

5TH-8TH GRADE UNIT

LESSON 4

Stewardship Close to Home

NUTSHELL

In this lesson, students learn what it means to be a steward, and participate in an exercise to illustrate the importance of teamwork in successful stewardship. They also work in groups to read and report on organizations and programs in Wisconsin that are working to help improve urban forests. Students brainstorm things they could do to be good stewards. To conclude, students do a web search to learn about other forest stewardship organizations that address forest concerns.

BIG IDEAS

- Individuals, neighborhood groups, volunteer groups, and elected officials can have a positive influence on others by increasing recognition of the value and importance of an urban forest. (Subconcept 23)
- All citizens have a responsibility to be stewards of the environment. Decisions they make affect urban forests as well as other forests. (Subconcept 24)

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- List different people who can have a positive influence on urban forests.
- Define environmental steward.
- Identify decisions they can make to be good stewards.

SUBJECT AREAS

Language Arts, Social Studies

LESSON/ACTIVITY TIME

- Total Lesson Time: 80 minutes
- Time Breakdown:
 - Introduction15 minutes
 - Activity45 minutes
 - Conclusion20 minutes

TEACHING SITE

Classroom

BACKGROUND

We all have a responsibility to be stewards of the environment. One way to accept that responsibility is to be a good steward of the environment you live in. Since urban ecosystems are connected to all other ecosystems, the good things we do there can help elsewhere too.

Actions taken can be as simple as planting a tree, volunteering for a cleanup day, voting, writing a letter to an elected official, or writing to a company you'd like to influence. Some people choose to donate money to causes that support stewardship activities. You can educate others, attend public meetings, or run for office. The options to help are plentiful, and you don't have to do it alone. Groups exist to help urban forests in communities all over Wisconsin. Their missions may vary, but they all welcome support from others in their community and in Wisconsin.

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION (↑↓)

1. Explain what it means to be a steward of the environment to the class. (*A person who takes responsibility to make decisions and take actions today that will allow resources to be maintained in a healthy manner.*)
2. Show the class a ping-pong ball. Tell them that it will be their challenge to be good stewards of the ping-pong ball. They need to get the ping-pong ball from one end of the room to the other without letting it fall.

MATERIALS LIST

FOR EACH STUDENT

- Copy of one page of Student Pages  **1A-G**, *Steward Profiles*
- Copy of Student Page  **2**, *Web Search*

3. Divide the class into groups (number and size of the groups will depend on class size) and give the class parameters to follow in the task.
 - They must carry the ball in a spoon from one end of the room and place it in a container at the other end.
 - The ball cannot touch the ground or be held in their hands.
 - Each student can only take five steps from the place they start. (This number can vary depending on group and room size. The idea is to limit their movement so they need to work as a team.)
4. Demonstrate what happens when people don't work together by attempting to follow the same parameters to get the ping-pong ball to the container by yourself. (You will likely end up throwing the ball from a distance.)
5. Allow students to attempt the process. Afterward, discuss why it worked when they did it as a group, but didn't work when you did it alone.

VOCABULARY

Greening: The process of adding plants (things that are green) to a community.

Steward: A person who takes responsibility to make decisions and take actions today that will allow resources to be maintained in a healthy manner.

TEACHER PREPARATION

- Conduct an internet search using key words suggested in the Conclusion.
- Arrange for computer access for students.

ACTIVITY – STEWARD PROFILES (↑↓)

(Modified from Unit 7-8 Lesson 8 from the *LEAF K-12 Forestry Lesson Guide*.)

1. Using the Introduction as an example, remind students that working together is more effective than working alone to solve a problem. Tell students that the same applies to being good stewards of urban forests. Ask students if they are aware of any groups in their community, in Wisconsin, or in the nation that work to help urban forests. After accepting their suggestions and discussing the groups briefly, tell the class that next they will read about different groups in Wisconsin and in the nation that take a stewardship role.
2. Tell students that they will be divided into groups. Each group will read an article and share what they learned with the rest of the class. They need to choose a spokesperson to:
 - Briefly overview whom the article was about.
 - Identify actions or choices taken by the group to help urban forests.
 - Identify how other individuals can become involved.

3. Divide the class into seven groups. Give each group one of the Steward Profiles to read, but each student is only responsible for some of the paragraphs (the teacher will need to determine how many). Hand out the appropriate Student Pages **1A-G**, *Steward Profiles* to every student. These pages describe groups in Wisconsin that work to promote and preserve urban forests. They are volunteer groups, tree boards, student groups, etc. Students will pick out the main ideas of “their” paragraphs and share them with their group, so that everyone learns about the entire article. Ask students to begin reading.
4. Have each group report to the rest of the class what they learned about urban forest stewardship from their reading. Brainstorm a list of things that students think they could do to be good stewards.

