge boulder or a cliff, an eroded gully, a ravine, or an old farm field hidden from view that they never knew existed. Until you've done some exploring there's no telling what landscape features you will



encounter, and the exploration itself can be great fun!

What To Look For

Go to your Secret Spot with the intent of looking for obvious geographic features and others that are more subtle. Take a walk from your anchor point to the perimeter of your area and circle around.

MAP 3: VEGETATION

Note the landmark trees, the big ones that you can see in all directions from your Anchor Point, and the dominant species of low-lying vegetation, such as ferns, berry thickets, and vines. Note where the grasses are. Note where the mosses are. If it's winter, look at the organic matter or forest litter. Oak leaves tend to stick around for a long time. Notice under maple trees that the leaves have already disintegrated and gone away. Note where pine needles are lying thick on the ground.

MAP 4: TOPOGRAPHY

Hills, Hollows, And Hummocks

Look for the little hills and hollows. Look for a place where an old tree uprooted and left an indentation as the roots pulled out of the ground. Notice where an old mine may have existed that was filled. The cause of the hollows is not really a concern; you just need to look for little hollows. Also look for little hills. There are little bumps known as hummocks that are often caused when a big tree falls over. The root ball rots and disintegrates into the ground leaving a little bump on the land, usually right next to a little hollow. Study the hills and hollows and hummocks.

Erosion

Also look for elongated dips in the ground that were formed when there was a high degree of erosion in that area. Look for gouges in the land such as ravines or gulches. In the summertime these features may be hidden from sight, covered with raspberry bushes, grasses or other kinds of wild herbs.

MAP 5: HYDROLOGY



Waterways

This is also time to pay attention to which way the creek flows, as it may be dry in the summer or hidden from view. Follow the streams as they move through the landscape, always checking the little tributaries and following them until you find where they begin. Springs are very difficult to see in the summertime, and as springtime advances, the springs themselves will be more difficult to see. Identify the wet areas, the rain pathways, and the springs of your area.

Vernal Pools

You may find during late winter or early spring what are known as vernal pools. These are ponds of water that are used by certain amphibians and some fish only for certain months of the year. These pools dry up and by the time late summer comes, the pools are gone. The only way you know they were ever there is by the discoloration of the leaves on what was the bottom of the pool and by some of the live vegetation growing there that favors wetland sites.

MAP 6: SOILS AND GEOLOGY

Soil

Look for places where sand is available. Later the grasses are going to grow in and cover these places. Find out where there is heavy clay, mud and loamy soil.

Rock Formations

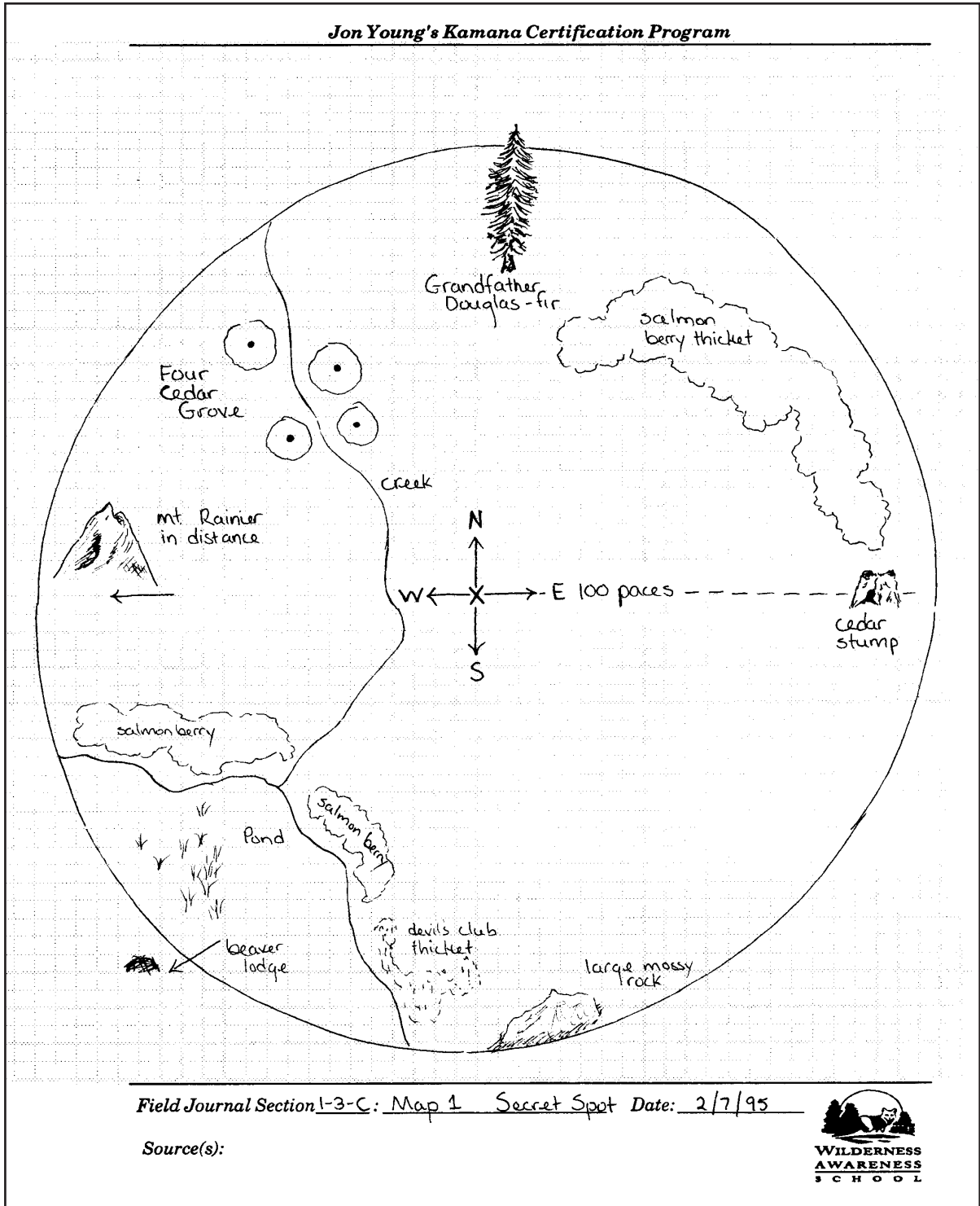
Make note of major rock formations that are in your study area. If there are none, note that too. Look for boulders, erratics left over from glaciers, things that don't look like they belong. Large boulders with scratch marks or gouges on them that are sticking out here and there may be erratics.

Take an hour or so now and look over the three official maps you have photocopied. Review the big picture of where your Secret Spot lies with respect to the land around you. Now review the maps you have drawn. Really take your time and have fun with this. Use your fingers to walk the landscape. Try to remember the smells, sounds and vegetation of the places that you know. Let that map come to life! Go do that now and don't come back until you're done with it.

A Word from Matt



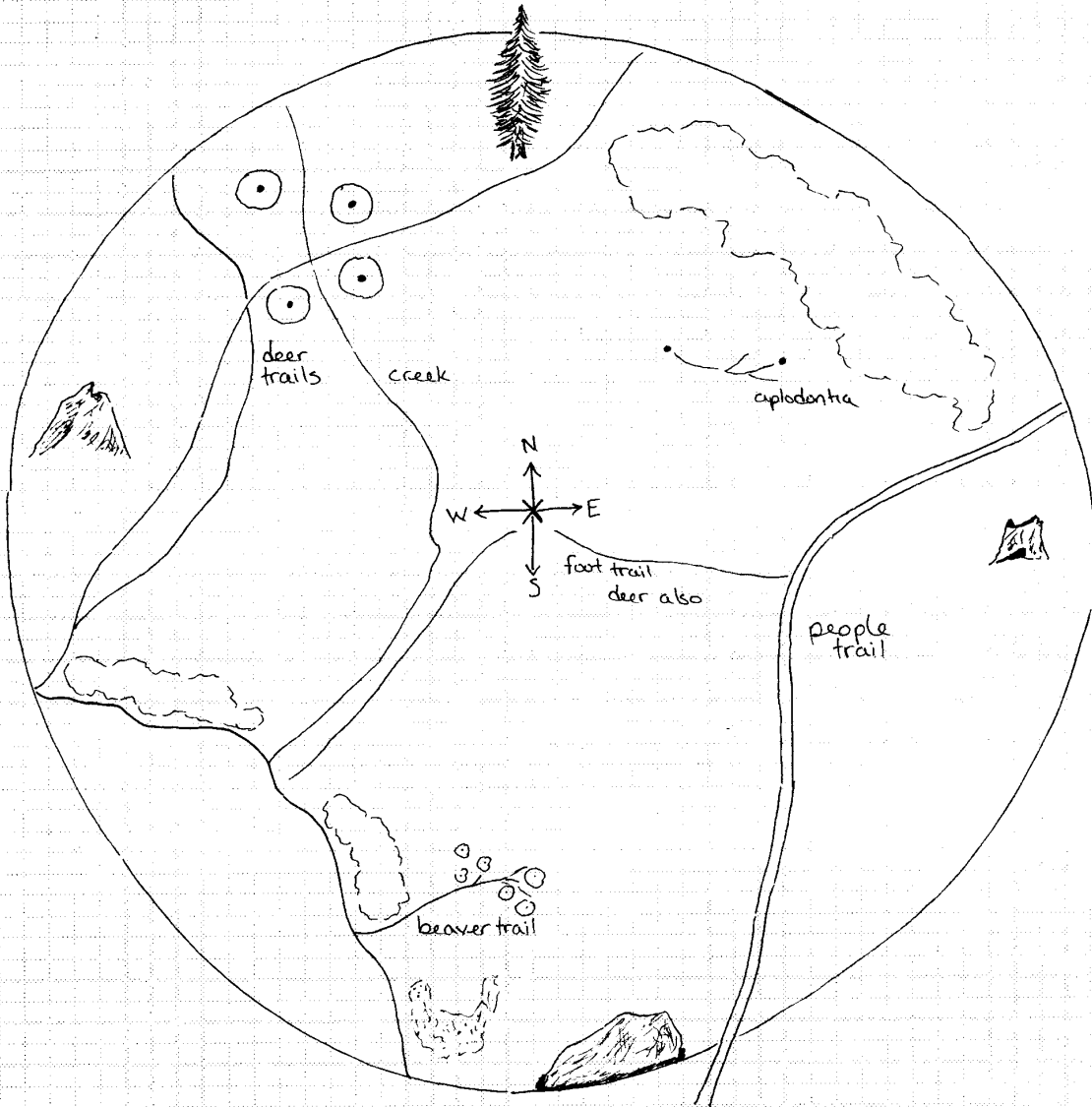
EXAMPLES



Map 1: Secret Spot Master Map



Jon Young's Kamana Certification Program



Field Journal Section 1-3-C: Map 2 Trails Date: 2/9/95

Source(s):



Map 2: Trails





Field Journal Section 1-3-C: Map 3 A Vegetation Date: 2/10/95

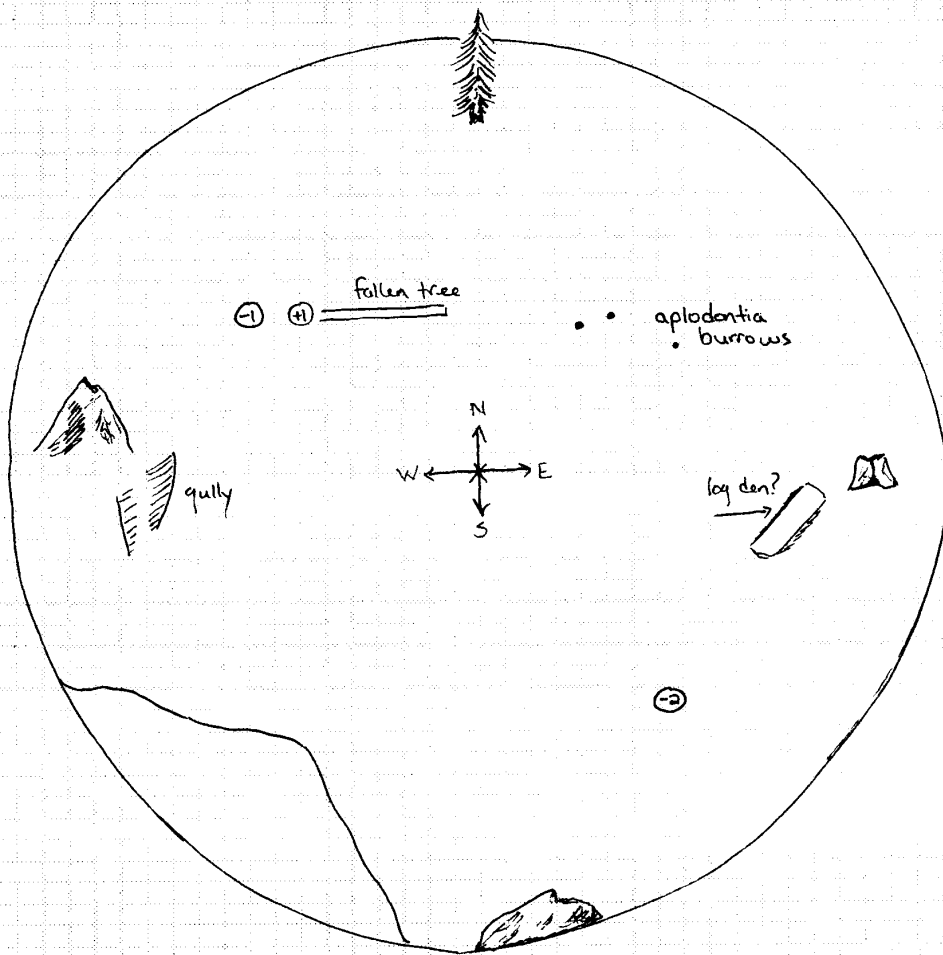
Source(s):



Map 3: Vegetation



Jon Young's Kamana Certification Program



Field Journal Section 1-3-C: Map 3 B Topography Date: 2/11/95

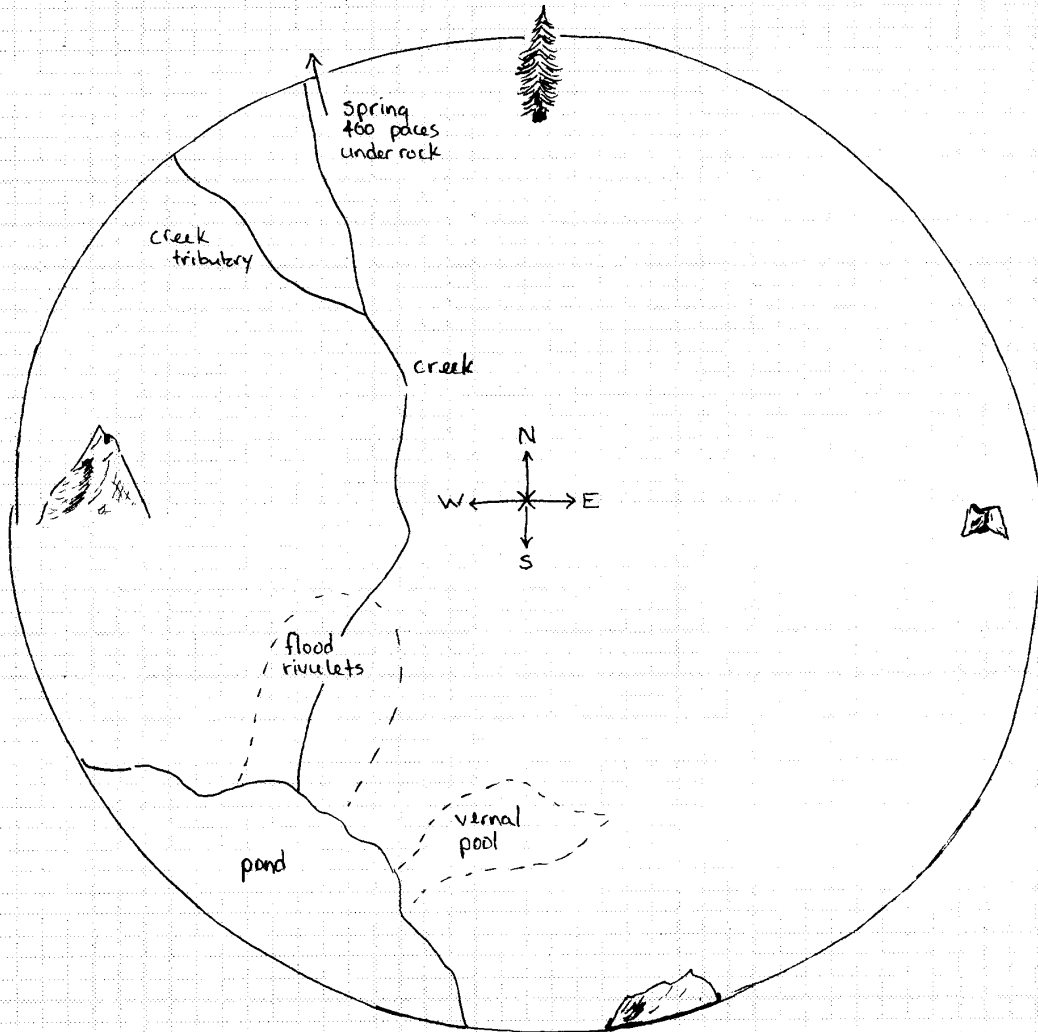
Source(s):



