



I LOOK LIKE A FOREST STEWARD

TIME: Varies

OBJECTIVE: To implement forest stewardship.

MATERIALS: Newsprint and markers
Descriptions of local areas such as parks or greenways

BACKGROUND:

The old adage “bloom where you are planted” holds true for stewardship. Anyone can be a forest steward and make a beneficial change to the land; training as a park ranger, forester, or wildlife biologist is not required.

Information on the Forest Stewardship Program is available through the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, North Carolina Division of Forest Resources, and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. These offices can provide the help necessary to begin stewardship practices.

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:

Check the resource pages that are appended to the lessons section; they contain suggestions for class projects. Then consider what actions could be taken to improve the local area. Planting flowers, shrubs or trees is a possibility but could require permission. Consider planting specific flowers to attract birds or insects; red flowers attract humming birds and butterflies. Another possibility is building a bird or bat house (instructions in Lesson #5), or build a bird feeder that provides food and shelter for birds as well as squirrels.

LEAD-IN:

Have you ever wished you could change something about your school or neighborhood environment?

Let’s look around our natural world and see what’s going on. And then, let’s see what we can do to make it better.

ACTIVITY:

1. Have students look around the school or neighborhood and list at least fifteen changes that could be made to create a better environment.*
2. If the students have difficulty with this activity suggest adding flowers to an area. Other suggestions could be to mulch a path (construct a path and line it with mulched material), make a water bar (log or rocks placed to direct the flow of water off a path) or to show succession (the types of growth that follow one another) by not mowing a section of the school grounds.
3. Choose which activities could be accomplished and become a steward.

*North Carolina Wild School Sites Program could be a resource for planting on school grounds.

BRANCHING OUT:

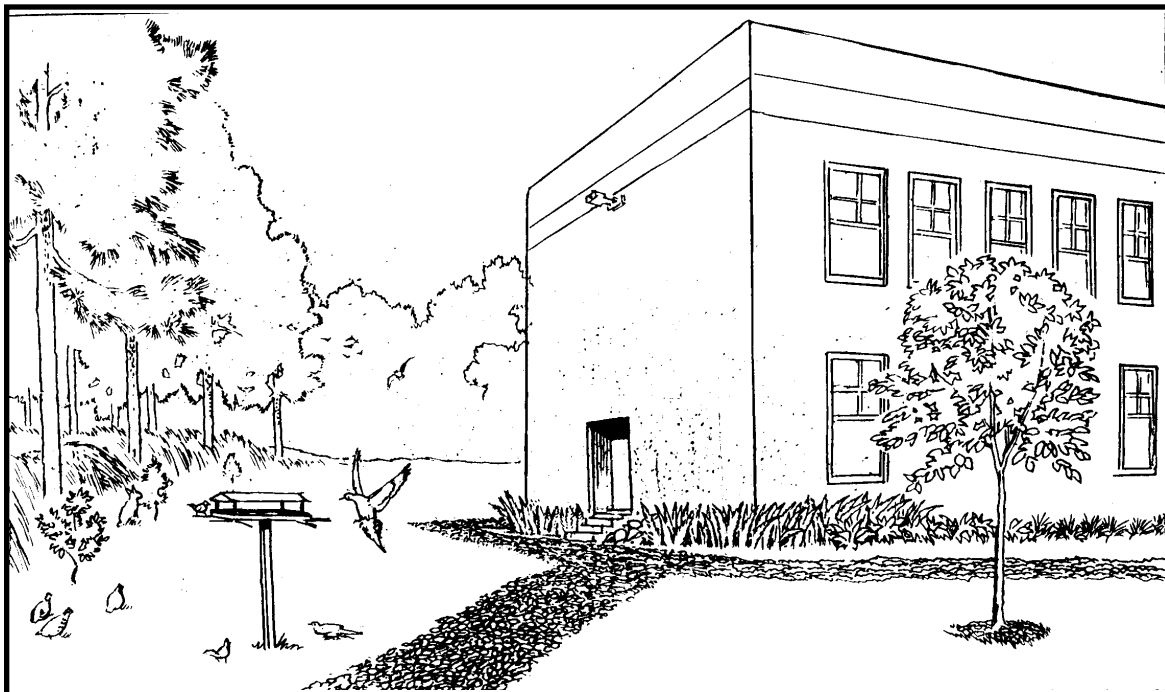
1. Students can develop changes for the neighborhood and plan how they would present their recommendations to the city council or parks and recreation director.
2. Invite an architectural firm representative to explain how decisions are made about what to keep and what to remove from a natural setting when buildings are planned.
3. Ask an extension agent to explain trail design and maintenance.
4. Have a parks and recreation representative discuss grounds maintenance.
5. Maintain a nature trail or section of a park /greenway.
6. Practice simulated town council presentation.

Stewards At School

You can make a difference in your own environment. Birds, bees, butterflies and small animals can benefit from small improvements that you make to your school grounds. Make a difference. Plan, prepare and get permission to steward your school grounds. Can you name other improvements that can be made?



Before



After