CONCLUSION – BEYOND THE URBAN FOREST (↑↓)

Assign students to do a web search using guided words (“forest stewardship” and “Wisconsin forest stewardship”). Use the worksheet on Student Page **2**, *Web Search* or have them write the following information they find from their web search on a piece of paper. The information they find should be discussed as a group and the worksheet handed in.

- Two websites under each search.
- Who runs the website? (Is it the stewardship organization or is it information about them by another group?)
- The name of group being discussed.
- The mission or goal of the group.
- Whom the group targets.
- Whether or not students could be involved. If not, why not?

LEAF LINKS

The lessons listed below, for the *LEAF Wisconsin K-12 Forestry Education Lesson Guide*, contain possible enhancements, extensions, or replacements for *Urban Forest Lesson Guide: 5-8 Lesson 4*.

UNIT 5-6 LESSON 8: WHOSE JOB IS IT?

Students learn about stewardship and how their choices affect the future of forests by participating in a mock school board meeting.

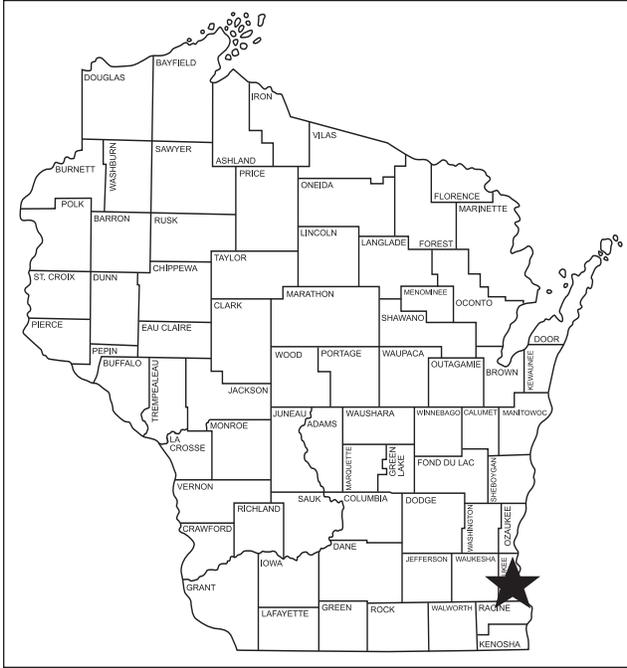
Use the Introduction of 5-6 Lesson 8 to enhance the Introduction in Urban Forest Lesson Guide: 5-8 Lesson 4. The Activity and Conclusion in 5-6 Lesson 8 could be used as is or modified as a follow-up to this lesson. The issue discussed and the interested groups could be modified to reflect urban forest related issues and groups.

UNIT 7-8 LESSON 8: SUSTAINING OUR FORESTS – CITIZENS’ ROLES

Students discover how people in Wisconsin practice good forest stewardship and debate their own choices through jigsaw readings and dilemma cards.

7-8 Lesson 8 Activity 1 was used as the basis for Urban Forest Lesson Guide: 5-8 Lesson 4. The Stewardship Statements in 7-8 Lesson 8 could be added to Urban Forest Lesson Guide: 5-8 Lesson 4 with explanation. The Conclusion could be added to Urban Forest Lesson Guide: 5-8 Lesson 4 prior to its Conclusion.

STEWARD PROFILE #1



GREENING MILWAUKEE MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN www.greeningmilwaukee.org

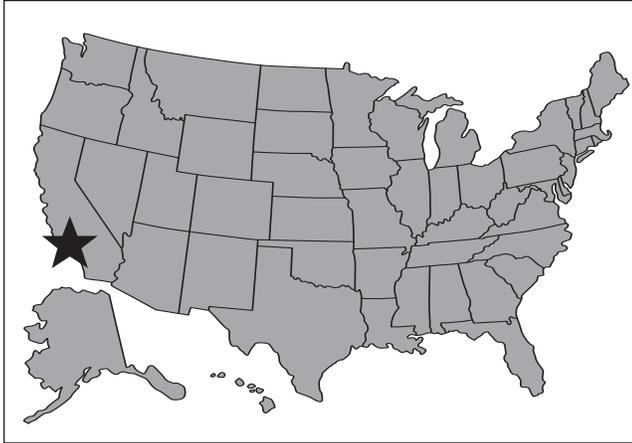
The group called Greening Milwaukee, located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was created in 1996. The mission of Greening Milwaukee is to promote activities that improve our urban environment. They do this by educating and training citizens to increase the city's tree canopy. The loss of American elm trees due to Dutch elm disease was the reason the group was started.