Map 4: Topography



Jon Young's Kamana Certification Program



Field Journal Section 1-3-C: Map 3 C Hydrology Date: 2/12/95

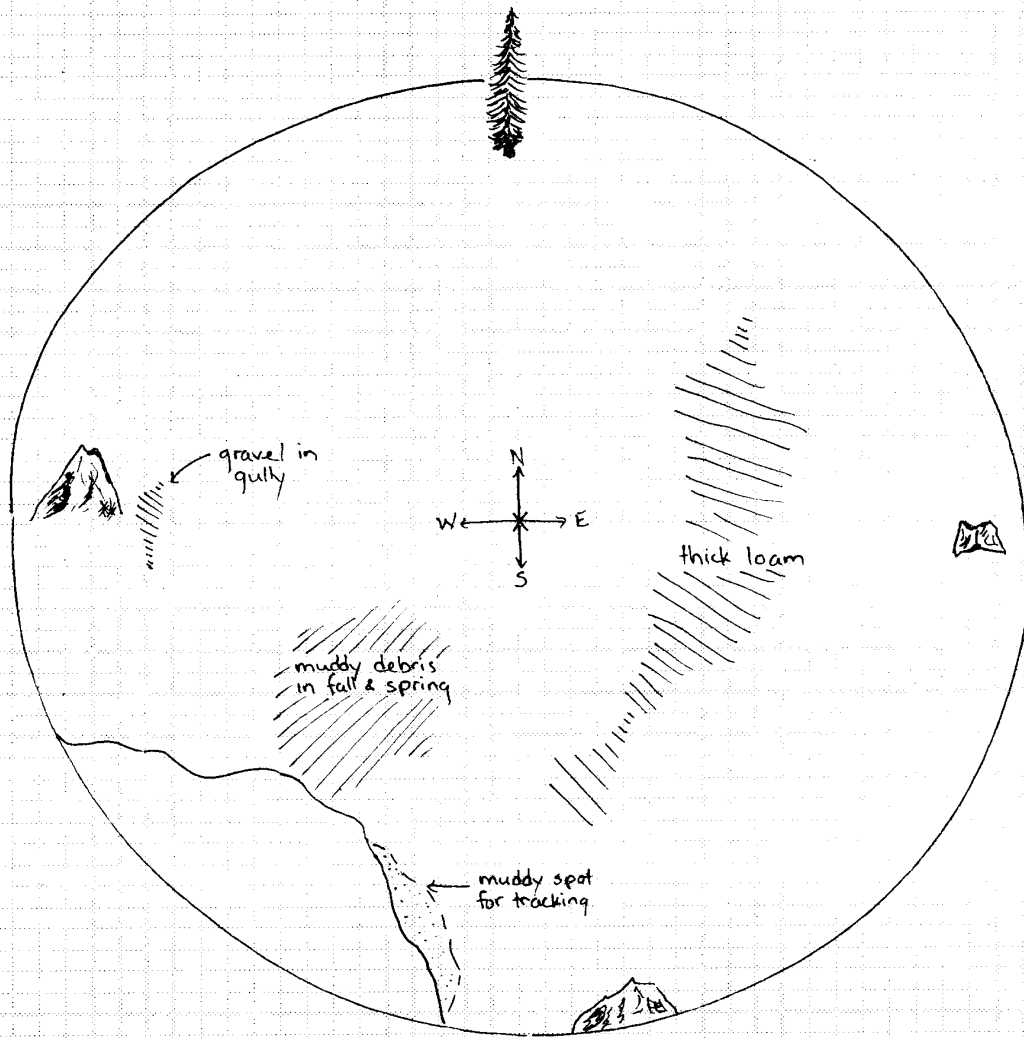
Source(s):



Map 5: Hydrology



Jon Young's Kamana Certification Program



Field Journal Section 1-3-C: Map 3 D Soil & Rocks Date: 2/11/93

Source(s):



Map 6: Soil and Rocks



Within two or three days, I'd like you to sit down and write your Field Exercise One Reflection on the pages that follow. This should be a reflection on what it was like finding your Secret Spot, spending time there, doing the mapping exercises, and any other cool things you want to tell us about your Secret Spot. Try to write a couple of pages. Write as if you were writing in your Nature Journal. Be open, be honest, and take the time to reflect and see what you've learned and what you have yet to learn. Do you like visiting your Secret Spot? Is it a challenge sometimes? Do you have questions for us? In addition, if you have been reading *The Education of Little Tree* during this time, what do you think of it? It amazes me that the Secret Spot idea was practiced by people from almost all continents for thousands of years. It's an honor to know that we are picking up this routine again. By the way, there are hundreds and hundreds of Secret Spot go-ers now. Chances are, when you're at your Secret Spot, one of our brothers or sisters is at theirs, too. Doesn't that feel good?

After you've written your reflection, get together all of your materials. What we're expecting is the three official maps of your area, your hand-drawn maps, the Martin and Sean Reflection, and your Field Exercise One Reflection. Once you're finished with that, take a deep breath and go on to Field Exercise Two. Remember to keep going to your Secret Spot. It is your foundation for everything that we do from here on out. Talk with you soon.

IMPORTANT



Following are blank pages for your Reflection paper, as well as the Field Pack 2.1 Assignment Sheet. When sending your work in to us, please remember the following:

1) Only send us **COPIES** of your work. **Please DO NOT send** the originals. You don't want to lose them. Keep them someplace safe—they'll be fun to look over in a few months. Even more fun in a couple of years. Maybe, someday, you'll even use them as teaching aids.

2) Don't forget to put your **NAME** and **STUDENT NUMBER** on each page. The date is helpful to us, too, but if you can only remember two things to write on **EVERY PAGE**, make it your **NAME** and **STUDENT NUMBER**. It's easy for your work to get lost if you do not properly label it.

3) Be sure not to move on to Field Exercise Two until you are done with this one.

Is your binder **missing** the following upcoming pages:

- **Field Exercise reflection sheets**
- **Blank Field Inventory sheets (for Field Pack 2.3 & up)**
- **The yellow Field Pack form you need to send work in to us?**

You can download the Field Pack forms, a blank Field Inventory template and Field Journal templates (Resource Trail) at www.kamana.org. For the Field Exercise reflections, simply reflect on the exercise by neatly writing or typing on a couple of sheets of paper.



FIELD EXERCISE ONE REFLECTION

Please respond to the Field Exercise, not the entire Field Pack.

We encourage typing Reflections if you feel comfortable doing so.



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE ONE REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE ONE REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE ONE REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

YOU MUST SEND US THIS FORM



ONLY hand in the following for Field Pack 2.1

- 1. Tourist Test Reflection**
(not the actual test) Located in *Songline*, Appendix B
- 2. Nature Awareness Trail:**
 - Martin and Sean Reflection
 - Field Exercise One Reflection
 - 3 official maps
 - Minimum of 5 hand-drawn maps
- 3. Resource Trail:**
 - 1 journal entry for each chapter (Chapters 2-7)

This form is for students registered with Kamana Services

(If you have not purchased this binder, you can find the *Student Services Registration Form for Kamana Two* at www.kamana.org. This is for on-going support during this program and certification through Wilderness Awareness School.)

Certification Option students use this form to organize your work as well.

- I am on time with this assignment.
(See the Registration Form we sent you for deadline.)
- I have exceeded the amount of time Student Services is available to me and have included \$25 for review of my work for this Field Pack.

Make checks out to Wilderness Awareness School. Students with Kamana Affiliates talk with your local office about payment options.

Method of payment: Check <input type="checkbox"/> M.O. <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Amex <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name as it appears on the card: _____	
Account number: _____	
Expiration date: _____	Today's date: _____
Signature _____	

Please send **COPIES, not originals...**
Write neatly in ink or type your work.

I have new contact information.

Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____
Day: _____

Email: _____

3. Mail to Kamana Student Services
FULL STUDENT SERVICES students please use the provided Field Pack label on the back of the envelope.

2. Tear off this sheet, fold in half, and insert your work in an envelope.

1. Did you include:
Copies (not originals) of:

- your Tourist Test Reflection
- your Resource Trail work
- your Nature Awareness Trail work (include all pages)



Name: _____
Student Number: K _____
Date: _____



We encourage you to copy your work on recycled paper (double sided) OR use the blank back side of already used copy paper.

Field Pack 2.2 Assignment Overview:

The Nature Awareness Trail:

- Read and complete the exercises for Field Pack 2.2. This assignment and Field Pack should take you no less than 30 days. See the yellow sheet at the end of this section for the exact exercises. In addition to your Reflection, you'll start your weekly Field Inventories. So this month you'll hand in your Field Exercise Two Reflection and four Field Inventories.

The Resource Trail:

What you'll be handing in:

- Two journals from each chapter for Chapters 2-7 of the *Resource Trail*.

Remember to check the YELLOW form at the end of the Field Pack to make sure you understand exactly what you'll need to send in.

Tips for Kamana Two:

Nature Awareness Trail:

- Make sure you reflect on the actual Field Exercise content ONLY in your Field Exercise Reflection.
- Fill out every space in your Field Inventories (Field Pack 2.2 and after). Be creative as well as observant.

Resource Trail:


- Try not to spend more than half an hour on a journal. (You want to get this down to 20 minutes).
- Use the Mind's Eye approach. Do not copy information verbatim.

IMPORTANT

Please hand in your work one Field Pack at a time. Do not send us more than one at a time to review. Your work with Student Services will provide you with 50% of the value of this course. You will get the most from Wilderness Awareness School or its Kamana Affiliates if you hand them in one at a time as you complete them.

**PLEASE WRITE NEATLY IN INK OR TYPE
THE WORK THAT CAN BE TYPED.**

Need help or inspiration? Give us a call!

FIELD
EXERCISE
TWO

THE
SENSE
MEDITATION

THE LEOPARD

by Matt Wild

In Red Bank, New Jersey—January of 1993—I met a man who was to change my life forever. I had already heard a bit about him. Not much—just enough to know that he deserved respect. I had no idea at the time, but I soon discovered he was a man I had been looking for all of my 18 years of living.

I knew that he was a co-founder of Wilderness Awareness School. He was of British decent but was raised in Kenya, Africa, and was adopted by the Akamba people (a traditional tribe of Natives living in the old ways). They raised him and mentored him in the way they had been mentoring people for thousands of years. He was an unbelievably great tracker, naturalist, hunter, storyteller and mentor. He had moved to New Jersey many years earlier to follow his vision to share the wisdom he had learned. He was in his late 70's. He was kind and considerate and a wonderful role model. I knew Jon Young and many others respected him. I had heard of his many volumes of photo albums from Africa. I heard he liked his coffee very much. His name was Ingwe.

Jon and I were on our way to the Wilderness Awareness School office one day, and he mentioned we were stopping by Ingwe's so I could meet him. I assumed the three of us would chat for a couple of minutes and we'd be on our way. It was 8:10 in the morning. Jon pulled his van up to the curb, pointed at an apartment building and said, "That's it right there, apartment B. Knock first but then go right in. Make him some coffee as soon as you get in—he takes it with a little milk and one sugar. Don't make him mad, OK, Matt? Oh, and ahhh...tuck in your shirt before you go in, would ya? I'll be back to get you late this afternoon. What did you bring him for a gift?"

Needless to say, I was a little on the nervous side. I tucked my shirt in, knocked, went in and found my way up the stairs. Meeting his eyes was like looking into the eyes of a Leopard or Mountain Lion. He was wild. It was, literally, like looking into the eyes of a wild animal. They obviously saw much more than I could imagine. They were filled with wisdom, compassion, kindness and an acute awareness. I had never seen eyes like that. I was captivated and a touch frightened. "You're late" was apparently all he had to say for now.

Fortunately, my shaky hands didn't spill his coffee as I brought it to him. He sipped it, smiled a big, wide grin and asked me where I was from. We spent the whole day together. I listened to his stories of the African wilderness, looked at his photo albums, met his wife and was honored to be adopted as his grandson. I still keep in touch with him regularly and stop by to visit him when I'm in New Jersey.

Ingwe is a wonderful grandfather, teacher, mentor, tracker, naturalist, photographer, hunter, storyteller...the list goes on and on. But there were two things I noticed most about him that day in January. The first was that when you're in a room with him, it really and truly feels like you are in the presence of a Leopard. Honestly. His eye contact is difficult to meet and you feel like at any moment, if he chose to, he could leap across the room, kill you, and be back in his chair before anyone knew what had happened. The second thing I noticed was that he has better senses than anyone I have ever met. He can see, hear and smell things that I can only dream of. His senses, like his presence, are those of a hunting cat.

When we had become close, I finally asked him one day, "Grandfather, how is it that you can always see, hear and smell things that nobody else can?" He told me the answer was very simple...practice. He told me to practice in a very specific way and gave me different exercises to work on. Those exercises are what make up Field Exercise Two. I've told you about Ingwe because I want you to know—really know—that you can continue to practice these for the rest of your life and they will take you beyond your wildest dreams of perception. Just in case you have any doubts, I have a story to share.

In the Spring of 1993, Wilderness Awareness School was running an expedition to The Great Smoky Mountain National Park. Jon Young, Ingwe and four or five instructors were going. None of us had ever been to that part of the park before. My job on the trip was going to be teaching the daily kid's programs and looking after Ingwe and our camp. I was also the designated "runner" in case of emergency. Needless to say, I studied the maps every day for about a month to make sure I could find all the water sources, lookout points, roads, ranger station, etc.

We drove down a few days before the students were to arrive so that we could get acquainted with the area and relax a bit. When we first arrived we all rushed to get out of the van. It had been a long, long ride. I opened the door for Ingwe. He got out, looked around for two or three seconds, took a deep breath in through his nose, pointed uphill and to the west and said, "Matt, why don't you go get Ingwe some water from that spring over



there.” He always refers to himself in the third person like that. Now, keep in mind I had been pouring over maps. I knew exactly where we were, and I knew that the closest running water was about a quarter of a mile south-east from where we were and that the closest spring was over two miles away and to the south. He pointed west, but I ignored the direction of his finger.

