

FEEL is a CHARITABLE.org
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR DONATIONS AND SUPPORT.

Send a child to the
The HMK Children's Water Festival

All it takes is \$30 per child to attend this FREE
two-day curriculum-based event that is held
annually @ Kinark Outdoor Centre
www.hmwaterfestival.ca

The proceeds from the
FEEL Native Plant Sale
Supports FEEL programming.

Place your order by May 1st at
www.haliburtonstewardship.ca

Look for FEEL **Rain Barrels**
around Haliburton County.
Order online and pick up in Minden.
www.rainbarrel.ca/feel

Register a team of 5 for FEEL's annual
CHIC 2B GEEK Quiz Night
ecoenvirolearn@gmail.com
\$10 per person \$40 per team

Our mission is to advance the
public's awareness, understanding,
and appreciation of ecosystems
through accessible education.

f.e.e.l

www.ecoenvirolearn.org
ecoenvirolearn@gmail.com



TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!
TOOLS FOR LEARNING MORE

Field Naturalist and Nature Clubs and
other natural heritage groups in the
Kawartha, Haliburton and Muskoka region.

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Kawartha Field Naturalists
www.kawarthafieldnaturalists.org

Muskoka Field Naturalists
www.muskokafieldnaturalists.com

Haliburton Highland Field Naturalists
www.hhfn.ca

Huntsville Nature Club
@huntsvillenatureclub

Kawartha Conservation
www.kawarthaconservation.com

Couchiching Conservancy
www.couchichinconserv.ca

Muskoka Conservancy
www.muskokaconservancy.org



FRIENDS OF ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

F.E.E.L

THE
SPRITE



A Publication for Kids and Their Families

Vol. 2, No. 1

October 21, 2017

CITIZEN SCIENCE 101

Citizen Scientists give
nature a voice, and you can too!

It's easy! You can become a Citizen
Scientist at any age, with no diploma
required. All you need to do is research
how to join your local Nature Club or
Field Naturalist group.

Most municipalities have a field
naturalist club to call their own and they
are run by volunteers who have a
passion for outdoor education and
environmental sciences. The best part
is that everyone in these clubs love to
spend time outdoors and talk about
adventures and explorations in nature!



Binoculars are a great Citizen Science tool.

The Sprite is published by FEEL (Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning)
as an outdoor education service and tool for children and their families.
For information about participation, memberships, and other publications, please visit
www.ecoenvirolearn.org.



A group of Citizen Scientists are out to learn more at the Carden Alvar Festival.

Tools to make the most of your Citizen Scientist outings.

| | | |
|------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Binoculars | Pencil | Paper bags |
| Hand Loop | Cue cards | Field guides |
| Minnow Net | Pocket knife | Nature apps |
| Camera | Laboratory jars | Good footwear |

Your field naturalist club membership lets you attend monthly meetings where you can see presentations by people who have done some interesting outdoor explorations around your area, or even in far off exotic places! Along with the cool learning opportunities and new friends, there are also refreshments, like cookies and juice, that are served. This is all free with your membership!

Nature clubs host interesting outings, on a regular basis, like educational snowshoe treks, hikes where you search for owls, mushroom walks, and bird song lessons. The membership often has its ear to the ground for other interesting activities, like bird counts, butterfly counts, and dragonfly counts, where you can have the opportunity to spend the day finding

as many specimens as you can, learn to identify them with an experienced scientist, and then report your findings to a natural heritage database, like the Ontario Wildlife Federation, and then BAM! Your report enters your name into a Citizen Science database and it's official! You're a real CS!

As you grow within your nature club you will become a mentor for younger members where you can share with them what your elders taught you. The elders in your nature club may even introduce you to other elders in the environmental and outdoor field who could hire you on for a job someday.

Field naturalist meetings usually include a 'Sightings' section on the agenda - this is where you report the interesting species and phenomena you may have seen each month (Note: it is often a Citizen Scientist that ends up documenting rare species that have never been seen in their community before). If you can't make a meeting you can email your sightings to the group because nature clubs love data!

Why do Citizen Scientist clubs love data? Well, Citizen Scientists act as nature guardians in their communities by recording what they observe. They know that the broader the scope of their region's natural database, the louder their voice is for nature, and with that voice comes protection.

Especially if Species at Risk are found.

Species at Risk are species in decline due to habitat loss, predation, and loss of food sources, among other challenges. Unfortunately, the most prevalent cause of habitat loss is human development of wild spaces.

When a Citizen Scientist documents a Species at Risk, their community can state a case for the species and can even get local governments to protect the species from further habitat loss through planning and zoning.

Nature Clubs hold an important place in the history of their communities too as club findings were often printed in local newspapers. This history is a source of long-term data which has been recorded through generations of observation. It is this long-term data that helps communities track natural trends. These trends can then be interpreted to communicate the natural language of wildlife and weather patterns to town officials where they get acknowledged and action can be taken if needed.

So go ahead! Join your local Field Naturalist organization. Start exploring with your Citizen Science Tool Kit. Write down what you see each time you are outside and enter it into your journal. Then take your observations and report them to your club because you CAN be a great Citizen Scientist and give a voice to nature in your home town! R.K.