Greening Milwaukee is a nonprofit organization.

It is mostly made up of volunteers. The group has many different programs to help meet its mission. One is the Mayor's Landscape Awards Program. It awards people and groups who have made the effort to help make Milwaukee green by planting green landscapes. The Tree Gift Program allows people to give the gift of trees that will be planted in Milwaukee. The Adopt-a-Tree Initiative allows residents of the City of Milwaukee who own property to apply to receive a free tree to plant. This program makes Greening Milwaukee unique. Most other groups work to green public lands. The Greening Milwaukee Schools Program provides help to schools to turn their asphalt- and concrete-covered surfaces into beneficial green spaces with trees. This program is a cooperative effort between Milwaukee Public Schools, the City Forestry Department, and Greening Milwaukee.

Greening Milwaukee volunteers do a number of different jobs throughout the year. They might work in the office filing papers or working to enter information into the computer. They may help get the word out to people about the program and events, or they might design advertisements. Some volunteers help train people to plant trees and some plant trees. Others help by taking pictures at events or judging entries at competitions. Volunteers are all ages, but some jobs have special requirements.

STEWARD PROFILE #2



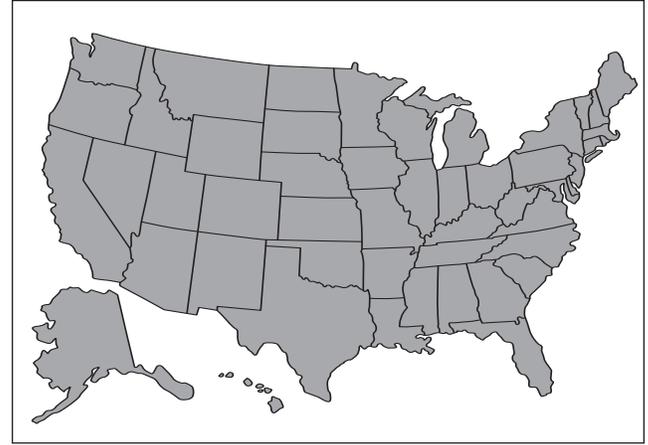
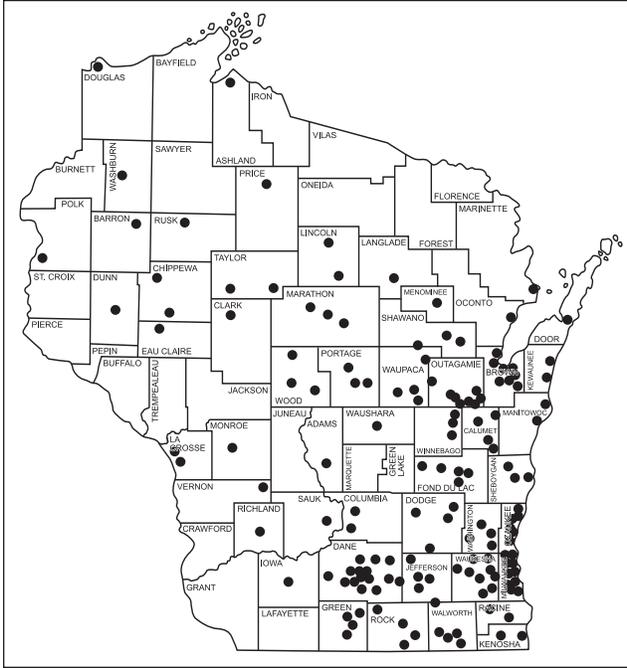
TREE MUSKETEERS
EL SEGUNDO, CALIFORNIA
AND NATIONAL
www.treemusketeers.org

The group called Tree Musketeers is located in El Segundo, California. Tree Musketeers also has a national program that reaches kids around the world. This nonprofit group was founded in 1987. It does a lot of different things to benefit urban forests and the environment in general. It was the first environmental organization founded and run by kids. According to their website, Tree Musketeers' mission is, "To empower young people to be leaders of environmental and social change in Earth's communities."

The Tree Musketeers group is made up of youth. Youth make the decisions and determine the focus of the organization. Adults are only involved with Tree Musketeers to support the youth leaders. In El Segundo, Tree Musketeers focuses primarily on tree planting. Even though they focus on tree planting, they have other projects such as a recycling program, youth leadership classes, and even their own tree service! Youth in El Segundo can volunteer to be trained in leadership, work at an internship, speak to groups, or just volunteer for a one-time event.