“Well Ingwe, I don’t have time to go all the way to the spring, but I’ll go,” I pointed southeast, “get you some water from the creek and have it purified in just a couple of minutes. Is that OK?”

He looked at me for a little while in a way that always made me uneasy. He said, “What do you mean you don’t have time? Just run over there and fill this with that nice Smoky Mountain spring water.” He handed me his canteen.

It was an uncomfortable situation to be in, but *someone* had to tell him he was wrong. After all, who would go uphill to find water? “Ingwe,” I said, “there is no water over there. There’s a little creek just a quarter mile from here, but the closest spring is at least two mile....”

“There’s a spring right over there! I can hear it! I can smell it! Go and get Ingwe some water!” Oops. I seemed to have made him mad. Well, I had been around him long enough to know that I should just do what he says, and so I walked off headed west. My plan was simple...I was going to walk west until I was out of sight, circle around, go get water from the creek and bring it back for him. I got far enough away, turned south and walked about 10 feet before I stepped in mud.

“Mud,” I thought, “Hmm. That’s strange.” I followed it uphill a little bit, forgetting about my task for Ingwe, and discovered that it turned into a very small and slow-moving stream, only about three or four inches wide. Uphill another 15 feet, there it was—a beautiful mountain spring. “Oh my gosh!” I was so excited. “I found a spring!” After drinking a bunch, I started to cup my hands together to shout for the others and celebrate my discovery, but I noticed there was a canteen in my hand. “Wait a minute. How could he have known that?” I rushed to fill his canteen and ran all the way back.

“Ingwe! Ingwe! There really was a spring up there. How did you know that?” I was beside myself.

“Simple. Just like I said...I could hear it. I could smell it. And now, I will taste it. Thank you very much.”

“What do you mean you could hear it? I could hardly hear it when I was standing in it. You mean that you sensed it somehow, right? You don’t really mean you heard it with your ears.” I was yanking on my own ear lobes in disbelief as I ask him.



“No, I really heard it. Listen.” He put one finger to his mouth as if to say “Sssshhh.”

“*What are you talking about Ingwe?!*” I was getting annoyed.

He said, “I can hear it because I *really* know what it sounds like. Can’t you hear the sound of your own name from another room even if you didn’t hear the rest of the words? That’s because you truly know it. Go and sit by that spring and really listen to it... don’t just hear it. Pay attention to it, Matt. Get to know it and soon you, too, will be able to hear it from far away. But only when you really *know* what it sounds like.”

That’s a true story. I went back to that same place a couple of years ago. I stood in the same spot, listened as hard as I could, and I still couldn’t hear the darn thing. I found it again, though, and it’s got to be one of the sweetest tasting springs in the South. Maybe I’ll be able to hear it next time. Well, you’ve waited long enough. Here’s Field Exercise Two. Read it through once, and re-read it a couple of times in the next week or so. Have fun.

LOSE YOUR MIND AND COME TO YOUR SENSES

“I stopped thinking when I was 19 years old.”

Jon Young

Can you stop thinking anytime you want...just turn the “brain chatter” right off? Can you stop thinking so that your mind is completely clear of thought and your spirit is left to freely detect the life force? Can you stop thinking for as long as you want and keep your mind free for an indefinite time if you so choose? This exercise will teach you one simple way to do it.

When I say I stopped thinking when I was 19, that is not to say I haven’t had a single thought since. What I mean is that I stopped allowing thoughts to control me—I took control of them. I stopped letting the thinking mind distract me from sensory awareness. I can start or stop thinking whenever I want to and “thought-less-ness” is now my primary mode of existence. This is absolutely necessary for developing the awareness skills that are vital to a naturalist and a tracker, as well as for allowing the small voice of intuition to be heard. It so happens that the following exercises are perfect for practicing at your Secret Spot!

BIRD’S EYE VIEW OF FIELD EXERCISE TWO

First, you will read over the entire exercise and get a feeling for the vital importance of this next piece to add to your “naturalist’s tool kit.” Then you will find a quiet place to begin practicing



bringing your various senses to life. You will practice four animal forms, imitating an aspect of each animal, and adding that animal's dominant sense to the ones you have already gained.

Once you have this basic understanding of what is involved, you will practice this awareness routine at your Secret Spot. This is a valuable tool that will bring a new depth of meaning and understanding to the world around you, and one that you will find very useful in all areas of your life. Towards the end of the month, you will write a Reflection Paper on what this exercise has done for your experience of nature and the world around you.

Overview

1) Read through this entire Field Exercise to see how everything flows together, and to begin to understand why a state of heightened awareness can be so important to a true naturalist.

2) Do the "Awareness Appetizer," below, as you come to it. Then go back to the section titled "The Sense Meditation or Sensory Awareness Exercise." Read this section again, stopping to do each animal awareness form as it is described. Then put them all together, becoming an owl-deer-raccoon-dog person with all your senses fully engaged at the same time.

3) Practice the Sensory Awareness Exercise every time you think of it, and whenever you go to your Secret Spot. Remember to write notes for your Naturalist Field Inventory. You may find that some of your brightest images come during your Sense Meditation, when your spirit is left free to detect the life forces that surround everything. Also, start reading the book *Ingwe* or listening to *Spirit of the Leopard* (both available at www.WildernessAwareness.org)

4) After at least 30 days, write your Field Exercise Two Reflection on the pages at the end of this section. Write specifically about your experience with this exercise. Tying in Ingwe's stories might be a fun thing to do. This can be a page or more to tell us how this exercise worked for you. Just lay it out in a very straightforward manner and have fun reflecting on the different things that come up for you.

5) At the end of the month, gather together your four weeks of Field Inventories, etc., and this "Reflection Paper," make copies, and send the copies all to us. If you have questions you'd like a quick reply to, give us a call.



SOME THOUGHTS ON SENSE MEDITATION

by Jon Young

“Sensory Awareness Exercise,” and “Sense Meditation”—you’ll see us use these terms interchangeably. They both mean the same thing: a set of exercises that will help you to develop your awareness of the world around you to peak efficiency.

Thinking the Fox Afraid

Back sometime in my late teens, I was walking down one of the many sand roads in the Pine Barrens late one night. I was strolling along, enjoying the feel of the breeze ruffling my hair, the gentle shift of the sand under my feet and the strong scent of pine. I wasn’t thinking; in fact, I hadn’t had a thought in my head for several hours. I was simply that old sponge, absorbing all the wonderful sights, scents, sounds and sensations around me.

Out of the distance, I noticed a fox trotting down the road toward me. He appeared totally unconcerned as he cut a chalk-line straight track in the sand. As he came closer, it was obvious that the two of us were going to meet right there in the middle of the road.

When the fox was nearly beside me, an uninvited thought burst into my head, “Boy, I can’t wait to tell somebody about this!”

The thought rattled around in the stillness of my mind like a metal garbage can banging down an empty street in the wind. The fox startled at that exact instant. He froze in place, half cowering, and looked up at me with the most incredibly surprised, unbelieving expression, as if to say, “Where in the heck did you come from?” I honestly believe that up until that moment, he had not perceived me as a human being.

I was completely ashamed of myself. Here I had the opportunity for this wonderful experience with a fox, and I had blown it by wanting to brag to somebody about what I’d done. I breathed a slow steady breath, exhaling all the tension and feelings that came with the thought. With that breath, my mind returned to its former state of calm awareness, and the intruding thought vanished like a shadow in the night.

The fox recovered from his half-crouch, his stance relaxed, and his eyes lost their look of alarm. He gave a slight shake, more like a shudder, as if ridding himself of the unpleasant experience, and resumed his happy trot down the road.



The Right Tool For the Right Job

This experience, and several others like it, have firmly convinced me that thoughts carry real, tangible power. In the natural world, it is important to be able to take the “thought tool” out of our “naturalists’ tool kit” and put it to good use—when the situation calls for it. My friend Greg, who sides houses for a living, will tell you that he would be lost without his special tools. At the same time, he doesn’t use his siding tools to repair his truck. There are times on the road to native natural awareness where thinking is definitely called for. And there are times when it is best left in the tool box. Our challenge, as naturalists, is to perfect our use of our “awareness tool” to the point where it becomes second nature. Awareness is one of those tools that should never be put away. Toned down, sometimes, but never completely turned off. The rational thought process is best left for those times that call for critical analysis.

Don’t Despair

If you have tried, or done, meditation, and if it was difficult to get into or remain in that state of un-thinking, don’t despair. Meditation is already a useful tool for some people, but for others, the task of completely turning off the thinking mind, as taught by many meditation instructors, is just too difficult. Classical meditation practices and this Sensory Awareness Exercise are as different as night and day *in approach*. So please approach this exercise with an open mind and let go of any preconceptions about meditation of another sort. If you practice this exercise regularly, *the way it is given here*, you can’t help but succeed.

Before Reading On, How About a “Sense Meditation Appetizer?”

It’s very simple: just relax, find a focal point out in front of you somewhere, expand to your peripheral vision, listen to the sounds all around you, sense the feelings your body is picking up, and notice the smells and tastes you are sensing. Maintain your peripheral vision at the same time you become aware of the other sounds and sensations around you. This means that your eyes aren’t really focused on any point or object, you just have “blurry vision” of everything. This is the state you naturally drift into when you are having a vivid daydream experience, except that during daydreaming your attention is focused on an imagined happening. Here, your attention is focused on the very real sensations your body is receiving from all around you. Really pour yourself into it, one sense at a time. You are a hypersensitive antenna of awareness, the proverbial sensory sponge in an ocean of stimuli.

If you had even one second where you did not have a WORD



pronouncing itself in your head, you succeeded for that brief moment in not thinking. If you can do it for a second, you can do it for two seconds. If you can do it for two seconds, you can do it for five, or for five minutes, or for five hours. All it takes is practice, and the will to master this tool.

This was just a taste of the real thing. Read on for the main course and dessert!

Thinking vs. Sensing

Be careful about the definition of what thinking is. Maybe you believe you are thinking when you are in fact adjusting your awareness to detect what your five senses are telling you. Thinking amounts to things like: “Gee, I have to go meet my friend at 5 o’clock,” and “Oh, I’d better get my homework done,” and “I wonder how much my gas bill is this month.” *Any unnecessary things that are constantly intruding into your mind which don’t have anything to do with your awareness of your surroundings are thoughts.* These thoughts must not be allowed to distract the intent of your will. The thinking mind is stuck in your head, whereas the sensing mind reaches into your surroundings. Your intent is to be fully aware with all of your senses fully engaged at all times.

Use your mind, don’t let your mind use you.

–Joseph Campbell

Stress in our lives is caused by how we think about stimuli and not how the stimuli really are. We choose to become upset, we *choose* to be angry, we *choose* to become emotional about things. It is not a function of the stress itself; it is really a function of how we perceive it and what we *think* about it.

For a really interesting study in this whole process, look into the Joseph Campbell video series known as *The Power of Myth*, where he discusses how the thinking mind can diminish the quality of life. He talks about how we should learn to live from our spirit and from our hearts and not from our thinking minds.

*The thinking mind is an excellent servant,
but a terrible master.*

–Unknown

Ultimately, when you reach the level of awareness that *native*



people possess when they live close to the land, you don't think at all, except when you choose to. The Sense Meditation is a direct route to this awareness, with easily reproducible results even for beginners.

You can use your thinking mind just the way my friend Greg uses his special hammer. When you are finished using the thinking part of your mind, just put it away in its tool box and return to your senses. Sensory awareness becomes your normal state of existence, and thinking becomes something you use to problem-solve, not something that rules your life. As Kahlil Gibran said: "It is slavery to live in the mind, unless it has become part of the body." Think about that for awhile! (Just kidding...)

USING THE SENSORY AWARENESS EXERCISE IN YOUR SECRET SPOT

When you are on the way to your Secret Spot, the first thing you should do is go into your Sense Meditation. Remember the house cat we introduced to you earlier? When the cat stepped out of the house and into the night, it stopped a moment on the porch to allow its eyes to adjust to the different light level, it checked the air for scents, and the breeze for sounds. Become that cat each time you leave your house. Immediately upon stepping out the door, stand still for a moment and tune in to your five senses. Start by taking a deep breath, hold it for a second or two, then exhale and relax. Look through your owl eyes, listen with your deer ears, feel the world around you with raccoon body, and smell and taste the air like the dog: use all of your senses fully—only then begin your walk.

Notice that if you are moving when doing this meditation, your focal point will constantly be changing. Try using a point above the horizon or just forget about having a central focal point and expand your visual awareness to the perimeter of your visual screen. Practice the Sense Meditation when you are walking to your Secret Spot, stopping occasionally to enhance it.

Once you've arrived at your Secret Spot, use it there as well. You'll tend to drift out of awareness, so the last thing you should do before you leave your Secret Spot is your Sense Meditation. When you return home, the last thing you should do before you step into your house is your Sense Meditation.

Make sure you use your Sense Meditation whenever you go to your Secret Spot but don't limit it to only that time. Use this tool in as many places as possible and as often as possible. *Whenever you think of it, do it.*

Even when you are in the house, let the subtle sounds outside



catch your ear and your awareness. If it is a bird you have never heard before, step outside and look for it. If it is those crows again, then go see what they are doing; maybe it is just their typical mysterious crow mischief. But then, maybe this time they are calling about a red-tailed hawk soaring overhead! Pay attention. That is what this course is about!

Take a Moment to Prepare for the Sensory Awareness Exercise

Before beginning the Sensory Awareness Exercise, find a pleasant location and a comfortable position; then relax. In the beginning, you should start off in a sitting position, but this particular exercise can be done while lying down, sitting, walking, running, driving, or just about anytime. Your goal is to develop the ability to enter this clear awareness at any time by *focusing your will* on this intent.

I am going to guide you through a Sense Meditation in this written assignment. However, you will become familiar with it and easily remember it on your own. It is as simple as learning to tune in your five senses, one at a time.

THE “SENSE MEDITATION” OR “SENSORY AWARENESS EXERCISE”

Sense of Sight

We will work through our senses in the order of their dominance. For most people, sight is their strongest sense. We use our eyes all the time, so let's begin with sight.

Owl-Eyes Form: Owls have developed eyes so big and so powerful that they have actually outgrown their eye sockets and are “frozen” in place. They have incredible eyesight, and are able to locate prey even on the darkest of nights.

Imagine that you are an owl. Look straight ahead and imagine that your eyeballs are so large that they are stuck in your eye sockets and cannot move. To look at, or focus your eyes on something, you have to move your entire head.

Now look straight ahead toward wherever your body is facing. Pick a spot directly across from you that you can train your eyes on without moving. Hold that spot in the center of your vision as your focal point. If your eyes wander off, bring them back to your focal point again. Always return to that one spot.

While staring at that spot and without moving your eyeballs, notice that you can also see part of the ground or floor between you and that spot. And without moving your eyeballs you can see part of the sky or ceiling between you and that spot. You can see



the ground, the sky, and that spot all at the same time using your peripheral vision.

Build on this peripheral vision now by adding to your awareness the farthest thing you can see to the left and the farthest thing you can see to the right, all without moving your eyeballs. You can see these five things at once: your focal point, the ground, the sky, the extreme left, and the extreme right.

Sense of Hearing

Now, while maintaining your focal point and expanded vision, notice the sounds around you.

Deer-Listening Form: Imagine that you are a deer, with a set of incredible auditory receptors that swivel and turn to catch the slightest sound. Pay attention to how your ears feel. Twitch them, or “prick up your ears,” and pretend that you are a deer, able to hear the subtlest of noises for a great distance, warned long before any possible danger approaches you.

