

Garry Oak Ecosystem

Kindergarten – Grade 5

The Garry Oak Ecosystems program allows participants the chance to connect with this vital, unique, and endangered ecosystem found in their backyard. Oak-camas meadows are rich in biodiversity and cultural significance. Participants will learn about biotic and abiotic features, as well as native species that can be found in this ecosystem. They will learn about the Indigenous uses and historical significance, of the plants in these meadows, and explore human-ecosystem interactions.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Learn about the different components of an ecosystem and ones that are unique to Garry oak ecosystems
- Connect with the Garry oak ecosystem through activities and stories. Learn about the Indigenous history of Oak-camas ecosystems, including prescribed burning and camas cultivation
- Identifying species from the Garry oak ecosystem through a seasonally focused ecosystem scavenger hunt
- Students will explore human-ecosystem interactions, from the influence of development and pollution to restoration

This program occurs entirely outdoors, please dress appropriately for the weather.

PROGRAM THEMES

- Recognize the key characteristics of Garry oak ecosystems
- Create relationship to the ecosystem – including its inhabitants and histories
- Develop ways to be better stewards of Garry oak ecosystems
- Garry oak ecosystems are cultural and ecologically important because of their ability to host complex, diverse, and interconnected relationships
- They are also at high risk due to habitat loss, climate change, invasive species encroachment, and fire suppression

SAMPLE CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Science:

- Kindergarten - Plants and animals have observable features.
- Kindergarten - Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things.
- Grade 1 - Living things have features and behaviours that help them survive in their environment.
- Grade 2 - Living things have life cycles adapted to their environment.
- Grade 3 - Living things are diverse, can be grouped, and interact in their ecosystems.
- Grade 4 - All living things sense and respond to their environment.
- Grade 5 - First Peoples concepts of interconnectedness in the environment
- Grade 5 - First Peoples knowledge of sustainable practices

Social Studies:

- Kindergarten - Rights, roles, and responsibilities shape our identity and help us build healthy relationships with others.
- Grade 1 - We shape the local environment, and the local environment shapes who we are and how we live.
- Grade 1 - Healthy communities recognize and respect the diversity of individuals and care for the local environment.
- Grade 2 - Relationships between people and the environment in different communities
- Grade 3 – Learning about Indigenous peoples nurtures multicultural awareness and respect for diversity (tangentially)
- Grade 4 – The pursuit of valuable natural resources has played a key role in changing the land, people, and communities of Canada
- Grade 5 – Natural resources continue to shape the economy and identity of different regions in Canada