Tree Musketeers also works outside of their local community through their Partners for the Planet Network. The program helps youth from around the country share resources. Tree Musketeers works to encourage youth across the country to become leaders in their own communities. They have "How-to-Kits" you can order and other information on their website to help you get started on projects in your community.

STEWARD PROFILE #3



TREE CITY USA NATIONAL

www.arboday.org/programs/treecityUSA.cfm

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/uf/awareness>

The Tree City USA Program is a national program. It is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation along with the USDA Forest Service, and the National Association of State Foresters. It provides technical assistance, direction, public attention, and national recognition for local urban forestry programs across the United States.

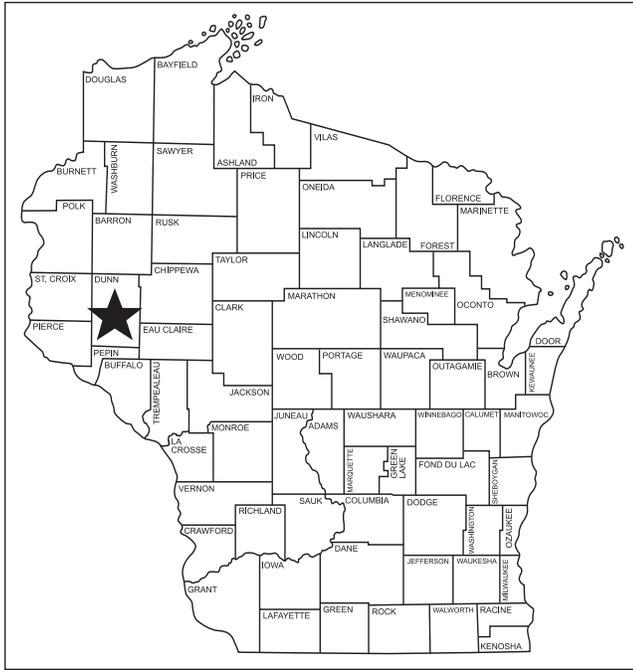
In order for a city to become a Tree City, it must meet the following requirements:

- Must have a tree board or department
- Must have a tree care ordinance in place (Ordinances are laws in a city. A tree care ordinance would set the rules for what can and must be done to trees.)
- Must have a community forestry program that has an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita. (That means \$2 for each person in the community. If the population is 10,000 people, the budget would have to be \$20,000.)
- Must have an Arbor Day observance and proclamation

There are many benefits to being a Tree City. Cities create a plan for action to improve their urban forest. It is easier to find urban forest professionals to help educate people about the importance of their urban forest. The city's image is better. The pride of the people who live there increases. There are often programs that give money to cities to improve their urban forest. In order to get that money, cities must be listed as a Tree City.

There are Tree City USAs across Wisconsin. They are listed on the National Arbor Day Foundation website and on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources - Urban and Community Forestry website. These cities do different things to improve their urban forests. Many need volunteers to complete their projects.

STEWARD PROFILE #4



MENOMONIE TREE BOARD **MENOMONIE, WISCONSIN** www.menomonie-wi.gov/?page_id=151

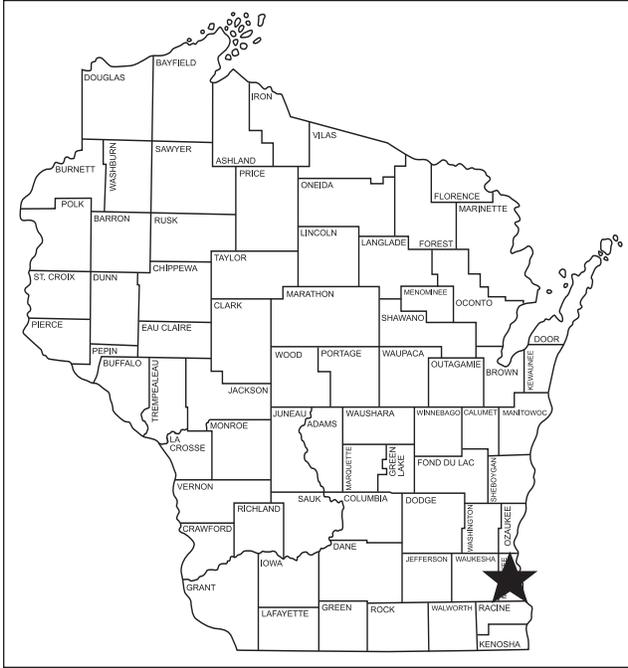
The Menomonie Tree Board in Menomonie, Wisconsin, was created in 1994. The group was created to advise the City of Menomonie Planning Commission, as well as the city’s building inspector, about what things are right and wrong to do with the trees in Menomonie.

