



Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks

Statement of Purpose

Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks is the educational arm of the Conservancy.

The Institute teaches park users and managers to care for urban parks everywhere.





Past Youth Programs

- Broad range of offerings & content:
- Contracted educators
- Open enrollment & flexible schedules

Redefinition

- Programs directly relate to Conservancy's mission & work
- Rely on expertise of CPC staff
- Fixed application periods & program schedules

Future Growth

- Depth over breadth
- Engaging families & educators to be better Park users
- Connecting youth to careers in urban park management



The Center for Urban Park Management shares the Conservancy's expertise with current and aspiring park professionals to elevate the urban park management profession.

The Center for Urban Park Management engages high school and college students in internships, apprenticeships, career exploration, and service-learning programs to cultivate the next generation of urban park managers.



Service Learning

- Woodlands Youth Crew
- ROOTS

Apprenticeship

- Visitor Experience Apprentice Program

Career Exploration

- Green Career Lab

Internships

- Summer Internship Program
- Horticulture Sciences College Internship

Summer Internship Program

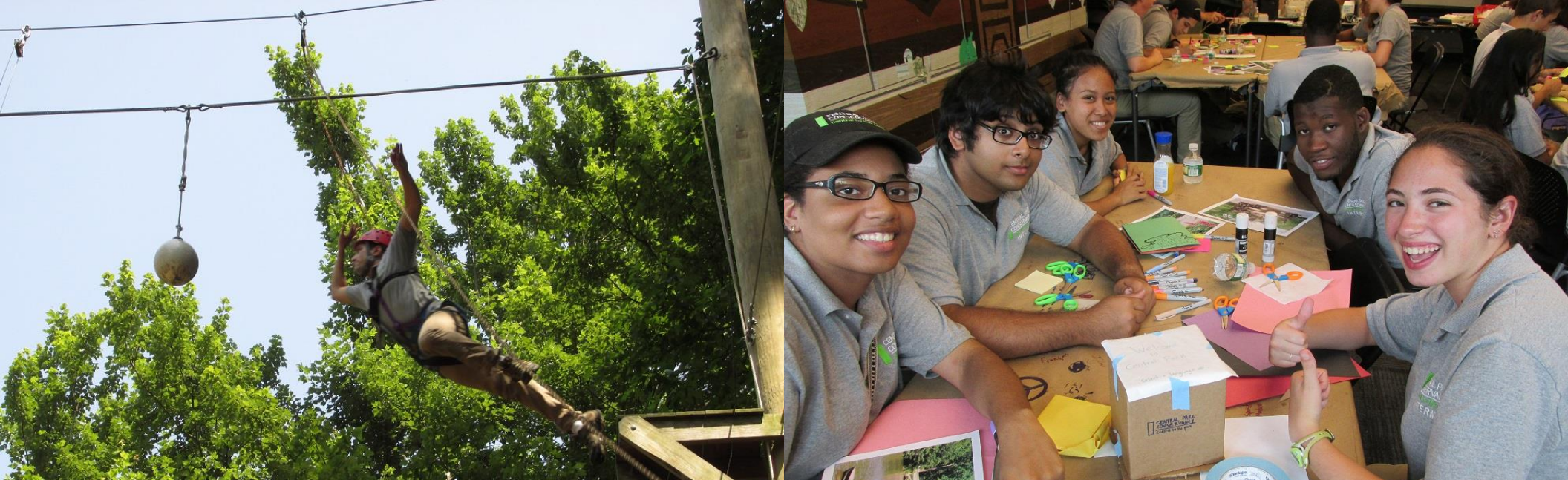
- 7-week, full-time, paid internship for 30 high school students
- One-on-one mentorship with CPC staff
 - Horticulture
 - Visitor Services
 - Public Programs
- Weekly site visits with program staff
- Weekly Friday trips
- Daily journaling & final writing project
- Overnight trip to Black Rock Forest