Listen to the sounds all around you. Perhaps you can hear the wind as it moves through the branches of a tree. If you are indoors, maybe you can hear the humming of the refrigerator, or the hum of an electric light. Notice that even where there is no sound, you can still hear the sound of silence. Sometimes you can hear a low-pitched vibration as background noise. There is sound coming from 360 degrees around you at all times. In your mind, sweep the area all around you, using your ears like radar. Tune in to the sounds in all four directions as well as those coming from above and below you.

With Owl Eyes and Deer Ears: Now, once again, return your awareness to your vision. See that spot? Make sure your whole peripheral vision is turned on. At the same time, listen to the sounds all around you. Now your eyes and your ears are fully engaged.

Sense of Touch

While you are aware of the ground, the sky, the spot in front of you, the birds singing overhead, and the sound of the wind in the trees, you are at the same time sitting on the ground, or in a chair, and your hands may be resting on your knees.

Raccoon-Touch Form: Raccoons earn their livings by their sense of touch. Have you ever watched a raccoon as it investigates the rocks at the edge of a pond? Its little hands touch and turn, check and reach under and around each rock, hoping for a tasty morsel. All the while, raccoons seem to be staring off into space, not really looking at what their hands are doing. Raccoons see



with their hands; they are the masters of touch.

Become the raccoon's hands, and feel the sensations around you with your whole body. How does it feel where you are sitting? Is the ground cold, or is there a rock poking you in the back? Is there any place in your body that is crying for attention? What does it feel like inside your shoes or on the ground beneath your feet? Can you feel moisture? Is the sun shining on your face? Can you feel its heat? Is the wind blowing your hair? Tune in to these things.

The largest organ of the human body is the skin. Skin is also the primary receptor for the sense of touch. Notice all of the sensations you are receiving from your sense of touch—from gravity to sunlight.

Owl Eyes, Deer Ears and Raccoon Hands: Now, go back to your focal point and peripheral vision. Return your awareness to the sounds all around you, and remain aware of the feelings that your body is picking up from the environment.

Senses of Smell and Taste

You will now add another level of awareness, the sense of smell.

Dog-Nose Form: Sniff the air the way a dog does—short inhalations to see if you can pick up an intriguing scent, a hint of dinner. The dog's nose is particularly sensitive, perfect for sniffing out the fresh track of another dog, a cat, a squirrel...or your steak dinner! Become the dog and sniff the air, flaring your nostrils to detect subtle smells.

Can you smell anything? Your nose has been picking up messages the whole time you've been sitting there. Now tune in to what it is telling you. If you are sitting under an evergreen, can you smell the fragrance of the needles or the pitch on the bark? Is that a hint of smoke? Can you smell the car that just drove by? Can you smell the fragrance of the rich moist earth, or the wonderful dryness of the sandy desert?

Smell and taste are closely related. As you use your nose and your sense of smell, notice also the tastes you can sense in your mouth and on your tongue. Is that a hint of your morning coffee there behind your molars? Can you taste the pine tree off to your right?

Owl Eyes, Deer Ears, Raccoon Hands and Dog Nose: Again, return to your focal point and peripheral vision. Be aware of the sounds all around you and the feelings that your body is picking up from the environment. Notice the smells and tastes that you



are sensing.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

by Matt Wild

Practice focusing your awareness through each sense, slowly adding on until you are practicing all five senses at the same time. Return to this Sense Meditation description frequently to make sure that you are not leaving anything out.

So there you have Field Exercise Two. What I'd like to do now is introduce what we call Field Inventories. They're easy things to do and will serve as a major part of your studies. From here on out, you'll be asked to fill out one Field Inventory every week for the duration of your time as an Independent Studies student. Field Inventories are a series of questions that will help you make clear observations of your Secret Spot and emotions and give you the time necessary to reflect on what you're doing and how you're progressing. They're a lot of fun.

I'll tell you a story about Jon Young. One day he and I were sitting in the Pine Barrens that you have all heard so much about. It was just after sunrise sometime in early May. Tree branches were heavy with buds, leaves and bird excitement. Bird song literally filled the air space and in every single moment there were at least two or three bird songs to be heard—sometimes there were as many as half a dozen singing at once. It was absolutely beautiful. I started asking Jon what some of them were. After a short time he closed his eyes and was naming *every single* bird as it sang and point to the direction of its song. Amazing! I took that as a challenge and decided to one-up him.

“Oh yeah,” I smirked, “Where's the moon right now?”

He pointed directly at it without opening his eyes. I'd have to push a little harder. “Which way is the wind coming from?” He pointed directly upwind before I was even done with my question and said softly, “About half a knot, but it just switched recently. It was out of the east until just a couple of minutes ago.” I continued to throw question after question at him until I could think of no more. I asked things pertaining to all of his senses. He got every one right and never hesitated to answer quickly.

Needless to say, I was awestruck. With no other questions left to ask him, I said, “Please teach me how to do that.” This is what he explained: It's simply a matter of practice. Start by picking a couple of senses to focus on for now. “It's real easy,” he said, “you just have to take it one step at a time.” He told me to spend the next two weeks focusing on my sense of hearing. He told me to



just keep pushing that sense. “It’s like a muscle in your arm or leg. The more you work it, the stronger it gets.”

For the next two weeks, when I would come back from my Secret Spot he would ask me all sorts of questions about what I had heard. How far away was it? Which direction did it come from? How many total sounds did you hear? How many could you identify? One day I came back and he said, “What did it smell like at your Secret Spot today?”

“I don’t know, Jon, you told me to focus on hearing.” He laughed, but when he asked the same question the next day you can bet that I knew. Slowly and patiently, he would introduce a new sense when he was satisfied with my accomplishments, always stressing not to ignore the others I had been practicing. He told me to use Owl Eyes and Deer Ears as a root, or foundation to build from. “Never get so distracted with practicing another sense that you forget about Owl Eyes and Deer Ears.”

Within a couple of months he was asking me about wind direction, humidity levels, bird activity, tracks, the scent of the plants, coming weather, etc. Then he’d always say suddenly, “Close your eyes!” and ask me something about the room I was in. He continued to build on it, over and over again. Believe it or not, I never really felt like I was learning what I had asked him to teach me. One night inside a house in West Virginia, many people were gathered talking over the radio. I noticed Jon’s body language change a bit—something I had learned to look for. He was still listening to the person who was talking to him, but I could tell he had heard something outside. Nobody else noticed. I sent my hearing out the partially opened window and heard what had gotten his attention. Coyotes, a pretty big pack, howling and yipping from across the valley and up on the other hill.

In my excitement I asked everybody to listen, “Shhh...can you hear that? Coyotes.” Jon smiled. Everyone else crowded by the windows and opened them up all the way. We all heard that beautiful sound of coyotes gathering in the night. It sounded like they were singing and dancing. Someone whispered, “Where are they? I’ve never heard coyotes here before.” I jumped in, proud and eager to show off, “They’re about half way up that hill over there.”

When they had stopped howling and conversation resumed someone came up to me and asked how the heck did I ever hear that? Could I teach them to use their ears that way? It was the first time I realized what Jon was teaching me. Jon, hearing my conversation with this young man from across the room, smiled knowingly. On his way out the door he whispered, “You missed them the first two times. There was another pack down river. They



were calling back and forth for 15 minutes before you noticed. But good job...good job.”

So that’s the way it works. Just like all of these skills, it’s something no one will ever master, but it sure is fun to practice. The Field Inventories have been written by Jon to get you thinking about pushing these senses and making good observations. The first four—one month’s worth—will be simple. Please fill them out every week. You don’t have to write much, just keep thinking about it. Slowly, as the program goes on, we’ll build upon them and begin asking more and more questions.

The next pages of this book are four blank Field Inventory sheets for you to complete. There’s also a little surprise in there for you, but *do not* skip to it. It’s there for a reason. Read it only when you get to it. Please do one Inventory a week. For this first month, they are all the same. Next month, we’ll add some more. The questions on these Inventories are just guidelines. Go ahead and write from your heart, but also stay on task. Fill out the Inventories when it’s time, but don’t go past the last one. What follows is Field Exercise Three, after you send in Field Pack 2.2. *Remember* not to send the originals and to write your name, student number and the date on the top of every page you send in.

So, you’re two weeks into this. How’s it going? I know that sometimes it can be a bit of a challenge to be pushing yourself so

Is your binder **missing** the following upcoming pages:

- **Field Exercise reflection sheets**
- **Blank Field Inventory sheets (for Field Pack 2.3 & up)**
- **The yellow Field Pack form you need to send work in to us?**

You can download the Field Pack forms, a blank Field Inventory template and Field Journal templates (Resource Trail) at www.kamana.org. For the Field Exercise reflections, simply reflect on the exercise by neatly writing or typing on a couple of sheets of paper.



FIELD INVENTORY

Please write your observations on the following subjects:

Owl Eyes. What are you noticing? How does it feel?

Deer Ears. What do you think? Can you hear things further away than you thought?

Can you combine Owl Eyes and Deer Ears?

How about Raccoon-Touch form?

How is Dog-Nose going for you?

Can you put them all together?



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

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hard. With that in mind, I thought you'd like to hear a story from our friend Dan Gardoqui.

THE POWER OF THE BUFFALO: INSPIRATION AND STRENGTH FROM WITHIN

by Dan Gardoqui

Surrender. You may have heard Tom Brown use the term to indicate the conscious decision to let go...to give in to one's spirit. Without surrendering, we let others live our lives. We surrender to their expectations, their desires for us. Unless we can take the time to stop, tune in, and surrender to our very soul, we cannot know who we truly are.

Maybe you've heard these phrases before: "I'm too tired to get up with the sun today and go to my secret spot. I'll do it this weekend," "I can't do thirty more strokes on this bow drill, my arms are like jelly," or "Heck, I already know ten trees near my house, it's alright if I don't figure out that row of strange trees with the fan-shaped leaves over by the firehouse." Sound familiar? I want to make you aware of the fact that in choosing to forego your naturalist training path, you are choosing another path. Most likely, it is the path of comfort, the path of ease and self-satisfaction. Tom Brown would say that we are "Surrendering to the false gods of the flesh." We all do it. I'd know. So, you ask, "What does it take to push us out of that comfort zone (a.k.a. the daily grind) and to give us our second wind in our quest as human beings striving to reconnect with our blueprint?" Good question. Let me share with you a story....

Have you ever had your eyes swollen shut from mosquito bites? If so, there's a chance you can imagine what the West Branch of the Penobscot River was like as we put in our canoes on an early August evening some years back. Our wilderness canoeing expedition was off to a psychologically challenging start. It was my, and many others', first time in a genuine North Woods mosquito storm. Needless to say, we were pleasantly surprised by a light rain that sent the skeeters packing as we set up camp. Unfortunately, the rain continued for two days straight. Amidst the ever-present moisture, we were able to cheer ourselves up a few times; there was the canoeing cornmeal mush fight, the cow moose who I could have touched with my paddle, up to her chest in sphagnum and murky water, and a couple of small, but exciting, sets of rapids. Nonetheless, the rain continued.

I was squatted in the bow of our craft, with Jon at the stern and Tater, our trusty Lab, midship. It was the third evening of



the voyage, we were forced to make a tactical decision: Do we attempt to cross Lake Chesuncook with the current winds and rain before sundown or do we make camp on the riverbanks and try to make up the time later? We chose to go for it. At first, the east wind was steady, but bearable, as we tracked northeast across the lake. Chesuncook is approximately a mile and a half wide where the West Branch dumps in. The wind shifted to northeast and increased in velocity. We were side by side with Dr. Dave and Fish paddling to our left. The wind grew fierce. Whitecaps began finding their way over my bow. I got on my knees and dug in to each swell. Fish, the bowman to my left, gave me a look that I knew meant trouble. The race was on.

Fish was a much larger, more muscular specimen than either Jon or myself, and Dr. Dave, albeit a few decades older than I, had a reputation such that seeing him stroking blindly while screaming into the headwind was extremely intimidating. Tater pushed aside gear and nestled into a tarp. Fish and Dave had pulled ahead. Jon yelled to me over the howling gale, “You gonna let those old men beat us?” “Hell no!” I replied, and began paddling with ferocity. We were gaining on them. Neck-and-neck we tracked across the turbulent lake for about ten minutes, switching sides every thirty strokes or so. We were halfway across the lake and could almost make out the point we were shooting for. Looking back, we could see only faint blurs that somewhat resembled canoeists. We were hauling ass! Just as I was about to call it a draw, the point became visible, only a half mile away. Fish and Dave spotted it before us and were going for broke. We followed their lead. I was exhausted.

Jon sensed my pain, fatigue, and weariness. Switching sides didn’t give us the boost it previously did. Jon cried out from the stern, “Think of the buffalo, plowing through chest-high snowdrifts, charging into the blizzard.” The apparition of a white buffalo on the plains in a heinous snowstorm came into my mind’s eye. I pushed myself harder. “The Buffalo!” I shouted out. Fish and Dave shot a quick, puzzled look at us, then returned to their labored strokes. We were pulling ahead. I closed my eyes, ignored the blisters on my knees, the tearing pain in my back and the spray of the whitecaps that stung my face like tiny bits of gravel and sand.

I reached further inside, losing my consciousness of the physical self and could see myself fiercely drawing on the crests of waves, soaked to the core. Before I knew it, we were fifty yards from shore. I heard Jon’s high-pitched laugh and heard him holler “Look at them! They’re barely visible!” It was true. Somehow, in that last 800 yards, we absolutely wasted them. Forget the other



five canoes. They were nowhere to be seen. The inspiration of the strong buffalo, charging, teeth to the wind, on the frigid plains, triggered a response deep within ourselves. We were the buffalo. Fish and Dave arrived as we were toweling off from a celebratory swim. They were both dejected and amazed. Fish whined to us from his bow, “How the hell did you guys do that?”

Ingwe, Wilderness Awareness School’s grandfather, has said , “The greatest thing on earth is to believe. Things happen beyond us. We must believe in the spirit.” I started this story talking about surrendering and the inability to motivate oneself. There are many reasons in many different situations for why we get bogged down in “the lazies.” However, one consistent theme that Ingwe has noticed when mentoring students through Wilderness Awareness School is that those students who are not challenged in the wilderness, who are not given rites of passage, are not able to go the last lap. To be a warrior for this earth, your family, and yourself, “It takes tears and it takes courage,” Ingwe says. We must never get too comfortable with our modern lives such that we lose awareness or that we stop learning. Ingwe is fond of an analogy about antelope and leopards: “Once an antelope no longer learns, then it takes things for granted. And when it no longer learns, then it is dead, boy.” To keep ourselves and our students alive we must learn to both surrender to our spirit and to accept the challenge of getting out of our daily ruts and habits.



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How about Raccoon-Touch form?

How is Dog-Nose going for you?

Can you put them all together?



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

FIELD INVENTORY

Please write your observations on the following subjects:

Owl Eyes. What are you noticing? How does it feel?

Deer Ears. What do you think? Can you hear things further away than you thought?

Can you combine Owl Eyes and Deer Ears?

How about Raccoon-Touch form?

How is Dog-Nose going for you?

Can you put them all together?



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

FIELD EXERCISE TWO REFLECTION

Please respond to the Field Exercise, not the entire Field Pack.
We encourage typing Reflections if you feel comfortable doing so.



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE TWO REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE TWO REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE TWO REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

YOU MUST SEND US THIS FORM

This form is for students registered with Kamana Services



Certification Option students use this form to organize your work as well.

ONLY hand in the following for Field Pack 2.2

1. Nature Awareness Trail:

- Field Exercise Two Reflection
- 4 Field Inventories

2. Resource Trail:

- 2 journal entries for each chapter (Chapters 2-7)

- I am on time with this assignment.
(See the Registration Form we sent you for deadline.)
- I have exceeded the amount of time Student Services is available to me and have included **\$25** for review of my work for this Field Pack.

