

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM OUTLINE

Interpreter's Name: Amelia Richards **Date of Program:** 10/14/14

Length of Program (time): Approx: 13 Min **Type of Program:** Interpretive Talk

Topic: *Common Milkweed Plant* **Sub-Topic:** *The Uses of the Common Milkweed Plant*

Focus: Natural Environment

Program Enhancement: Natural Environment Site and Topic

Theme: There are many ways for humans to use the various parts of a Common Milkweed plant.

Audience: A small group of college aged Outdoor Recreation Students visiting Moosewood Nature Center for class.

Location: Outside the front entrance of Moosewood Nature Center, by the large patch of Common Milkweed plant (Butterfly Garden)

Resource: Natural Resource, Common Milkweed Plant

Materials Needed: Products made from Milkweed (Seed Pods, Floss, Pickled Pods, Cordage), Pictures of the various life stages of the plant, Paper, clipboards, drawing utensils (colored pencils or pastels), sit pads

Goal: To teach my audience the human uses and have them gain appreciation for the Common Milkweed plant by the end of my presentation.

Objectives/(Measurement): (what you want the audience to do):

Each participant will draw various parts of a Milkweed plant resulting in a complete plant drawing throughout the presentation. (*All students will have a completed drawing.*)

All students will learn at least one human use for each main part of the milkweed plant by the end of the presentation. *Notes on the drawing or observations of enlightenment (Interest, questions, aha look, ect.)*

At least 50% of the audience will have gained a new appreciation for the Common Milkweed plant and want to seek more information after my presentation by expressing further interest in the topic. (*Questions, returning or lingering around the patch inspecting the plants, reading the butterfly sign, declarations of attempts to cook with it, ect.*)

Relevance

Tangibles: green, brown, plant, sticky, spiky, rough

Intangibles: Butterflies (monarchs), nature, caterpillars (collecting them), fields, my cabin, milk

Universal Concepts: Nature, Butterflies?

How will it be relatable?: Many people have experienced these plants before as they are fairly common in the midwest... recalling memories of playing with the milky sap, perhaps learning the cycle of a monarch butterfly in school or at a nature center, playing with the white fluffy seeds... While most of these connections are based on natural uses, I hope to have my audience relate to the plant more once they know some of the human uses; for example, what milkweed has been used for and it's edibility. I also hope to connect my audience to the plant through the experience of drawing it as well as touching parts of the actual plant to incorporate more of their senses.

Program Title: *“The Common Milkweed Plant: It’s More Than Caterpillar Food”*

Theme: There are many ways for humans to use the various parts of a Common Milkweed plant.

Introduction:

- a) Butterfly Garden, Everybody knows of the Milkweed because of Monarch Butterflies
- b) Theme: “The common milkweed plant isn’t just useful for butterflies, it’s various parts can be used by humans in a number of ways!”
- c) Introduce drawing activity by passing out materials

Body (sub-themes):

1) The stem has several uses.

- Draw the stem
- Young shoots can be cooked, similar to asparagus (Pictures of shoots)
- Once mature, the stem can be pulled apart and twisted into cordage. (pass around cordage)

Transition 1: “And now we will add some leaves to our drawing!”

2) The sap and leaves are slightly poisonous, yet with the right prepping, are still edible.

- Draw leaves
- The sap is toxic which gives animals a bitter taste and was used as a topical for warts as well as a crude rubber cement. (sap from chilled stems)
- Debate on toxicity of sap, Gibbons 60s Dogbane
- The young leaves can be fried up and crisped

Transition 2: “And now let’s draw some seed pods in their various stages.”

3) The seed pods have many uses throughout their development.

- Draw pods (Show examples of various stages)
- The immature pod can be eaten and the silk can be cooked with as well. (pickled pods)
- The native americans used the soft seed parachutes as stuffing for things
- The fluff is extremely buoyant and was used in WW2 to stuff life jackets

Transition 3: “Now show your drawing off if you’d like and marvel at all of the things you could use this plant for!”

Conclusion: If time, ask for questions, Then pique the audiences interest with last line: “To find out more about the *natural* uses, explore the Monarch butterfly’s dependency on the common milkweed plant.”

Accuracy

Topic references:

Densmore, F. (1974). *How Indians use wild plants for food, medicine, and crafts*. New York: Dover.

Graham, A. (1976). *The milkweed and its world of animals*. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday.

Holdrege, C. (2010). The Story of an Organism: Common Milkweed. *The Nature Institute*. Retrieved

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Thayer, S. (n.d.). Milkweed: A Truly Remarkable Wild Vegetable « Forager's Harvest. Retrieved from

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Zachos, E. (2013). *Backyard Foraging: 65 Familiar Plants You Didn't Know You Could Eat*. North Adams, MA: Storey Publishing.

Interpretive Process References:

Ham, S. H. (1993). *Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets*. Golden, Colo: North American Press.

Regnier, K., Gross, M., & Zimmerman, R. (1994). *The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations* (Third edition.). Stevens Point, WI: UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc.

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