CHARLES A. DANA DISCOVERY CENTER

CENTRAL PARK
CONSERVANCY
central to the park



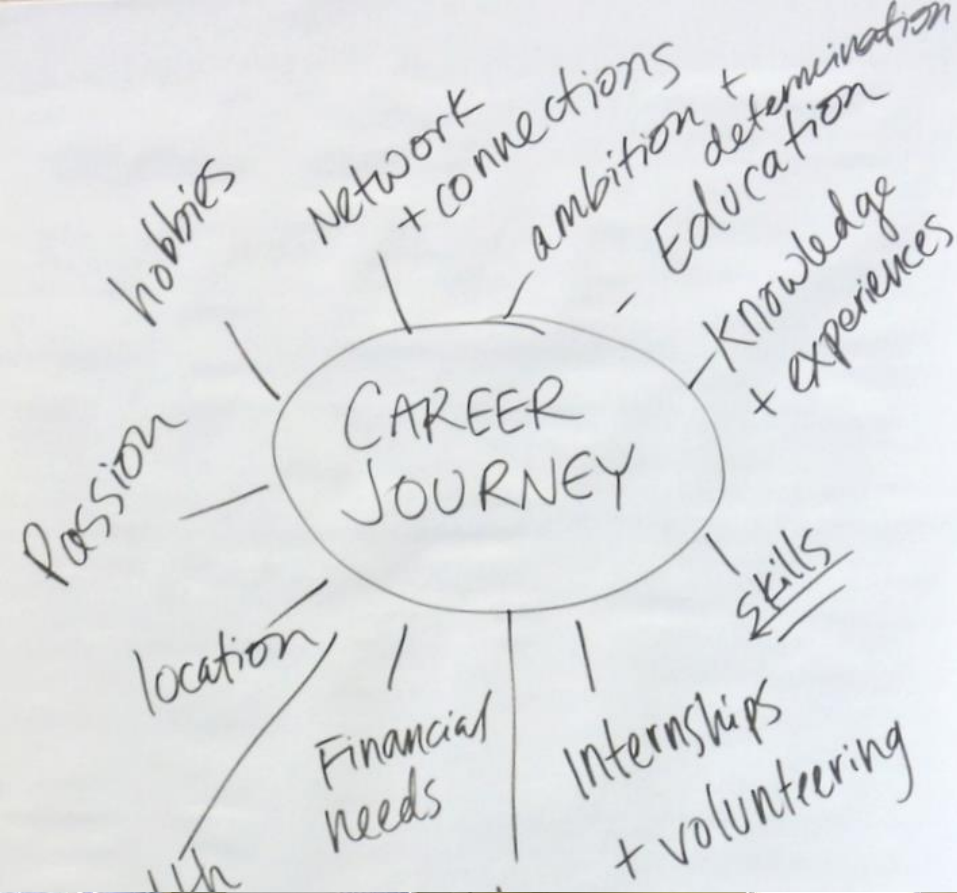




Green Career Lab

- 5-week career exploration workshop for high school students
- Saturdays, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm in January & February
- Learning about careers in urban park management by:
 - Interviewing professionals
 - Visiting other urban parks
- Part of program pipeline keeping students engaged with CPC year-round
- Program piloted in 2015





The Center for Urban Park Discovery redefines how visitors experience Central Park, facilitating exploration and in-depth educational experiences in the Park.

The Center for Urban Park Discovery provides environmental education for the Park's youngest visitors, resources and training for educators who use parks as outdoor classrooms, and a variety of lectures and tours for adults who wish to learn more about the park.



Service Learning Programs





Keeping it Green for Schools

- Started mid-90's
- Grades K - 12
- March - June
Spreading mulch
- September - November
Spreading mulch or leaf-raking

Keeping it Green for Families

- Started fall 2014
- Engaging parents and children in active stewardship
- Location provided with registration

Pitch In, Pick Up

- Reserve trash grabbers and bags at visitor centers

Volunteers Are Essential





Environmental Education

Self Guided

- Discovery Kits
- Discovery Journals and Exploration Guides

Facilitated

- Discovery Walks
- Woodlands Discovery Club

Professional Development





Discovery Guides

Dana Discovery Center

- Opened to the public in 1993
- Invite the public to explore the northern end of the Park
- Educational and community programs
- Exhibition gallery
- Holiday celebrations

Discovery Guides

- Fall 2012
- In-Park Visitor Experience representatives
- Support Conservancy programming



Charles A. Dana Discovery Center

Harlem Meer Exploration Guide

Center for Urban Park Discovery

Suggested for Grades 1-5

Welcome to Central Park's Harlem Meer! There is plenty to discover in this aquatic ecosystem.