Make checks out to Wilderness Awareness School. Students with Kamana Affiliates talk with your local office about payment options.

Method of payment: Check <input type="checkbox"/> M.O. <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Amex <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name as it appears on the card: _____	
Account number: _____	
Expiration date: _____	Today's date: _____
Signature _____	



Name: _____
Student Number: K _____
Date: _____

Field Pack 2.2

1. Did you include:

Copies (**not originals**) of:

- your Resource Trail work
- your Nature Awareness Trail work (include all  pages)

2. Tear off this sheet, fold in half, and insert your work in an envelope.

3. Mail to Kamana Student Services

FULL STUDENT SERVICES students please use the provided Field Pack label on the back of the envelope.

Please send COPIES, not originals... Write neatly in ink or type your work.

I have new contact information.
 Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____
Day: _____

Email: _____



We encourage you to copy your work on recycled paper (double sided) OR use the blank back side of already used copy paper.

Field Pack 2.3 Assignment Overview:

The Nature Awareness Trail:

- Read and complete the exercises for Field Pack 2.3. This assignment and Field Pack should take you no less than 30 days. See the yellow sheet at the end of this section for the exact exercises. This month, you'll have maps that will accompany your Field Inventories. The Field Inventory format introduced with this exercise will be the basis for all future inventories.

The Resource Trail:

What you'll be handing in:

- Three journals from each chapter for Chapters 2-7 of the *Resource Trail*.

Tips for Kamana Two:

Nature Awareness Trail:

- Make sure you reflect on the actual Field Exercise content ONLY in your Field Exercise Reflection.
- Fill out every space in your Field Inventories. Be creative as well as observant.
- Make sure you make a map for every Inventory.


Resource Trail:

- Try not to spend more than a half hour on a journal. (You want to get this down to 20 minutes).
- Use the mind's eye approach. Do not copy information verbatim.

IMPORTANT

Please hand in your work one Field Pack at a time. Do not send us more than one at a time to review. Your work with Student Services will provide you with 50% of the value of this course. You will get the most from Wilderness Awareness School or its Kamana Affiliates if you hand them in one at a time as you complete them.

**PLEASE WRITE NEATLY IN INK OR TYPE
THE WORK THAT CAN BE TYPED.**

FIELD
EXERCISE
THREE

THE
THANKSGIVING
ADDRESS

Robert A. Emmons, professor of psychology at the University of California, Davis, recently published scientific data about gratitude: It makes you healthier, smarter and more energetic. He found that those with an attitude of thanksgiving “exercised more regularly, reported fewer physical symptoms, felt better about their lives as a whole and were more optimistic about the upcoming week.”

CHIEF JAKE SWAMP

by Dan Gardoqui

Peace. We hear people say it all the time. Humans symbolize peace in a few ways. First there is the peace sign (which you can find being doodled by adolescents around the globe). And then there is the two fingers version. This physical representation of peace is unconsciously given by pedestrians, motorists, runners, and other humans in a number of interactive situations. Therefore, we all know *of* peace, but do we really know what peace is?

To me, Jake Swamp is the physical representation of peace. I know of no people that better role model a peaceful existence than Jake and Judy Swamp. A leader of the Wolf Clan of the Mohawk Nation, a spiritual elder for many, and founder of the Tree of Peace Society, Chief Jake Swamp lives a life of peace. His vision is to spread the good message of peace and thankfulness around the world. He’s doing pretty well. His efforts have inspired countless organizations with diverse backgrounds. Many peace, justice, human rights, and environmental groups owe much of their success to the teachings that Jake Swamp has shared with them. As of the new millennium, more than two hundred million trees have been planted in the name of peace, from the Catskills to China.

It was at a peace tree planting that I first met Chief Jake. It was the spring of 1990, and I was a junior in high school. Jon Young (then a biology teacher in my high school) and I decided to play hooky for the day. We had heard a little about Jake Swamp, but we really didn’t know what to expect. After navigating early morning New Jersey traffic, we arrived at the suburban home of an elderly couple in Netcong, New Jersey. The man of the house was very ill and had requested that Jake come visit to raise his spirits. I’ll never forget when Jake nonchalantly reached into his soft briefcase and pulled out a single photocopied sheet written in the time of our nation’s independence. In fact, it looked remarkably similar to the preamble to the United States Constitution. Jake handed it over and said, “This is a



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www.TreeOfPeace.org
Please support their work.

new constitution. A constitution based on the great law of peace.” He humbly continued, “We are proposing this to the United Nations soon.” I devoured the text with curious eyes and was left breathless. As you know, seventeen-year-old boys don’t cry very frequently. I was amazed to find myself physically weak with tears trickling down my cheeks. It was the most beautiful thing I’d ever read. Simple and beautiful. At that moment I couldn’t understand why anyone would ever choose conflict over peace. Jake’s message has gone directly to my heart. I knew I would be spending more time with this man.

Thanksgiving. Any Independent Studies student, participant of a Wilderness Awareness School workshop, or Wilderness Awareness School staff member would attest to the fact that every single time we gather (from expeditions to office meetings), we always begin with a Thanksgiving Address—“The words before all else.” No exceptions. (You did it in Kamana One, remember?) So when did we start doing that, you ask? Believe it or not, it was on that same fateful April day that Jon and I heard our first Thanksgiving Address. We stood in a high school soccer field whose turf blanketed some of the most fertile farmlands in the Garden State. Under my feet I could see signs of the nutrient rich, glacially deposited soils of the Piedmont region, represented by a myriad of spring blooms: strawberries, bluettes, speedwell, chickweed, and mint. Jake Swamp began his talk. Over a stiff west wind, his deep, deliberate, gentle voice was amplified by a PA system. He spoke in a language we had never heard, yet we could understand the feeling of his words. For a long time, Jake would say something, then repeat a phrase. Then something new, then the phrase. Again and again. This was the Thanksgiving Address. After a long pause Jake spoke to the crowd of kids, parents, teachers, and interested locals in English. He told them the gist of what he had just said in his native tongue of Mohawk. He then shared with us the Address in our native tongue.

The Peacemaker Principles. If you’ve attended any of the Art of Mentoring workshops or have spent any time working or volunteering for Wilderness Awareness School, you’ll know that our entire organizational culture is based on three principles of peace—Unity, Peace, and the Good Message. The Peacemaker story was first shared with Wilderness Awareness School on the same April afternoon in the high school soccer field. For more information on the story of the Peacemaker, read *White Roots of Peace: Iroquois Book of Life*, by Paul Wallace.

Democracy. Wilderness Awareness School has learned more from the Mohawk people about the founding of our own nation, government, and the principles of democracy than all high school civics books combined. From the huge role that the Mohawks had in mentoring Ben Franklin (it is still evident on our legal tender.



Honest—look for it) to the striking similarity of our Articles of Confederation to the Great Law of Peace, the Mohawks had more influence on our founding form of government in the United States than any other group of people. The Iroquois Confederacy was the first and continues to be the longest-running democracy on the planet. It is estimated that their democratic government is over 1,000 years old. We can learn a lot from these people. For in-depth information on Iroquois contributions to democracy, consult *Wampum Belts & Peace Trees* by Gregory Schaaf, *Indian Givers* by Jack Weatherford or *The White Roots of Peace* by Paul Wallace.

You might think that Jake, in his early 60's, would be ready for retirement after achieving such success with his vision of instilling peace and thankfulness into the lives of humans around the globe. But Jake would laugh if you said that to him. In addition to his work with the Tree of Peace Society, Jake is a husband, father, and grandfather in his community. Jake and his wife Judy Swamp are tireless community leaders. Judy is the most powerful woman I have ever met. Her power comes from her wisdom as a daughter of a clan mother. It is not an egotistical or greedy power. When in the presence of Judy Swamp, you get the feeling of being surrounded by the true essence of motherhood. Judy is simply an extension of the earth mother—wise, nurturing, caring, and there to teach all of us the invaluable lessons of life. Judy supports Jake's vision and mission by often forgoing travel to exciting places in order to keep together the Swamp family. Often working together, Jake and Judy Swamp provide retreats and workshops for men, women, youth and elders.

Chief Jake Swamp's ultimate goal: plant one billion trees in the name of peace. Sanctioned by his nation's elders, Jake continues to travel around the globe planting trees as symbols of peace, and teaching about the ways of peace and democracy. Look out for him at your local school, library, non-profit, etc., because Jake is not resting. So we, the community of Wilderness Awareness School, are so very grateful for this great man's efforts and commitment, for Jake continues to follow his original instructions, teaching people all around the world to respect and be thankful for all life. For if we can accomplish this simple yet difficult task, then peace is inevitable.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF FIELD EXERCISE THREE: GIVING THANKS

Greetings from sunny Washington state. "Sunshine," the rich, revitalizing energy that brings new life, comes in many forms here in my home, some of them liquid or solid, but I'm extremely thankful for all of them. The sun, the rain, the winds...they all



work together to provide the wonderfully rich and green environment of the Evergreen State.

In your third Field Exercise, I will introduce you to the Thanksgiving Address. In the Thanksgiving Address, we learn to honor and acknowledge each element and being of Creation, which so generously gives of itself to the human family and to the other beings around it, and to recognize the utter dependence of each being upon all others. We are thankful to Mohawk Sub-Chief Tekaronieneken Jake Swamp, for his patience and willingness to share this important teaching with Wilderness Awareness School. Jake has written a beautiful children's book called *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message*, which depicts the Thanksgiving Address in a wonderful way.

Read this exercise all the way through to get a sense of the Thanksgiving Address. Then go through the Preparation Exercise (which should take you only about a few minutes to sketch). At this point, develop a routine of thankfulness into your everyday practices. After being with this experience for the month, write a Reflection Paper, telling us what routine thankfulness has brought to your life.

Do This Exercise in the Following Order:

1) Read through this whole exercise to gain a sense of history and a feeling for the Thanksgiving Address.

2) An important aspect of this exercise is personalizing this practice to serve your needs. Reread the Thanksgiving Address on page 130, titled "Ohen:Ton Karihwatehkwen: The 'Words Before All Else.'" Also reread the section entitled "The Personal Nature of Thanksgiving" on page 130. How will you express this in a way that is good for you? Are there additional elements, personal ideas, or beings in the natural world that you feel particularly drawn to include, or to name individually, in your own way?

While doing this, try to use your mind's eye to create an image of each aspect of the address as you send your thanksgiving greeting. Use of the mind's eye to picture things is an important theme throughout the Kamana program, and in training as a tracker.

3) As you work with these images, make them your own and sit with these images for a moment. Then take a blank Field Journal page and quickly make a sketch of the Thanksgiving Address (send with Field Pack 2.3). The order is easy to remember and was designed to be that way long ago. It starts with the People, then the Earth, then it goes on to the things closest to the Earth, and then in ascending order, the Animals, the Trees, the Birds, the Winds, etc., all the way up to the Heavens.

Just make a *very quick* drawing. No need to be elaborate or fancy. Stick figures and simple line drawings that have mean-



ing to you are all that are necessary. This picture will remain in your heart, a living map of The Words Before All Else, and the Thanksgiving Address will be yours to treasure always.

4) Now go to your Secret Spot, relax into the Sense Meditation, and when you have quieted your mind, go through the Thanksgiving Address and recognize in nature and in your mind's eye each aspect of the natural world. *Try not to bring either this paper or your sketch with you when you go to your Secret Spot.* An important aspect of Kamana is to remember with your mind's eye and sensory awareness. Be with the experience of Thanksgiving when you have peace of mind, or at least time to find some measure of peace of mind. You will come to find that the Thanksgiving Address will help to create peace of mind, even when you didn't realize you were lacking it.

5) Use the Thanksgiving Address as an awareness tool to expand your senses, your observation skills and your mind's eye ability. For the next month make this part of your routine. Sometime this month, read *Giving Thanks* by Chief Jake Swamp to a child. If you don't have one, find a young relative or neighbor you know. Note what comes up for you when you share these words with a child. If you really can't come up with a child, then just hold on to the book for a future time. However, read through it anyway.

6) Toward the end of the month, when you have experienced this combination of routines for awhile, please write a short Reflection Paper that simply tells us about your experience with the Thanksgiving Address. Think in terms of your awareness before, during and after you learned this technique for greeting the natural world. Write down whatever feels right for you to comment on. Many people find that giving thanks causes an upwelling of feelings. Did this happen? Many find that giving thanks brightens awareness. Does it do this for you?

BACKGROUND OF THE THANKSGIVING ADDRESS

We Give Our Thanks

The Mohawk Nation is a part of a confederation of north-eastern Native peoples who call themselves the Haudenosaunee, or the People of the Longhouse—better known to most of us as the Iroquois Confederacy. Composed of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora Nations, they are also known as the Six Nations.

The Thanksgiving Address is one of the cornerstones upon which these people built a peace that has lasted, unbroken, for over a thousand years. Later in this course we will focus more on the contributions of these people to the democracy we call the



United States of America and other important contributions they have made to our lives. We will begin by introducing and sharing the Thanksgiving Address, which they refer to as the “Words Before All Else.”

The Roots Of Thanksgiving

The Mohawk people trace the Thanksgiving Address back to the very beginning of time. This very old and special practice of Thanksgiving has its roots in helping people overcome the sense of loss and grief that comes from losing loved ones. There are similar teachings in every culture and religion of the world. Some of them have just gotten a bit dusty from lack of use! Let’s revitalize our thankfulness—especially during these challenging times we live in. Perhaps we can help our troubled world become a better place. When we do the Thanksgiving Address it helps us to recognize the beauty of the world around us and that we are a part of that world and that beauty. It brings that beauty to life in our hearts and minds and helps us to discover the happiness of being alive.

There is sadness in beauty.

*Without this sadness,
the wholesome is lost.*

There is happiness in being alive.

*Without this happiness,
the Soul’s purpose would be denied.*

—Alex Callen



Principles of Thanksgiving

I must thank Tree of Peace Society volunteer Jeff Lambe, M.A., who has prepared the following exposition for you. It is based on his work with the Mohawk-based Tree of Peace Society and personal research.

CELEBRATING OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

by Jeff Lambe

The first thing that's done is you give thanks to everything. You thank the waters beneath the Earth, the stones, the soil, all the way up to the stars. It's just a reminder of where we are, and who we are within that part of it. We should never forget that. That's the thing that the early colonial founding fathers simply were blind to; they didn't see that.

—Kahionhes John Fadden,
Turtle Clan of the Mohawk Nation

Traditional Haudenosaunee meetings begin and end with a Thanksgiving Address, *Ohen:ton Karihwatebkwen*, the “Words Before All Else.” Due to human nature, people have a tendency to forget important issues. Without constant repetition, realities such as our responsibility to and relationship with the natural world are forgotten. Once forgotten, the beauty and bounty of nature are often taken for granted.

When we take things for granted, part of our consciousness is split off. Through acknowledgment and Thanksgiving, one recognizes the importance of everything, thus creating a larger consciousness, a continuous memory of what we have on the planet. Thought precedes action. Unfortunately the systems of life are not in most people’s thoughts. Thus the consequences of their actions on the rest of Creation are not perceived and seemingly the problems do not exist.

Somewhere during our cultural development as a nation, we lost our fundamental relationship to the synergistic processes of continued existence, commonly referred to as nature. If we expand our consciousness through Thanksgiving, our choices are not only ours—our choices are connected to the rest of the world, so we take responsibility for what we do. This focus naturally looks to the children. The future of the next generation is dependent on the thoughts that inspire our actions.

A fundamental principle of the Traditional Haudenosaunee lies in the idea of power. Not power in a materialistic or economic



sense...they refer to the power that flows naturally when many people become of One Mind. It is as if many people are moving about and thinking as one being. When all decisions are made based on the benefit of the future generations, while keeping in mind the natural world, power is reality. The Thanksgiving Address is a way to get people into the space of coming to “One Mind.”

