



Hnutí DUHA

Weeks for Wilderness

Weeks for Wilderness are traditional seasonal activity organized by Hnutí DUHA - Friends of the Earth Czech Republic. During the summer hundreds of volunteers who want to preserve wild nature spend one week in the most valuable wilderness areas of our country. At the Weeks for Wilderness they have the opportunity to learn about wilderness protection from both local and national leaders in conservation, get out and enjoy the tranquillity of camping in wilderness and especially get dirty by returning some piece of nature to its wild state. These weeklong educational work camps are intended for general public. So far, Weeks for Wilderness took place 118 times in more than a dozen localities. During past eighteen years of its existence 1578 of volunteers from all over the country have been involved in the project and worked more than 56,000 hours on conservation of wilderness.

Background

Wilderness is deeply valued for cultural, spiritual, moral, and aesthetic reasons. Strictly protected areas are essential places to safeguard our European Natural Heritage and also a source of increasingly valuable biological and ecological information for scientists and the public, to whom wilderness offers wide educational opportunities and a strong emotional experience. So there is a lot to learn from protected areas, and the interest amongst adults for on-going training programs on wild flora, fauna and natural habitats and also on how to behave in and how to experience wild places is high.

The word *wilderness* derives from the notion of "wildness"—in other words, that which is not controlled by humans. Hnutí DUHA as a leading organisation in wilderness protection in Czech Republic believe that ecosystems that are, or have been, inhabited or influenced by activities of people may still be considered "wild." This way of looking at wilderness includes areas within which natural processes operate without human interference. Hnutí Duha leads long term a campaign for enlarging wilderness areas and increasing of their number. In some localities we try to reset natural processes by removal of unoriginal species introduced by man.

Hnutí DUHA believes that progressive outdoor learning can be achieved by combination of outdoor education and practical activities in wild life protection. Our outdoor learning programs (Weeks for Wilderness, Lynx Watch, ect.) are based on practical engage in natural conservation which encourages participant to make connections experientially, leading to deeper understanding of natural processes and wildlife needs. Our volunteers learn by experience and become confident and responsible citizens who value and appreciate landscapes, wild-life species and natural habitats. In addition, interacting with wild nature

improves not just physical and emotional wellbeing of participants, but also change their attitudes towards wilderness itself (and consequently societal values).

Vision

Hnutí DUHA's vision of outdoor learning is that our program participants are successful learners about wilderness protection, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens who disseminate our approach to wild life preserve and landscape management. We will use massive potential of the outdoor environment for learning about natural processes and wild life habitats. We will facilitate progressive and creative outdoor learning experiences which will be part of our curriculum. We will increase the potential of our outdoor learning programs to admit more interested persons. Wilderness learning in the outdoor environment becomes a reality for thousands of people.

Aim, targets and objectives

Aim:

- bring fundamental changes in the public attitude towards wilderness by educating them about the various benefits of wilderness and its importance

Short-term measurable objectives:

- number of trained participants
- amount of training hours
- amount of work (in hours)
- amount of managed landscape (in hectares)
- number of protected species (if monitored)

Long – term targets:

- emphasise the responsibility for the human impact on natural processes and on the quality of our environment
- increase the public interest for and understanding of wilderness and thus help nature protection
- strengthen participants competencies to protect wilderness
- establish outdoor learning through initiatives such as working to improve biodiversity as respected approach
- create community of people willing promote the concept of wilderness
- facilitate concept of wilderness as an experience (a sense of adventure, an appreciation of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through physical activity)

Educational forms and methods used in the programme

- field work aimed at helping particular protected area, for example construction of fences, removal of unoriginal species, creating of habitats ect.
- frontal teaching by local or national wilderness expert
- excursion to protected areas
- observation and identification of wild species
- discussions about wilderness protection

- experiential learning (diverse method targeted to re-connection of participants with nature)

Target groups

- general public (including students, teachers, experts ... whoever, who wants to learn about our fauna and flora and help with protection of wilderness) - good physical condition is essential

Number of participants

Range from 10 to 20 (the optimal number of participant depends on the locality)

Language

Lectures speak in Czech language and currently translation is not provided.

Dates

Jun, July, September (please, check our website for exact days)

Location 2015

NP Šumava, NP Podyjí, NPR Kralický Sněžník, CHKO Beskydy, CHKO Moravský kras, CHKO Bílé Karpaty – Ščúrnic, CHKO Bílé Karpaty – Mlýnky

Information on accommodation and food

- sleeping mostly in-door in wood cabins and huts (sleeping bag and sleeping pad are needed)
- take with you: work clothing and footwear (rain), mess tin, cutlery, headlamp, candles, water bottle (or vacuum flask), diary and your other necessities
- vegetarian food is provided daily (at least one hot meal) and everybody helps with preparation

Fees

gratis

Certificate

No certificate is available but if any confirmation on participation is needed, it will be provided upon request.

Contact

Lukáš Kala

Coordinator of The Practical wilderness protection courses

Hnutí DUHA (Friends of the Earth Czech Republic)

Address: Údolní 33, 602 00 Brno

Telephone: 778 489 629

Email: lukas.kala@hnutiduha.cz

Web: <http://ceskadivocina.cz/tydny-pro-divocinu/>

<http://www.hnutiduha.cz/akce/tydny-pro-divocinu-2015>



Supported by the European Union