What is an aquatic ecosystem?

Aquatic ecosystems consist of open water, the water surface, the bottom of the water body, and the shoreline. They are made up of living things, the plants and animals, and non-living things, like water, soil, and rocks. Although the Harlem Meer is a man-made lake, it is still a functioning aquatic ecosystem.

The Harlem Meer as habitat

A habitat is a place that provides five essential things for living things to survive: food, shelter, air, water, and space. Many animals depend on the Harlem Meer as an aquatic habitat. Birds like mallard ducks can be seen in the Meer year-round. Frogs and turtles can frequently be observed in the spring, summer, and fall. Near dusk you can observe bats swooping down above the Harlem Meer, enjoying a banquet of insects.

Plant adaptations

Many plants have adaptations to help them thrive in very wet areas. Although aquatic ecosystems present challenges, like low oxygen levels, plants like cattails, duckweed, and bald cypress have unique adaptations that give them an edge. Bald cypress trees have "knees" called pneumatophores that are thought to help them access oxygen from the air when the tree is rooted in oxygen-poor, watery soil. Cattails produce light, fluffy seeds that can travel by air and water. Duckweed actually floats on top of the water, with a root that will never touch the bottom.

On your walk

Begin at the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center. Walking the perimeter of the Harlem Meer should take about 45 minutes, including stops to observe and discuss aquatic ecosystems.

Plan your visit

Enhance your experience by checking out a free Discovery Kit that includes brochures, a hand lens, pencils, scratch paper, and child-friendly field guides. An optional Discovery Journal provides fun activities for children to do in the Park (\$2 each; class discount available). Advance registration required for groups of five or more. For more information, contact the Dana Discovery Center at 212.655.1315.

Discover Responsibly

Do your part to keep the Harlem Meer healthy and beautiful. Follow these three rules while you explore:

1. **Keep the wildlife wild.** Wild animals have unique diets and human food isn't good for them.
2. **Put garbage in its place.** Litter pollutes the Park and can be harmful to animals if eaten.
3. **Respect the landscape.** Fenced areas give animals and sensitive plantings a break from people.

Tell us what you discover [@centralpark](#) [@discoveryjournal](#) [#DiscoverCentralPark](#)

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Habitat Hunt

Animals need food, shelter, space, air, and water to live. These five things make a habitat. The Harlem Meer provides habitat for mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and birds!

Discover. Can you find the food, shelter, and space these animals need to survive? Check off each one when you see it around the Harlem Meer!

	Food	Shelter	Space
 Mallard	Floating plants, insects <input type="checkbox"/>	Shoreline plants <input type="checkbox"/>	Water, shoreline <input type="checkbox"/>
 Bullfrog	Insects <input type="checkbox"/>	Floating and shoreline plants <input type="checkbox"/>	Muddy banks, shallow water <input type="checkbox"/>
 Eastern Painted Turtle	Insects, floating plants, fish <input type="checkbox"/>	Shading shore with plants <input type="checkbox"/>	Rocks sticking out of water <input type="checkbox"/>
 Little Brown Bat	Flying insects <input type="checkbox"/>	Buildings or trees <input type="checkbox"/>	Open air above a water body <input type="checkbox"/>

Meet the Harlem Meer

The Harlem Meer is a man-made lake in the north end of Central Park. The Meer and its surrounding landscape make up an aquatic ecosystem that is important to many different kinds of plants and animals.