This is the “Basic Call to Consciousness.” “Basic” in the sense that what we see and do is real. Our thoughts direct our actions, which, in turn, become part of the process of nature. When we are well grounded, we get a strong sense of where we are in our relationship to the environment.

Recited in the native tongue, followed by English, the Thanksgiving Address is very beautiful to hear—beautiful in its simplicity, humility and purpose. As Jake Swamp relates, “It follows an order in which we can relate to all of the Creation. The Address is based on the belief that the world cannot be taken for granted, that a spiritual communication of thankfulness and acknowledgment of all living things must be given to align the minds and hearts of the people with Nature. This forms a guiding principle of culture.”

Thanksgiving Every Day

The Haudenosaunee People are instructed to greet the day with Thanksgiving, to begin each important gathering with Thanksgiving, and to end each meeting the same way. Thanksgiving is a beautiful way to start every morning. Greeting the dreamtime with Thanksgiving is a wonderful way to end every evening. Gathering family and friends in Thanksgiving is a powerful way of uniting a group. A private Thanksgiving before important decision making is a clear way of maintaining balance and perspective.

Consider this thought from Jake Swamp; it is the basis of his life’s work:

If all of the children of the world were to be a part of this kind of Thanksgiving each day, I believe that the problems of the world would start to go the other way.

For more information on these teachings contact:

*The Tree of Peace Society, Cook Road, RR 1 Box 188C,
Hogansburg, New York, 13655-9751 or*

www.treeofpeace.org



WE BRING OUR MINDS TOGETHER AS ONE

by Jon Young

In the Thanksgiving Address you will notice the word “we,” even though you may be saying it alone. The “we” is due to the fact that this greeting is used by the Haudenosaunee in a group setting. What if you were to think of all of the people in history who have followed a good path when you say “we”?

When we heard this greeting offered, it was often preceded by the words “Let us greet the world in Thanksgiving as if we shared one mind, one heart, one body.” What starts out in our minds as symbolic becomes reality in our hearts. We eventually realize that this image, this thought of “one mind, one heart, one body” is quite true of all things on this living planet.

The Personal Nature Of Thanksgiving

The Thanksgiving Address is a very important way of understanding and communicating with all aspects of the natural world. It is at once broadly universal and very personal. This version of the Thanksgiving Address was shared with our school by Jake Swamp, and was reviewed by him for accuracy and consistency with the way in which this is shared in the Longhouse during gatherings of his Nation. We have repeated it here as closely as possible to the way we learned it from Jake. Jake encourages us (as we may not be Mohawks), to adjust this practice to suit our own culture, and religious/spiritual beliefs. If your heart leads you into further Thanksgiving, so much the better. **(PLEASE READ the side bar, “A Simple Request.”)**

Some people have added things to this practice to be as thorough as possible. This helps them feel better. That is what is at the core of this routine after all.

An example is the Insect Nations:

“With one mind we now think of our relations in the many Insect Nations. Like all the other members of the natural world they too have not forgotten their original instructions from the Creator of Life, as they continue to perform the hard work, such as insuring that the flowering plants can continue to bear fruit, and that those things which are no longer needed are returned to the Earth. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the many members of the Insect Nations.”

Traditional Native people always honor the Elders and Children. Here is an example of how we incorporate this into the Thanksgiving Address:

A Simple Request...

Giving thanks for the world around us has been a common practice for many human beings of many cultures throughout our history as a species. What we are focusing on in this exercise is just ONE of the infinite number of ways that people have given thanks. What is beautiful about this exercise is the rare opportunity to practice the way one particular group of indigenous people give thanks. This is an unbroken chain from the Haudenosaunee who first said the Thanksgiving Address to the Haudenosaunee of today.

From understanding and internalizing the Thanksgiving Address, you will begin to understand the essence of giving thanks and what that means to you personally as YOU relate to the world around you. You may eventually come up with your own individualized ways of giving thanks as you progress on your life's journey.

Please understand that what the Tree of Peace Society is sharing with us is a very important part of Haudenosaunee culture. If you are going to share the Thanksgiving Address with others as you have learned



it here, please be respectful and honor its roots before you speak it. Please do not print it for the general public unless you have permission to do so from the Haudenosaunee. Other permitted published sources of the Thanksgiving Address besides this exercise are the Giving Thanks book and Thanksgiving Address: Greetings from the Natural World, published in several languages by Jon Stoke's Tracking Project (www.thetrackingproject.com).

If you choose to alter the Thanksgiving Address that is in any way different than what you read in this exercise, that is fine. However, please do not mention that it was taught to you by the Tree of Peace Society or any of its members when you speak or print your creation. If you are sharing your creation with others, that is your own way of thanksgiving that you are sharing with them.

Thank you for honoring this simple request from the generous people who have shared the Thanksgiving Address with Wilderness Awareness School.

“With our minds together as one mind we now look to the Elders and to the Children, for they give us the guidance of those who have walked before us in a good way, and purpose to live our lives in a good way. With the guidance of the Elders and the purpose of leaving a better World for the Children we can find the essential goodness of Life. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the Elders and the Children.”

Here is another Thanksgiving Greeting that comes from a booklet published by John Stokes of The Tracking Project in Corrales, New Mexico, who is a well-respected tracker and long-time friend of Jake Swamp and the Tree of Peace Society:

“We are thankful to all the Enlightened Teachers who have come to help throughout the ages. They help us to remember the way we were instructed to live as People. In doing so they have cleared a path so that we may walk more freely as we fulfill our obligation to Creation. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to these caring Teachers of the World.”

Special Words

The version of the Thanksgiving Address we are including here refers to the “Four Spirit Beings.” The things in life that the Mohawks attribute to the Four Spirit Beings are recognized in all other cultures as well, under other names. Probably every language has something that means ‘grace’ or ‘divine assistance.’ The United Nations sponsored a special event in October of 2000 that included over 1000 spiritual leaders from nearly every religion and native culture of the world. Their proceedings concur that all peoples have words for this aspect of living. For the sake of world peace these leaders stressed that it was important for all people to respect everyone else’s choices in this manner and recognize that we are all unique but sharing similar needs and ways when you get to the core of things.

Sometimes things happen in our lives—fortuitous coincidences that seem to add up to a larger story. Although they are coincidences (incidents that coincide), and may be looked at as chance happenings, they have definite meaning in our lives and often bring us together with other people in a special way. People frequently say that these things occur most when creativity, intuition and deep reflection are part of the process.

These things happen in a special way that connects us deeply with one another and all life. These happenings help us realize



that we are on the right path in life. We have been told that this is nature giving us an affirmation. No one can really explain to everyone's satisfaction how it works, but we honor the fact that it does exist and it does happen.

In my upbringing the phenomenon that guides "coincidence" was referred to as the Holy Spirit. What do your ancestors call the unseen powers that help us in life? Perhaps you can even call it "luck." That is up to you. Maybe you don't want to call it anything at all! Remember this is personal for you and you alone, and it needs to serve you in a way that helps you feel integrated with your circle of family and friends.

These are examples of how the "Creativity & Intuition" or "Sacred" are working in our own personal lives. Out of the hundreds of people I have trained over the years, many, if not all, have told stories of special experiences that have led them into very important events or have affected vital aspects of their lives. These are reflections of creativity at work in their lives. We can learn to recognize these things by simply paying attention. As a tracker, naturalist or person who pays attention, subtle guidance, creativity and just plain "gut feelings" lead to things that otherwise would have been missed. Even scientists express this phenomenon of creativity as a big part of the world of discovery, invention and problem solving.

When we think of the coincidences that have occurred in our lives and have brought us to special places or into special circumstances, it is really good to be thankful. Acknowledge these in your life. Know that there are lots of other people around the world who have these kinds of experiences. Whatever you want to call it, it is operating in the natural world. The more we use our senses, the stronger these things will become in our lives. We are thankful that these things do exist.

A More In-Depth Look At Our Neighbors

There is a story told in one of the Native tribes of the west about the Creation of the World. It is said that the Creator knew that Humans would take too much for granted if they were given all the wisdom, so instead the Creator gave a little piece of the wisdom of how to live on the Earth to each of the different animals. Thinking about it from this perspective makes you appreciate how important the animals are as our teachers in the natural world. This is a good way to think about the animals when doing the Thanksgiving Address. The animals are teachers. It helps us to understand why, for instance, we want to become trackers. It is difficult to learn about the animals if you can't see them. Since most animals are active at night, we have to learn about them through studying their ways, their behavior and their tracks.



In Haudenosaunee traditions, the birds are credited with lifting us out of our troubled minds. This means that when we learn to listen to the birds, as in the teachings about the “five voices of the birds” taught at Wilderness Awareness School, we have to get out of our thinking minds in order to utilize our senses for observation and awareness strongly enough to understand the language of birds.

According to one old story, at the beginning of time the Creator gave the birds the instructions to each find a special place to live in the world, and that they should learn the song of that place and sing it so that all the beings of Creation might know what it is like to live there. When we hear the song of the house finch, we can feel the wonder of life among the treetops. When we listen to the voice of the field sparrow we can know what it means to live among the dry grasses. The birds accurately capture in their own Thanksgiving song the feeling of the place in which they live, and when we listen with our hearts we know from their songs that these places are sacred.

THANKSGIVING AS A FIELD EXERCISE

Why We Believe Thanksgiving is Important

We recognize the importance of connecting our minds to the natural world. The Field Exercises of the Kamana Program are designed to root our hearts in the land, not only through understanding with the thinking mind, but also through the “heart.” Most of us can articulate the problems facing the world today with rational processes, but our modern life may not instill in us the very important connection with the natural world through our feelings. Later in this program when we work on tracking skills, an essential part of that study will be a connection we develop in our hearts with what we track. We have found that people are more successful in their tracking abilities if the “thanksgiving” feeling is invoked during the process.

There are other benefits to thanksgiving, as well. Robert A. Emmons, professor of psychology at the University of California, Davis, recently published scientific data about gratitude: It makes you healthier, smarter and more energetic. He found that those with an attitude of thanksgiving “exercised more regularly, reported fewer physical symptoms, felt better about their lives as a whole and were more optimistic about the upcoming week.”

From a purely practical standpoint, as naturalists it makes sense to use a Secret Spot, a Sense Meditation and, now, a Thanksgiving Address as a model for developing yet another part of our “sensory bodies” or nature-antennae, if you will. These Awareness Exercises will enable us to tune in to the subtle harmony of the



natural world as nothing else can. Greet and end the day with a genuine sense of thankfulness, and you will be amazed at the difference it makes in your life on many levels.

A Message About “The Elders”

We, at Wilderness Awareness School, are not part of a Native tribe, but we think of ourselves as natives of the Earth. When we refer to the Elders, we are referring to Elders living according to their Original Instructions from all over the Earth. It is a time in history when ancient teachings and sacred knowledge from all cultures, all races, and people are being shared in a good way and wrapped into one big bundle for the benefit of all. We are people who are trying to find our native roots, and it helps to feel the support of a Native culture around us. In our hearts, we adopt all of the Elders of the world. This is who we think of, the ones who have walked before us in a good way.

One Mind, One Body, One Planet

The concept of a “living planet” is ancient. In Greek mythology, Gaia (or Gaea) is the name of the Earth personified as a goddess. In the late 1970’s, an English scientist by the name of James E. Lovelock really shook things up by proposing that this ancient concept was indeed fact, not fiction. In his book *Gaia, A New Look At Life On Earth*, Lovelock proposed that there is ample evidence to suggest that the Earth as a whole is one living, breathing, sentient organism. When something major adversely affects the balance of things on Earth in one way, the Earth itself takes steps to mitigate or counter the effects in another, he proposed. This book is a fascinating read; I highly recommend it.

Shuttle’s Eye View

It is important to remember where we are, and what a wondrous place we are a part of. For a moment, look down at our world from the perspective of outer space. Try this for a moment: picture the Earth as a whole being, not as a collection of nations or of individuals. We have all seen the pictures sent back from space. How beautiful our Earth is, the blue-green oceans swirled with glistening white and gray, the continents an imaginative sculpture of ridges and valleys.

Slowly, very slowly, see yourself approaching closer and closer to the surface of the Earth, falling through the atmosphere, the clouds. Soon you can see the continent you live on, its shape and mass; then you can see the area in which you live, with the large mountains or lakes or plains or deserts. Then you can see the countryside around your Secret Spot. You can make out the forests, the meadows and the streams. Finally, you can see yourself



sitting there...one of the many life forms that shares the air, the water, and the many resources of the intricate web of life.

Try to hold this image and this feeling in your heart as you give thanks to all the beings who share this beautiful world with us. Semantics of important words are important to some people and not to others. Adjust the choice of words to fit your ways. Some believe we should give thanks to the Creator FOR things in nature and not TO them. Whatever works for you. Here is just one example of one thanksgiving address that was shared at Wilderness Awareness School by Jake. We share this to help you get the feeling and overall purpose that guides this practice. Remember to make it your own.

OHEN:TON KARIHWATEHKWEN:

THE “WORDS BEFORE ALL ELSE”

“Today we have gathered and have come from many different places. We have all arrived safely at this place to share with each other our gifts from the Creator. So we bring our minds together as one in Thanksgiving and Greetings to one another.

“We now turn our thoughts to Earth Mother who, like our own mother continues to give for our well being. She continues to care for us and has not forgotten her instructions from the beginning of time. We now bring our minds together in Thanksgiving for the Earth.

“Now as one mind we turn our thoughts to the Waters of the Earth for they too have not forgotten their original instructions from the Creator of Life. The Waters continue to flow beneath the ground, in little streams and in rivers, in lakes and wetlands, and in the great seas. These Waters also continue to fulfill their duty to Continued Creation. They quench our thirst and help us to keep clean so we can fulfill our duty to Creation. We now bring our minds together in Thanksgiving to all the Waters of the Earth.

“We will now address all the Beings, both seen and unseen, that dwell in the Water for they too have not forgotten their original instructions from the Creator of Life. There are many life forms in the Waters which provide for us in many ways. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to all the Nations who dwell in the Waters.

“Now we direct our thoughts to the many kinds of plants that live upon the Earth—the mosses, the many grass-forms, the herbs, food plants and the many other low growing plants, for they too have not forgotten their original instructions. There are many members of this Nation who sustain those who walk upon this Earth and there are many others who continue to fulfill their duties



to take away the sicknesses of the human family. With one mind we send our thoughts and Thanksgiving to the Plant Nations.

“We now gather our minds together and send Greetings and Thanksgiving to all the Animal Life in the world, for they continue to instruct and teach us even today. We are happy that many still walk with us on our continuing journey although their natural world has been changed and life has become very difficult for them at times. Sometimes at night we may see a fox or a deer in our headlights and we are reminded of that feeling of kinship we get when we see the animals. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to all the Animal Life in the world.

“With one mind we now think of the Trees. According to their original instructions the Trees still give us shelter, warmth, food and keep the air clean. The trees can make the environment a more suitable place for life to dwell. When we see the trees we are reminded of the beauty and power of the natural world. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to all the members of the Tree Nation.

“We now bring our minds together to send our Greetings of Thanksgiving to the Birds. At the beginning of time the Birds were given a very special duty to perform. They were instructed to help lift the troubled minds of the Human Family and during the day our minds are often lifted by the songs of the Bird Nations. They too continue to fulfill their obligation to Continued Creation. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to all the Birds of the world.

“We are thankful to the Four Winds who continue to blow and cleanse the air in accordance with their original instructions. As we listen to the Winds, it is as if we are hearing the Creator’s breath, clearing our minds as it blows through the Trees. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving to the Four Winds.

