



Potato Hill Farm Outdoor Education Center

GUIDE TO STELLA'S TRAIL

1. **Conifer trees** Identify conifers by their needles. Fir trees have flat needles. Spruces have square needles. Pines have needles that come in pairs or more. Amerindians/Native Americans used conifers for tea, beer, gum, and fiber for sewing hides & canoes.
2. **Animal enclosure** There will be a variety of animals pastured here.
3. **Staghorn sumac** The branches of this small native tree resemble the antlers of deer "in velvet." The red fruit makes Indian sumacade, a citrusy drink.
4. **Deciduous trees** Deciduous trees lose their leaves to conserve energy & water, not enough sunlight in winter for photosynthesis. The sugar maple is the State Tree of NY. It is a hardwood tree with 5-lobed leaves. Quacking aspen have heart-shaped leaves with flattened leaf stalks that enable the leaves to flutter even in a light breeze.
5. **Red Osier Dogwood** The dogwood is a small tree or shrub. It has red stems. A sticky substance in the leaves helps hold them together.
6. **Highbush cranberries** Highbush cranberries are a native viburnum. The berries are high in vitamin C & taste sweeter after a frost.
7. **Butternut tree** The butternuts were used for dyes, stains, oil for food, & dried for eating. The sap was made into a syrup. The butternut tree is often attacked by a canker.
8. **Elm tree** The elm tree has a vase or umbrella shape. The trunk often divides near the ground into large limbs. Many of our elm trees have been decimated by Dutch Elm Disease, a fungus spread by a beetle.
9. **Apple tree** The apple tree is a small rounded-top tree that is an important food source for animals. Apple trees have thick branches used to support the fruit.
10. **Glacial erratics & bedrock** last Ice Age was about 8,000-10,000 years ago. Erratics are rounded from traveling with the glaciers.
11. **Norway spruce** Norway spruce is an introduced species that was planted as a windbreak. It is the only spruce with drooping twigs & branchlets and it has a large cone.
12. **Beech tree** The beech tree is a native tree with smooth gray bark. The wood is used for the handles of tools. A beech syrup is made from the sap.
13. **Highland cattle** horns up = female, horns down = male.
14. **Birch tree** The bark of the birch tree burns when wet. Native Americans built canoes made of birch bark. The sap was used for syrup. Estimate the age of trees by encircling the trunk with hands. Length of one hand = about 12 years.
15. **Black cherry and Ash trees** Note the difference in the bark of the two trees. Both trees are native and valued for their wood.
 - Wildflowers in season clover, dandelions, golden rod, milkweed, bedstraw, black-eyed susan, daisy, ragged robin, garlic mustard, bird's foot, trefoil, wild parsnip