

### **Who we are . . .**

Shady Creek Outdoor School has been a leader in outdoor/environmental education for the past 40 years (previously known as Woodleaf Outdoor School). We have gleaned the very best from the myriad of creative naturalists who have worked here throughout that time to develop a highly evolved and effective educational program.

Shady Creek is operated by the Sutter County Superintendent of Schools and is designed to reach students at the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. We are a five day residential program and students participate as a class with their classroom teacher.

### **What we do . . .**

Our educational framework stems from the philosophy of teaching to the whole child and not just within the realm of knowledge. The goals of our program are three-fold: 1.) to develop in each individual a feeling of personal responsibility to help preserve, conserve, and enhance our environment; 2.) to develop heightened observation skills to more fully appreciate the beauty and diversity of the natural world; and 3.) to develop in each individual a feeling of self-confidence and self-acceptance while also instilling the ability to cooperate with and appreciate the diversity of others.

### **How we do it . . .**

All of our classes are designed to be highly interactive, hands-on experiences and the curriculum for each class has been developed to meet the California Science

Content Standards. Our areas of focus include aquatic or forest ecology, geology, avian ecology, native culture, sensory awareness, survival skills, and team building activities.

We strive to teach to as many learning styles as possible in order to reach students that may not do as well in a traditional educational setting. Throughout the week, students are encouraged to learn by using scientific inquiry, observation skills, cooperative activities, language arts, music, and drama.

Knowledge alone, however, will not motivate significant life changes so, within every experience is woven an element of caring. Whether in their cabin group, class group or simply at recreation, the students are exposed to a group of people whose focus is to role model how to care -- about other people as well as the world around them.

### **You mean there's more . . . ?**

- *The Raptor Center:* Raptors have been a large part of our program for many years, but now students have a wonderful opportunity to get close to and learn about these amazing animals. Understanding these birds' "stories" and how they came to us empowers students with the knowledge that even the little things they do can make a big difference.

### **Even more opportunities to learn . . .**

Since learning is a lifelong experience, we have created several new programs

designed to reach students at a variety of learning levels.

- *4th Grade Day Trip:* We offer one day field trips to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from the program area. Students visit the Raptor Center, learn about the forest, and explore an aquatic habitat. This program is run in conjunction with our Student Naturalist Program and provides these young adults with a firsthand teaching experience.
- *Student Naturalist Program:* Many students who visit us in the 6th grade return as high school counselors. Many of those high school counselors are so inspired by the program that they are interested in pursuing this line of work as a career. This program is designed to take those individuals and give them a year of college credit to learn about and experience being a naturalist. This program provides training in leadership, human resource management, professionalism, public speaking, teaching, and decision making, to name a few.
- *Intern Naturalists:* Internships are for one full Shady Creek school year. Fall season runs from September through early December and spring season runs from early February through May. Internships are designed to give individuals new to outdoor/environmental education a firsthand learning experience. Much time at the beginning of the program is devoted simply to learning the schedule and

curriculum for the classes. From there, interns will be expected to observe and begin to participate in evening programs, skits, and projects. By the end of the fall season, interns will be teaching, facilitating meals, participating fully in evening programs, and taking on program duties as needed. They will be observed teaching classes and given written and verbal evaluations throughout the year so that they may continue to improve as teachers and naturalists. Regular staff inservices on topics such as natural history and teaching techniques are also provided.

#### **How can you get involved . . . ?**

For information about the Shady Creek Outdoor Education Program, its non-profit Foundation, the Adopt-a-Raptor program, or how you can become involved please call:

Willi Slack at (530) 822-2949 or  
Rikki Shaffer at (530) 822-2416.

**THANKS FOR YOUR  
INTEREST**



#### **Who we are . . .**

**Sutter County Superintendent of Schools  
970 Klamath Lane  
Yuba City, California 95925  
(530) 822-2949**

Bill Cornelius, Superintendent  
George Stratman, Director