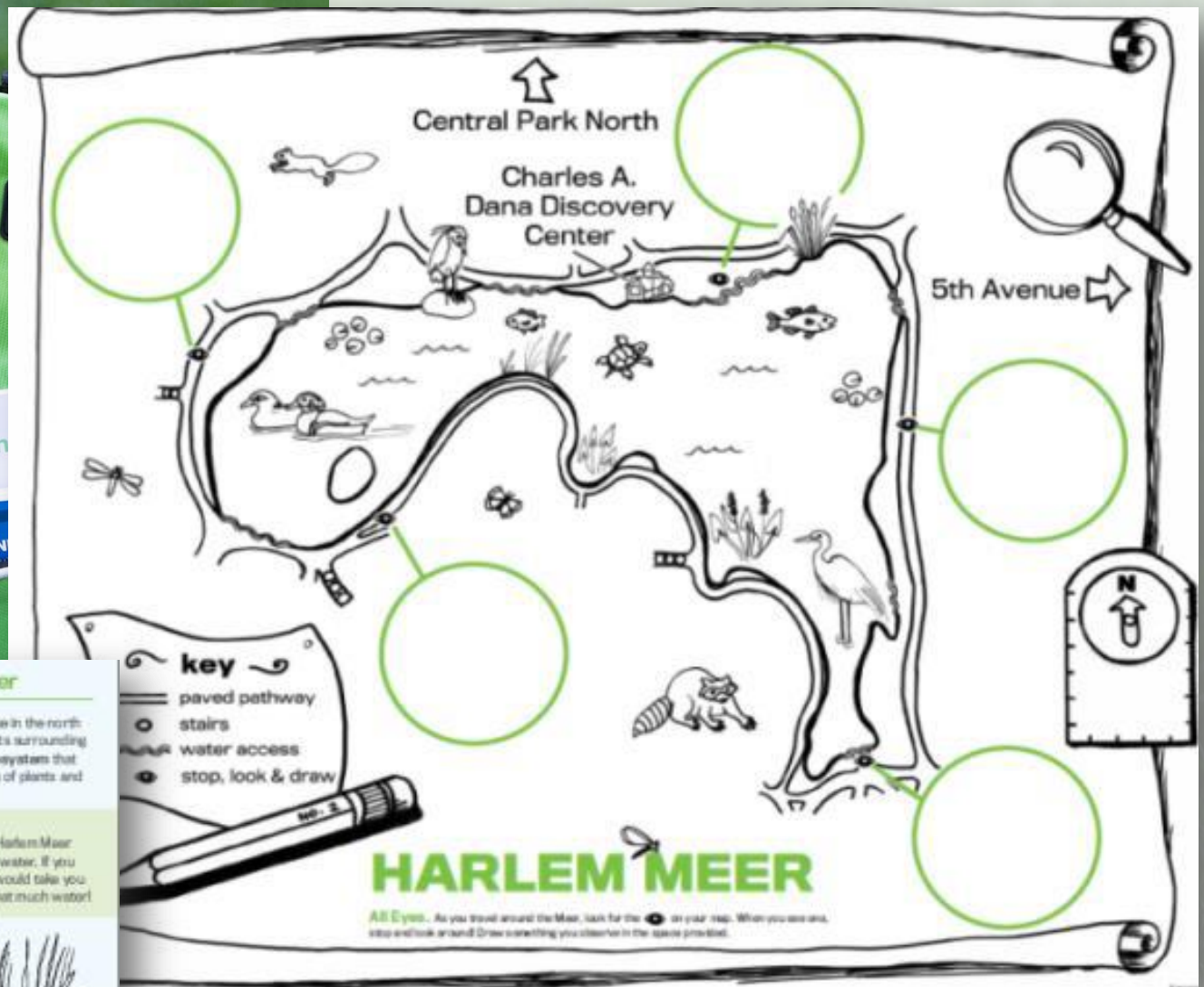
Did You Know?

Although it's only 10 feet deep, the Harlem Meer contains about 30 million gallons of water. If you drank 8 cups of water each day, it would take you more than 160,000 years to drink that much water!



Tell us what you discover

[@centralpark](#) [@discoveryjournal](#) [#DiscoverCentralPark](#)



- Clipboard with paper
- Discovery Journals (\$2.00 in Visitor Centers)
- Exploration Guides (free, online)



Discovery Walks

Discovery Walks

- Facilitated inquiry based exploration of Park landscapes using Discovery Kits
- Building relationships with families
- Encouraging further self-guided exploration
- Promote responsible discovery
- Free, registration required

Birding Basics for Families

- Partnership with NYC Audubon
- Recently refocused program to meet the desired family audience
- Free, registration recommended

