

Kid's Corner

Winter 2021 Newsletter

The beauty of winter is the eye of the beholder. Although the deciduous trees have lost their beautiful leaves, pine trees display their colorful green needles and cones. Creating a magical white canvas on snowy winter mornings. Did you ever wonder how these items of nature continue to live in the winter? The coniferous trees (what we have come to call Christmas trees) and their pine cones are amazing!

What is a coniferous tree and what is the job of a pine tree?

Coniferous trees have scales or needles. They are different from deciduous trees because they stay green all winter. Conifers get their names from their cone shaped vessels that house their seeds. Examples of coniferous trees are pines, cedar, firs, and redwoods. The cones of these trees hold the seeds. The seeds are protected in them during cold weather. In order for the seeds to be released, outside conditions must be warm enough. This is why in our own pine barrens in New Jersey have controlled burns. This occurs when they purposely set "controlled fires" in the pine barrens to help the forest repopulate so the cones release their seeds.

PINECONE SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Supplies:

3 Jars

3 Pinecones (all the same size)

Warm Water

Cold Water

Ruler

Timer

Steps:

1. Observe and sketch each pinecone. Then put each pinecone in each one of the jars.
2. Take the three jars, fill one to the top with warm water, one with cold, and leave one empty. Label the jars warm, cold, and control. Observe the pinecones every 5 minutes. Take sketches of the pinecones, use a magnifying glass to observe them.



BONUS LEAVE THEM OVERNIGHT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS!!

SNOW ICE CREAM

Materials:

- evaporated milk (12 oz)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- bowl of snow (about ½ galloon)

Instructions:

1. In a small bowl, mix the milk, sugar, and vanilla together until well combined.
2. In a large bowl, add about 8-10 cups of snow. Pour the milk mixture over the top and stir well to combine. The texture will be close to that of homemade ice cream (thinner than store-bought ice cream but still have some structure when scooped).
3. Serve right away, adding sprinkles if you'd like

ARTS and Crafts:

Pinecone bird feeder

Supplies:

Pinecone
Peanut butter (or shortening)
Small bowls
Popsicle sticks
Paper plate
Twine
Bird seed
Scissors

Directions:

1. Scoop some peanut butter in a small bowl.
2. Next, pour some seeds in another bowl.
3. Place your pinecone on a plate and using the popsicle stick spread the peanut butter on the pinecone.
4. Then, sprinkle the bird seed on the peanut butter covered pinecone. You can roll it to cover it totally.
5. Lastly, tie the twine to the pinecone and hang it from a tree. Enjoy watching the local birds enjoy it.

SNOW PAINTING

- reusable plastic ware, old cupcake tin or something similar
- snow and water
- food coloring
- paper

Instructions:

1. Drip a few drops of food coloring into the containers.
2. Scoop a handful of snow into the food coloring
3. Pour the water over the snow (if the water is warm enough, the snow will melt!)
4. Leave it outside overnight. The next day go outside and pop out the colorful ice.
5. Now you can use the cubes to paint! Go inside with your colored cubes. As the water warms you can use it as watercolors and paint a beautiful picture.