“Now we turn our attention to the Thunderbeings. For they too have not forgotten their original instructions and welcome the Spring with their loud voice. Along with the lightning, they carry the waters of Spring on their backs. It is also said that the Thunderbeings were given the job to hold down the beings beneath the earth which would prevent life from continuing. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the Thunderbeings.

“Our minds are one as we send our thoughts to our oldest brother the Sun. Each day the Sun continues his instructions from the Creator of Life, bringing the light of the day, the energy source of all life on Earth. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to our oldest brother the Sun.

“We now gather our minds together and give Thanks to our oldest Grandmother the Moon. She too has not forgotten her origi-



nal instructions, holding hands with all of the women of the world and binding all of the female cycles and rhythms of the Waters so that we may continue to carry out our obligation to Creation. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to our Grandmother the Moon.

“With one mind we send our thoughts to the Star Nation who continues to light our way during times of darkness to guide us home, and holds the secrets of many forgotten stories. Even though many of the stories are no longer in our minds, it is said that it is enough to be thankful to the Stars and perhaps one day we would learn these stories again. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the Star Nation.

“With our minds as one we think of the Four Spirit Beings who live in the Four Directions. At the beginning of time when the Creator first made the Human Family, it was seen that we very quickly got ourselves into trouble. The Creator knew that we needed extra help and so created the Four Spirit Beings to remove the obstacles from our paths. We know that they are helping us when we are moving through life and a feeling tells us not to go a certain way, or that we are on the right path. They speak to our feelings, so by trusting our feelings we can avoid trouble and stay on the right path. And now we gather our minds together as one and send our special Thanksgiving Greetings to the Four Spirit Beings.

“Now we have arrived in a very special place where dwells the Great Spirit, the Creator of the Universe. As one mind we turn our thoughts to the Creator, for without the Creator we would not be able to walk on the Earth fulfilling our original instructions. Everything we need is provided for us and all we have to remember is to give thanks. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to the Creator.

“We have now become like one being. We send our Prayers and special Thanksgiving Greetings to all the unborn children of all the future generations. We send our thoughts to the many different beings we may have missed during our Thanksgiving. With one mind we send our Thanksgiving and Greetings to all of the Nations of the World.

“Now Our Minds Are One.”

Some Notes on the Thanksgiving Address

Remember that it is important to do this your way. Perhaps your own spiritual or religious roots have a version of this. One important aspect of this practice is the thoroughness of the inventory represented. There is nothing left out! Whatever the practice you adopt (and you may adopt this one until you find one that



suits you better), it is important to include as much as possible. Today, I express thanksgiving for my ability to get around to help others (my car) and my ability to communicate to you (my computer, phone, email, electricity and the written word). As it has been made clear, the Thanksgiving Address was used to bring people's minds together. It is important to remember to separate your minds when you are done. Don't forget that. When you do the Thanksgiving Address by yourself or at your Secret Spot, you can just bring your mind together with the inhabitants of your Secret Spot. Sound good?

Many of our students have expressed that saying the Thanksgiving Address out loud has been of enormous value. Do whatever feels right to you in the moment. Personally, I have found that sometimes I say it softly out loud while other times I prefer to say it in my mind. Although it is not required for the course, I highly recommend that you take the time to share the Address with someone else. I do that as often as I can and it always makes it even more meaningful for me. Kids are great to share this with, but I know that's not convenient for all of you. Any friend, family member, or loved one will do. Read the *Giving Thanks* book or share it in your own way. If you decide to do this, please write about how that was for you in your reaction to this exercise.

FIELD INVENTORY INSTRUCTIONS



At this point, I would like to introduce the next series of Field Inventories. Again, they are to be done at least once a week. As I promised, they are different than the ones from last month. For now, they will prompt you to think about the things from the Thanksgiving Address. Please write just as you did last time—from your heart while staying on task. Here are some guidelines and ideas for the Field Inventories.

Your Naturalist Trail Field Inventory involves visiting your Secret Spot daily and taking inventory on a weekly basis. You will record your observations on the enclosed inventory forms and you will key your observations to a Bird's Eye View map of your Secret Spot and its surroundings.

What to Write on the Naturalist Inventory Blank

As you visit your Secret Spot, practice all you've been taught about walking invisibly, approaching your spot from different routes, tuning all five senses, and instinctively sensing where to focus. But, keep your mind quiet of thoughts. Your awareness will naturally imprint on things that catch your attention. Images, feelings, observations. Just let these settle into your mind and go on to new observations.

When you get home, out of the rain, out of your mittens, take a few minutes each day, or about an hour a week, to record those things that captured your awareness. You will get good at arranging your observation within the context of the inventory because they are in an easily memorized order that goes from the people around you to the Earth beneath your feet, to the waters, the plants, the animals, the trees, the birds, the wind, the clouds, the moon, the stars and on up to the heavens themselves. It is in ascending order in terms of elevation and therefore is easy to remember.

Try to make observations about each aspect of the inventory. Do as many as possible each time and all of them as often as possible. Some of the categories, like People, or Moon, Sun, and Stars, or The Wakan in our Lives, may include observations you made throughout the day and night, even in your dreams. Do whatever seems right to you.

How to Write on the Blank

It is important to realize at the outset that we do not expect thorough detail for each item. That would be too time consuming. Rely on your mind's eye to tell you what is important to mention.

It is not important to know the names of things. We are only concerned with details of observation. For instance, you see a beautiful flower blooming that you have never seen before.



Perhaps you know the name as “marsh marigold,” perhaps you don’t. Describe it, or make a small sketch in the margins. If you want to, name it based on its characteristics: for example, “yellow five-petaled water flower.”

There is no hard and fast rule about how to write. There is no correct or incorrect way.

This is a subjective process in that *you* will decide what is important to emphasize based on *your* interest. Jonathan Talbott’s example is included just to give you an idea of how to begin.

The most important part in all of this is, of course, to have fun. Keep enjoying yourself and see what you can learn. Whatever you do, *do not get bogged down* with the details. Don’t worry—as long as you are going to your Secret Spot, noting down your weekly observations, having fun and listening to your heart, you can’t do anything wrong. I know this all sounds like a lot of information and assignments, but trust me, it’s not like that at all. We’ve written a lot about it so that it is clear and easy to understand what we are looking for. That’s all. Have some fun.

You may choose your own way of filling in your inventory.

- Some students write in the provided forms; some make their own. If you decide to fill them out more often than once a week and you need more forms, feel free to copy them yourself or make them on your computer.
- Some students fit a week’s worth of observations in the space provided. Some want to take more space. Remember, if you like to write more, that the spirit sketch and the skeleton image are often more effective than the fully furred and feathered picture.
- Some students take daily notes, perhaps dating entries to distinguish the flow of events through a week. Some trust their memories and sit down at the end of the week to allow the most vivid images to settle themselves on paper.

How to Draw the Map

Grab a blank field journal page and make a simple map. Make a new one each week. Keep your original Secret Spot map handy as a reference until you memorize it. Include your Secret Spot at the middle, and add in the basic landmarks such as *major* trails, water, major land features, and the four directions.

As you work on the written part of the inventory, key in your observations on the map. Code each observation with a number. For example: “At my anchor point I noticed several new violets blooming.” You code it with a “1.” On the map you write “1” at the place on the map where you saw the new violets. You may want to include a numbered key to index the observations you



have made and recorded. See example on page 142.

Weekly Time Commitment

The minimum time you'll need to spend quietly in your spot is 15 minutes a day about 5 days a week. However, you will probably spend more than that amount of time. You'll be getting ready to get there, getting there, exploring, finding your way in from different directions, visiting favorite other spots, and generally loitering.

You can make the map and write the weekly inventory in about an hour, too, if you're quick. But you may spend fifteen minutes each day, or an hour each day — it's up to you.

What If I'm Away From Home?

If you go away for a vacation, family expedition or business trip, keep an inventory of the new environment. If you're hiking in a higher, dryer or wetter region, all the better: you can practice your awareness on new patterns. Make it clear on your inventory that you are *not* at your Secret Spot, but keep up the routine of awareness and inventory.

When to Journal

You should write about things after leaving your Secret Spot and not while there. Do not let anything distract you when you are in the field. Just be there. Keep your hands free. Let your memory guide you to what is important in the way of observation.

As you journal, you will be surprised at how much you can see in your mind's eye and how much detail you can remember. This will be a marvelous experience that enhances many aspects of the program and can bring out many good things in your life that may currently be latent in your subconscious.

THE NATURALIST INVENTORY REFERENCE

There is some information you may want to keep personally to yourself. Therefore, you may want to maintain a separate journal for these personal thoughts. If you want to share it with us at Wilderness Awareness School, we are happy to hear it. We will honor your privacy and confidentiality.

The People

When you think of people, think of what people are prominent in your mind at this time. It may be a loved one, an old teacher, a co-worker, or a friend. You may think of Wilderness Awareness School people, of native people, of someone who needs healing, or those who do not see what they are doing to the Earth. You



may think of the Elders of all the people who have ever lived in a good way, those who live close to the land, the children of the future, the children now, your family, your community, your Nation, your race. You may think of an individual, you may think of many people, and you may think of all people. Whatever comes to your mind, simply make a note.

The Earth

Do an inventory of the happenings in nature. First look to the Earth. Observe the land with all of your senses. Put your hand down on the ground and notice how it feels to your touch.

During warmer weather, move some of the leaf litter and see that there are many different kinds of insects moving around. You'll notice that there are lots of spiders around some times of the year. Do not worry about what kinds of spiders or insects they are. Do not worry about what kind of leaf litter it is.

Just make general observations about the Earth and the things close to the Earth, such as the rocks, soils, snow cover, moisture, leaf litter, debris, and minerals, as well as the insects, spiders, worms and other things moving on the ground.

The Waters

Next look at the waters around your Secret Spot area and notice the life in and around the waters. There may be flowers blooming right in the water. You may notice a lot of purple flowers that you have never seen before blooming beautifully along the edge of the water. The water may be warm where the leaves are black and over by the spring it may be cold.

Notice the frost or dew on the ground. Notice the damp places, puddles, ground water, bogs, pools, swamps, springs, creeks, rivers, bays, salt marshes, and oceans—whatever bodies of water, small or large, are in or near your Secret Spot area. Observe the things living in any of these areas. Observe the plants, the fish, the turtles, the frogs, any animals and even the rocks in and around the waters. Make general observations.

The Plants

Next look at the plants. Look at the algae, lichens, mosses, ferns, horsetails, and grasses. Look at all the herbs, garden plants and all the other low growing plants and make notes of your observations.

How tall are they? Are they flowering or fruiting, or can you tell at all? Are there many varieties growing together, or only one type in a thick colony? Are they just bursting from the ground, or now losing leaves in the fall with the frost? Are they sleeping through winter?

Where is the energy of the plant? In the ground? In the shoot?



In the stems near the almost flowering tops? In the flower? In the fruits? In the seeds?

What of the stems? Are they succulent, woody, stringy, brittle, hairy, shiny, dull, bright, soft, spiky or what? Describe their color, their texture. What comes to your mind's eye most? Ask your heart and make *simple* notes.

The Animals

Next look to the animals. Make general observations about all animal forms including worms, snails, slugs, ants, spiders, mites, crustaceans, centipedes, millipedes, insects, frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards, snakes, turtles and mammals.

This includes tracks, sign, and trails as well. Perhaps you see little tiny deer tracks now, or it is the rut when all are grown and feisty with autumn. There may be a lot of coyote tracks in one area but not in another. The animals may be settled into an area, in nests or in dens. You may notice groundhogs, rabbits or marmots out and about. What do you see along the roadways? Make general observations.

The Trees

Next look to the trees. What do you notice is different about the trees this month that you haven't seen before? Some trees may have leaves coming out, some may be fully in leaf, others may seem to be flowering. They may be in full autumn splendor, or in winter sleep.

Notice also the vines, shrubs, and other woody plants. What kind of changes are the trees making in their environment through leaf litter, shade, root action, shed branches, and stumps? Without concerning yourself with identification, make general observations about the trees.

The Birds

Next look to the birds. There may be a new bird that you haven't noticed before. A black and white bird may be dancing on the side of a tree like a woodpecker but you don't think it's a woodpecker. Maybe it's a Black and white Warbler. The Starlings are singing all the time, the Robins are singing at dawn, the crows are busy by their nests.

Pay attention to the birds that call from the landscape, especially those who sing in such a way that they become part of your conscious memory of a place. Think in terms of what you hear, and what you see soaring, gliding or flitting overhead. Make general observations about the bird life in your area.

Also think of the time of day, especially with birds, but with



other life forms as well.

The Wind

Next look to the four winds. What do you notice about the winds? Is it very windy now? Is it just a little bit windy? Has the wind been cold from the northwest? What scent does the wind carry? The winds which blow from the four directions shift about restlessly. They sometimes appear as a steady wind bending the grasses, sometimes as discrete bodies of energy which whirl in place or move slowly with much energy through the trees. It is our mind's eye that can best interpret the winds by listening and feeling their effect. Make general observations about the wind.

The Weather, the Rain and the Clouds

Next look to the clouds and the rains. Notice the presence or lack of thunder and lightning. Observe the mists, the humidity, and dampness. Notice the cloud formations, the occurrence of snow, the occurrence of rain, and the storms of spring. On a calm cloudy day, cloud watching can be very soothing. The clouds from our breath in the cool morning air are related to the clouds in the sky.

Even humidity and barometric pressure are part of this cycle.

The Moon

Next look to the moon. What phase is the moon in? How does it appear? Is it low? Is it bright? Sometimes the moon looks really big. In October it looks huge at moonrise, indicating that it is very close to the earth at that time.

How does it appear now? How does it feel? When did you notice it? Do you notice its effect on the tides? Each day, the moon rises and sets at a different time by nearly an hour and it rises and sets each day at a different place by a few degrees.

It does not always travel directly overhead on its journey and may be low in the sky at its zenith. Observe the moon through the trees, across the mountains, or in the open sky at all times of day and night and through all the seasons.

The Sun

Where is the sun rising? Where is it setting in relation to your Secret Spot? How high is it at midday? How warm does it feel? How does it make you feel? The sun rises and sets at a different point on the horizon every day. It moves by only a few degrees daily, but week by week it is noticeable. Note the effect on the shadows, the animals, and the plants. Think of its effects on the flow of life on the earth.

The Stars



The North Star, Polaris, sits still in the northern sky, but all the other stars rotate around this point in the sky much the same way as a record (LP) turns on a turntable around the little pin in the center. The seasons reveal different constellations at different times.

Look up at the stars and make some notes about where the stars are relative to one another. What constellations are you seeing now that you didn't see before? Even if you don't know the names of them, familiarize yourself with the common patterns. Access your memories, even from childhood, of looking at the stars. The stars are always there.

Try stargazing on a clear night. You can get lost wandering through their infinite mystery.

...Stars, solar systems, and galaxies have blueprints similar to individual cells, atoms, hurricane gyrations, and splashes of water.... The closest thing that resembles the entire universe is the mind.

—Alex Callen

Creativity In Our Lives

Creative forces move in our lives in many ways. You may be taken by an inspiration, or may have thoughts that lead to insights and realizations. These things can be triggered by conversations, words in books, feelings in nature, visions and dreams. They guide us to be closer to our purpose and more intent in our thanksgiving for life.

Write down any inspirational thoughts that may have come to you. Has anything happened recently that seems to be a coincidence? Make observations about patterns you've discovered or feelings you've had.

Make a note of anything that you've noticed honoring the connection that you have with the source of inspiration, intuition and special coincidence.

The Universe and the Future Generations

Never can we know everything of nature and the universe. Many things have been hidden from our view. What would you say to the forces that created the universe if given the chance? Think about all the future generations to whom we will be ancestors. What would you say to the future generations about the world we live in now? What is it you would say to them in light of everything you are doing now? What would you say to them to reassure them? Make some notes on these perspectives.

FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT FIELD INVENTORIES



by Matt Wild

At the risk of being redundant, I'm going to give you a bit of a review regarding what is expected of you.

If you want to graduate this program, you need to complete at least one Field Inventory and map *every week* while you are doing the Field Exercises. That goes for all levels of this program, but you don't need to worry about that right now. We have included four Field Inventory sheets and maps with each Field Exercise because that is the minimum amount of time needed to complete the Exercise. **If, however, you need longer to complete it, please continue to do one Field Inventory and one map every week.** We've included extras in the back of the book if you need them.

Although it is not required, I really do hope that you continue to maintain your Secret Spot visits even in between programs. Getting to know your Secret Spot is, as we've said, the cornerstone of this program and your development as a tracker and naturalist. **Please hear that.** The Field Inventories are designed to build your connection to that place to help facilitate your learning there. However, as I've said, it is time for you to fly. **If you continue to visit and connect to your Secret Spot in between programs and do weekly inventories, you will learn much faster.**

Remember, this method of education is not about "getting the assignment done." It's about *your* growth and what you put into it. No, we won't review those interim inventories, **but they will keep you observing nature through the seasons without a break. And that is very important!**

Some folks have trouble fitting what they want to say into the spaces provided. You are welcome to type it or re-write it. Please write so we can read it. The next pages are for your reaction to the Thanksgiving Address and Field Exercise Three. Let us know what you thought of it! When you are done, please send in the copies of your reflection and the four Field Inventories with Field Pack 2.3. **Remember to do the maps with your inventories (use Field Journal pages).**

You'll continue Field Inventories in Field Pack 2.4 even though there is no Field Exercise for that assignment.

So Long for Now...

Well, my friends, it is time for us to go our own ways again for a little while. Thank you so very much for completing *Kamana Two*—you are making the world a better place for me to live! I really am delighted that there is one more person in the world relaxing at their Secret Spot.

I'm already looking forward to hearing from you again. I don't know how to express what an honor it has been to compile this work. Thank you again for all of your dedication and commitment.



Keep having fun, and I'll look forward to working with you again in *Kamana Three*.

Wishing You Health and Happiness,

Matt Wild

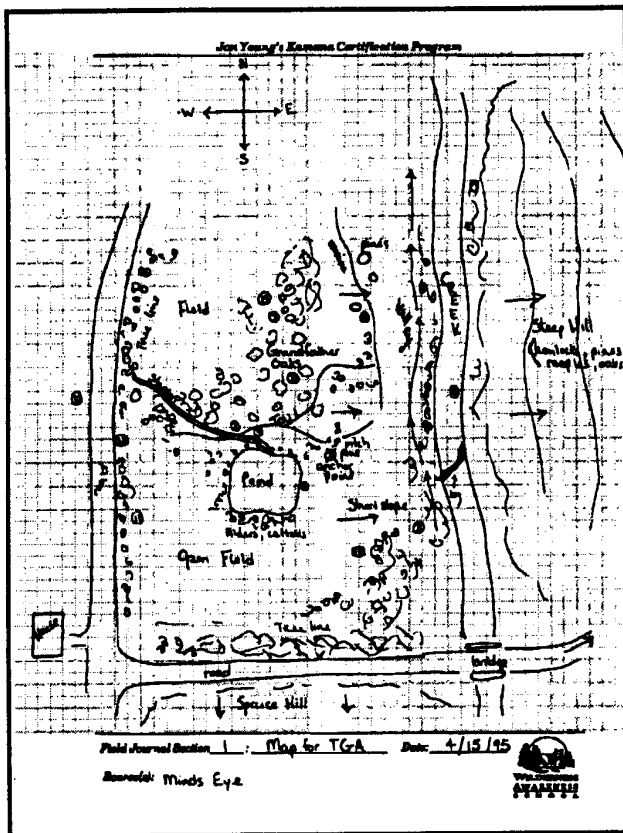


Is your binder **missing** the following upcoming pages:

- **Field Exercise reflection sheets**
- **Blank Field Inventory sheets (for Field Pack 2.3 & up)**
- **The yellow Field Pack form you need to send work in to us?**

You can download the Field Pack forms, a blank Field Inventory template and Field Journal templates (Resource Trail) at www.kamana.org. For the Field Exercise reflections, simply reflect on the exercise by neatly writing or typing on a couple of sheets of paper.





Jonathan Talbott illustrates a bird's eye map (left) and prepares a Naturalist Inventory (below).

Thanksgiving Address Inventory Sheet

THE PEOPLE

Many events and fairs are taking place in the community and bringing many of us together. The family and relatives are together, happy, with interesting stories to tell. I think of the others outside of this community who do not try to work in harmony and I can feel the fear of knowing this beautiful valley where I wonder could easily have its beauty destroyed by the ignorance of so many.

EARTH

Many soft soils are very muddy now from the rains such as where the creek meets the trail and the far side of the pond. There is one patch of rocks in a small bend along the top part of the ravine. In the area of the Grandfather Oaks there are thick layers of oak leaves along the ground and few hanging in the trees still, but exposed patches of soil are scattered by squirrels, turkeys and raccoons. The soil is warm here to the touch.

WATERS

Because of little snowfall this year the creek is not quite as swollen as past years. The grasses are thick with dew these mornings. I've seen brown trout now in a small pool in the creek. Red maples surround a small vernal pool and swamp where the peepers are singing. Turkeys are on the dock now in the pond.

LOW GROWING PLANTS

The fields are full of yellow and coral leaves coming up. Jewelweed is beginning to sprout along the trail. I picked and ate from a small patch of chickweed. The grasses are growing thick and full now all in the field. Blank cabbage is coming up along the swamp and here I noticed a very few patches of sphagnum moss.

ANIMALS

I am finding ticks out now fairly commonly. The spiders have woven many webs that glisten in the morning sun, sparkling off rich dewdrops. Snails and slugs are all over the grasses and in the vole trails and I've seen interesting red types of tiny ants crawling spiders. I came upon a large group of wild turkeys in the valley. The muddy creek area is covered with raccoon tracks.

TREES

Many trees are still bare although the buds are very large now. The fruit trees on the slope are beginning to flower. Honeysuckle is in full leaf and the lush areas of the transition area are getting thick with greenery, starting to get hard to see through.

BIRDS & OTHER WINGED SINGERS

The peepers are singing all day and night now. Red tail Hawks are always soaring and I see a Marsh Hawk hunting high in the field. I hear flickers all the time, Red winged Black birds on the wires along the road. New bird songs are coming into the area, many of which I believe to be warblers.





FIELD INVENTORY

THE PEOPLE

EARTH

WATERS

PLANTS

ANIMALS

TREES

BIRDS

WIND



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

FIELD INVENTORY

THE WEATHER, RAIN & THE CLOUDS

THE MOON

THE SUN

THE STARS

CREATIVITY IN OUR LIVES

THE UNIVERSE & THE FUTURE GENERATIONS

FIELD INVENTORY

THE PEOPLE

EARTH

WATERS

PLANTS

ANIMALS

TREES

BIRDS

WIND



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

FIELD INVENTORY

THE WEATHER, RAIN & THE CLOUDS

THE MOON

THE SUN

THE STARS

CREATIVITY IN OUR LIVES

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FIELD INVENTORY

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EARTH

WATERS

PLANTS

ANIMALS

TREES

BIRDS

WIND



Date:

Time:

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FIELD INVENTORY

THE WEATHER, RAIN & THE CLOUDS

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THE PEOPLE

EARTH

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ANIMALS

TREES

BIRDS

WIND



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

FIELD INVENTORY

THE WEATHER, RAIN & THE CLOUDS

THE MOON

THE SUN

THE STARS

CREATIVITY IN OUR LIVES

THE UNIVERSE & THE FUTURE GENERATIONS

FIELD EXERCISE THREE REFLECTION

Please respond to the Field Exercise, not the entire Field Pack.
We encourage typing Reflections if you feel comfortable doing so.



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE THREE REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE THREE REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

FIELD EXERCISE THREE REFLECTION



Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date: _____

YOU MUST SEND US THIS FORM

This form is for students registered with Kamana Services



Certification Option students use this form to organize your work as well.

ONLY hand in the following for Field Pack 2.3

1. Nature Awareness Trail:
 - Field Exercise Three Reflection
 - Sketch of the Thanksgiving Address
 - 4 Field Inventories & Maps
2. Resource Trail:
 - 3 journal entries for each chapter (Chapters 2-7)

- I am on time with this assignment. (See the Registration Form we sent you for deadline.)
- I have exceeded the amount of time Student Services is available to me and have included **\$25** for review of my work for this Field Pack.

Make checks out to Wilderness Awareness School. Students with Kamana Affiliates talk with your local office about payment options.

Method of payment: Check <input type="checkbox"/> M.O. <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Amex <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name as it appears on the card: _____	
Account number: _____	
Expiration date: _____	Today's date: _____
Signature _____	

Please send COPIES, not originals...
Write neatly in ink or type your work.

I have new contact information.

Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____
Day: _____

Email: _____

3. Mail to Kamana Student Services
FULL STUDENT SERVICES students please use the provided Field Pack Label on the back of the envelope.



We encourage you to copy your work on recycled paper (double sided) OR use the blank back side of already used copy paper.



Name: _____
Student Number: K _____
Date: _____

Field Pack 2.3

1. Did you include:

Copies (**not originals**) of:

- your Resource Trail work
- your Nature Awareness Trail work (include all pages)

2. Tear off this sheet, fold in half, and insert your work in an envelope.


Field Pack 2.4 Assignment Overview:

The Nature Awareness Trail:

- All you have to do is four weekly Field Inventories and maps. And be visiting your secret spot, of course.

The Resource Trail:

What you'll be handing in:

- Four journals from each chapter for Chapters 2-7 of the *Resource Trail*. You'll also photocopy the pages at the end of Chapters 2-7 with the  icon.
- Copy of the final questionnaire in Chapter 8.

We've included extra Field Inventories for you, to hold you over. If you need more, just photocopy a blank. The same goes for Field Journal pages. Blank templates are available at www.kamana.org.

Are you going on to Kamana Three? Please read...

If you are planning on continuing on to Kamana Three, you will need to have a Student Number before you can start the course work. If you have not signed up for full Student Services, the only way to get a number is by registering for the Certification Option (see green pages in the beginning of the *Nature Awareness Trail*).

The cost of *Kamana Three* and *Four* includes Student Services support. When you get your *Kamana Three* binder, you will find a yellow Activation form in the front. **You will mail this to Wilderness Awareness School immediately or whenever you are ready to begin the program.**

We nor any Kamana Affiliate will be able to service your *Kamana Three* until the Activation form with your student number is received by Wilderness Awareness School Kamana Services.

Tips for Kamana Two

Nature Awareness Trail:

- Fill out every space in your Field Inventories (Field Pack 2.2 and after). Be creative as well as observant.
- Make sure you make a map for every Inventory after Field Pack 2.2.

Resource Trail:

- Try not to spend more than half an hour on a journal. (You want to get this down to 20 minutes).
- Use the **Mind's Eye** approach. Do not copy information verbatim.

**PLEASE WRITE NEATLY IN INK OR TYPE
THE WORK THAT CAN BE TYPED.**

Is your binder **missing** the following upcoming pages:

- **Blank Field Inventory sheets (for Field Pack 2.3 & up)**
- **The yellow Field Pack form you need to send work in to us?**

You can download the Field Pack forms, a blank Field Inventory template and Field Journal templates (Resource Trail) at www.kamana.org. For the Field Exercise reflections, simply reflect on the exercise by neatly writing or typing on a couple of sheets of paper.

FIELD INVENTORY

THE PEOPLE

EARTH

WATERS

PLANTS

ANIMALS

TREES

BIRDS

WIND



Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

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THE WEATHER, RAIN & THE CLOUDS

THE MOON

THE SUN

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YOU MUST SEND US THIS FORM



ONLY hand in the following for **Field Pack 2.4**

1. Nature Awareness Trail:
 - 4 Field Inventories
2. Resource Trail:
 - 4 journal entries for each chapter (Chapters 2-7)
 - Photocopy the pages at the end of **Chapters 2-7** with the  icon.
 - Copy of the final questionnaire in Chapter 8.

Certification Option students use this form to organize your work as well.

- I am on time with this assignment.
(See the Registration Form we sent you for deadline.)
- I have exceeded the amount of time Student Services is available to me and have included **\$25** for review of my work for this Field Pack.

Make checks out to Wilderness Awareness School. Students with Kamana Affiliates talk with your local office about payment options.

Method of payment: Check <input type="checkbox"/> M.O. <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Amex <input type="checkbox"/>	
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Please send COPIES, not originals...
Write neatly in ink or type your work.


I have new contact information.

Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____
Day: _____

Email: _____

3. Mail to Kamana Student Services
FULL STUDENT SERVICES students please use the provided Field Pack label on the back of the envelope.

1. Did you include:
 - your Resource Trail work
 - your Nature Awareness Trail work (include all  pages)
2. Tear off this sheet, fold in half, and insert your work in an envelope.



Name: _____
Student Number: K _____
Date: _____

Field Pack 2.4



We encourage you to copy your work on recycled paper (double sided) OR use the blank back side of already used copy paper.



DEEPENING THE ROOTS OF NATURE AWARENESS

KAMANA THREE

Now that you have the basics down, it's time to really dive in and experience what Kamana is all about.



In the Resource Trail you will learn how to look at all the diversity in nature and really boil it down to what you need to learn to be an effective naturalist and tracker. You will learn taxonomy, classification and other important naturalist skills in a clear, fun, and simple to understand way. The Nature Awareness Trail will take you through four more monthly awareness exercises and will continue to expand your daily observations in the Field Inventories as well as in Weather Journals. After *Kamana Three* you will be ready for the final leg of the field work in *Kamana Four: The Complete Naturalist* before wrapping up the course with the final assignments.

If you are a member of Kamana.org Student Services You'll receive support from our Student Services office via phone, mail and email. We will send you the binder soon after ordering. When you are ready to begin, simply send in the *Kamana Three* Activation Form included in the Kamana Three binder.

If you want to continue, mail this form in with your final assignment or hold onto it for another time.

All resources available at www.WildernessAwareness.org

New Required Resources for Kamana Three:

- *Botany in a Day* (Tom Elpel)
- *Peterson's Field Guide to Medicinal Plants*
- *Peterson's Field Guide to Edible Plants*
- *Skulls & Bones* (Searfross)
- A college level Biology book. We suggest checking used book stores, the internet (such as www.abe.com) or using a library when needed. Text books are expensive new.

See Kamana.org for more information about Kamana Student Services and to connect with other Kamana students around the world!

You MUST have a student number before beginning Kamana Three. If you do not yet have a number and you have finished Kamana Two, please register for the Kamana.org Student Services.

Name _____ Student number: _____

Address with zip _____

Phone (evening) _____ Phone (day) _____ Fax _____

Email _____

See above note. You do not NEED a student number to PURCHASE Kamana Three, but you do when you want to BEGIN the work.

Send me:
 Kamana Three , \$185+\$12 S&H (within lower 48 states) Please call/email the School office for international shipping costs

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Wilderness Awareness School
SEE WEB SITE or recent mailer for our address

Method of payment Check Visa Mastercard Amex

Name as it appears on the card: _____

Account number: _____

Expiration date: _____ Today's date: _____

Signature _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

FIELD INVENTORY

Do not let your awareness building routines end just because you do not have *Kamana Three* yet. Use these sheets we have provided so you can continue to grow your awareness abilities.

THE PEOPLE

EARTH

WATERS

PLANTS

ANIMALS

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Date:

Time:

Name:

Student #:

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WATERS

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Printed on
Recycled Paper
with Soy Ink