The Menomonie Tree Board is mostly made up of volunteers from the community. One member of the city council is also on the Tree Board. The group works with the city forester

and park employees to ensure that the trees on public land are well cared for. It also helps resolve conflicts between the city departments who take care of trees and residents. Another important role the board plays is to make sure city residents are educated about what is happening to the trees in their city. They coordinate the Heritage Tree Program, which recognizes old trees in town, and a Memorial Tree Program, in which people can donate trees in memory of a loved one. They also have Arbor Day Celebrations.

The Menomonie Tree Board is a volunteer group. Even if community members are not on the board, they are encouraged to participate in the decisions being made in their urban forest. People can donate trees, join in Arbor Day celebrations, and educate others on the importance of trees in the community.

STEWARD PROFILE #5



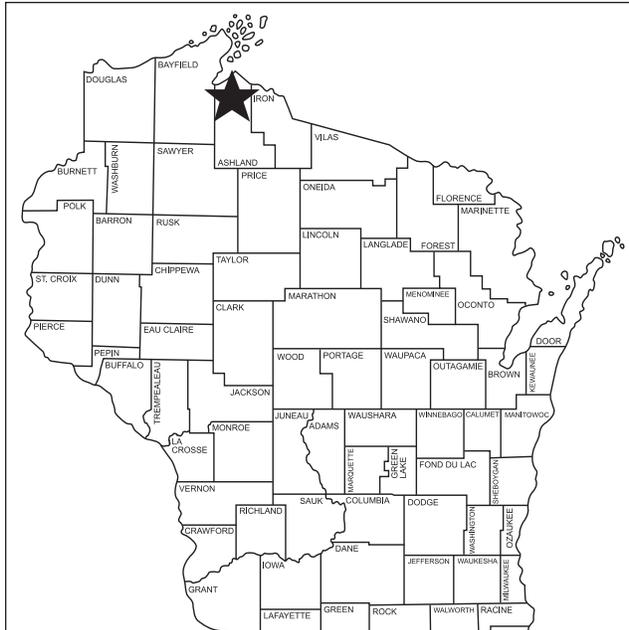
URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN www.urbanecologycenter.org

The Urban Ecology Center is located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is a neighborhood community center. It uses the park it is in as a living laboratory. The Urban Ecology Center provides environmental programs to neighborhood schools. It promotes awareness of the environment in the community. It preserves and enhances the natural resources of the park. It also protects the Milwaukee River.

The Urban Ecology Center has many activities and programs. It is visited by 18,000 students and teachers each year. They use the center to learn about the urban environment. They also learn to appreciate nature. It has workshops and talks for adults. It has weekend programs for families and youth. It also has a summer camp for youth. Did you know you can even hike, bike, and canoe right in Milwaukee? The center has programs to help people get outside and enjoy nature in the city.

The Urban Ecology Center has people who are paid to work there. Since the center does so many things, it still needs lots of volunteers. It's easy to get involved. There are many different things that need to be done. Adults and kids can help. You could help remove invasive species. You could help keep the park and river clean. They even have volunteers help with research projects. Volunteers answer phones, clean, fix things, teach, and more. To make it easy for people to volunteer, they keep a whole list of things on their website.

STEWARD PROFILE #7



ASHLAND FFA ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

The Ashland FFA is a student organization that promotes premier leadership, personal development, and career success. The Ashland chapter specifically promotes agricultural literacy, completes various community service projects, and develops personal leadership qualities.

The group is made up of 7th through 12th graders who are interested in topics related to animals, plants, food, etc. The students

are from farm, rural, and urban backgrounds. Recently the Ashland FFA was awarded a grant to complete an Urban Tree Walk at Ashland High School. This tree walk is intended to be used by the public when they plan landscaping in their yards. Ashland FFA also performs community service with things such as roadside pickup, senior citizen/aging luncheon servers, and hosts for parent/teacher conferences. They promote agricultural literacy through annual petting zoos. They also work with younger students to help teach them about animals, plants, food, etc., and rural and personal safety.

To get involved with projects like these, see if there is an FFA chapter in your community. Even if there isn't an FFA chapter for you to join, you could start one or volunteer to do similar activities yourself.

WEB SEARCH

1. List two websites that you located when you did a search on “forest stewardship” and “Wisconsin forest stewardship.”
2. Who runs the website? (Is it the stewardship organization or is it information about them by another group?)
3. What is the name of the group being discussed?
4. What is the mission or goal of the group?
5. Who does the group target with their message?
6. Can students be involved? If no, why not?
7. What other pertinent information you care to share about the organization?