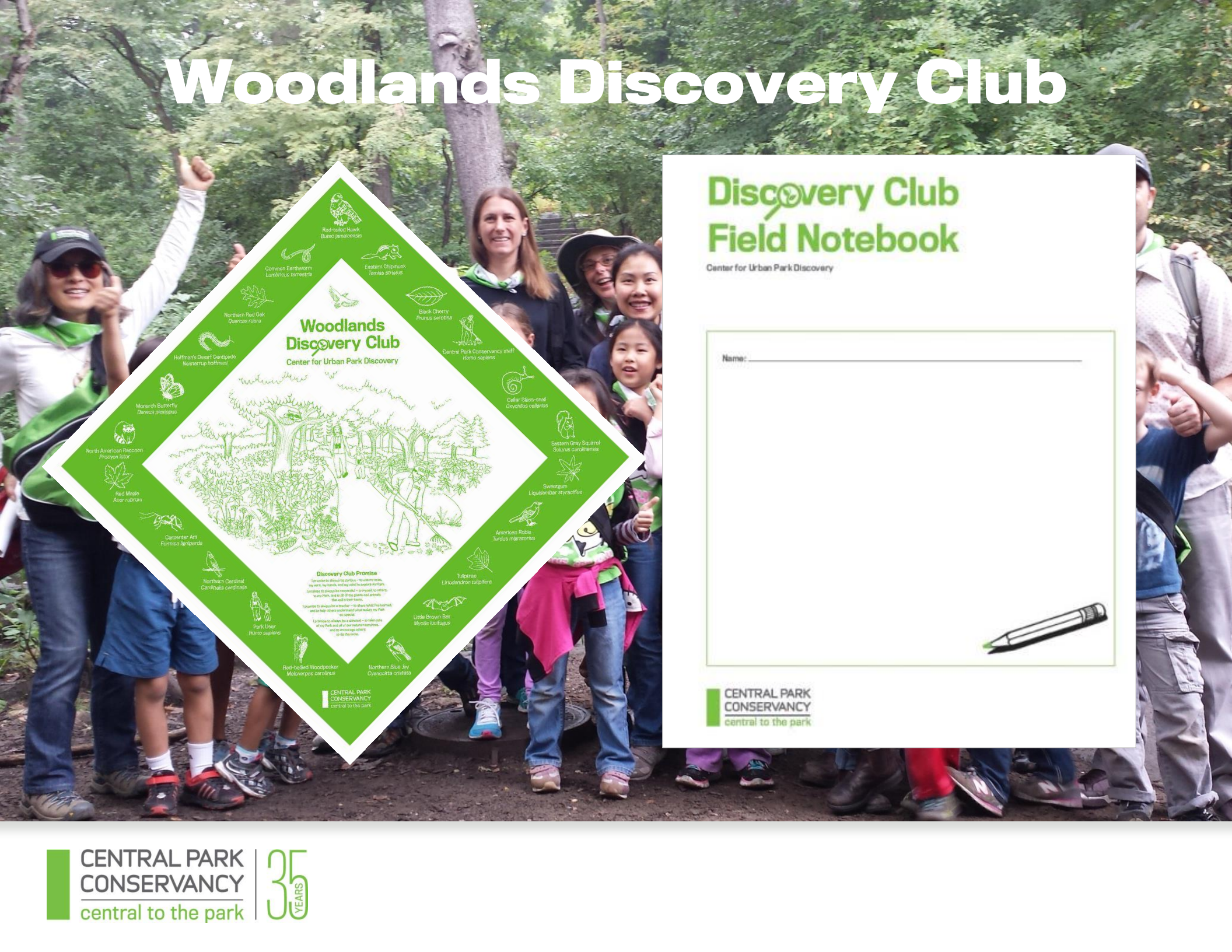


Canopy Layer

Understory Layer

Ground Layer

Management



Center for Urban Park Discovery

Norms





Woodlands Discovery Club

- Piloted fall 2014
- Five week paid program
- Cultivate a community of stewards and supporters
- Focus on the field notebook and ongoing observation
- Culminates in a service project enhancing the North Woods

Train the Teacher

- Developing resources for educators that align with the Conservancy's message while correlating with learning standards and remaining relevant in the classroom
- Developing workshops based on feedback from educator focus groups
- Increasing comfort level for educators not accustomed to teaching outdoors

Professional Development



Questions?

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Thank you!

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