

Nature Trail Quiz by Rob Clark
Camp Sequassen's Forests - Past and Present

1) Conifers are plants that have seeds contained in structures called 'cones'. Which of the following conifers did you see on this hike?

- A) Eastern Hemlock
- B) Tuliptree
- C) White Pine
- D) Christmas Fern

A and B. Hemlock and White Pine are two of the most common conifers in Sequassen. Tulip tree is a flowering plant without cones and christmas fern reproduces using spores, not seeds.

2) Imagine that you come across a large rock the size of a car. This boulder is just sitting on top of the soil in a completely random spot. How did it get there?

- A) Dinosaurs moved it there
- B) It was left by a melting glacier at the end of the last ice age
- C) It is left over from the construction of stone walls by farmers a hundred years ago
- D) The rock has always been there since the land formed millions of years ago

B. Large boulders that seem to have been placed on the soil out of nowhere are remnants of the last ice age. Glaciers are sheets of ice hundreds of feet deep and many miles long that break up rocks from mountains and carry boulders long distances. Geologists call these remnants of moving glaciers 'glacial erratics'.

3) Judd's brook is the stream that we passed over twice on this hike. What is the main place that this stream goes to?

- A) West Hill Pond
- B) The Nepaug reservoir for drinking water
- C) It stops in the cedar swamp
- D) Camp Sequassen's water tower

B. The water from this stream is part of the Nepaug watershed, which ultimately ends up as drinking water for people who live in that area of Connecticut. Always remember that pollution in one location to spread to another place very far away.

4) Which of the following is mammal NOT native to Camp Sequassen forests?

- A) White-tailed deer
- B) Moose
- C) Black bear
- D) Grizzly bear

D. There is plenty of wildlife to be found in Sequassen if you look hard enough, but you will never find grizzly bear. Black bear are native to this area, but grizzly bears are only found in Western North America, particularly around the Rocky Mountains up to Alaska.

5) American Chestnut trees used to be one of the most common trees in local forests. Now they are almost completely gone. Where did they go?

- A) All the trees were cut down by loggers to build wooden ships during the American Revolution
- B) Chestnut trees cannot grow here any more due to acid rain
- C) Chestnut seeds were over-harvested to roast on open fires at Christmas time, preventing new trees from ever growing in the forest.
- D) Chestnut trees were killed by a disease accidentally introduced by humans

D. Tragically, chestnut trees are killed by a fungal blight introduced a little over a hundred years ago. Only small, sickly trees remain. Any chestnut seeds that you buy at the store are from the European chestnut, which can be grown on farms and are resistant to the disease.

6) Which tree would be ready to gather the sunlight in spring before all the others?

- A) White Pine
- B) White Birch
- C) Tuliptree
- D) Red Maple

A. White pine has green leaves all year round. While Birch, Tuliptree and Red Maple are deciduous, White pine is not. White pine has tough needles that last through winter. When the first warm days come in spring, they are ready to start photosynthesis while the other trees still have to grow out their new leaves.

7) Some American Beech trees have black welts all over their trunks. Where did this damage to their bark come from?

- A) Pileated Woodpeckers looking for ants to eat
- B) They were infected with a disease spread by sap-feeding insects
- C) They were attacked by an invasive beetle
- D) The trees were damaged by careless hikers

B. Beech trees are damaged by a disease spread by plant-sap-feeding insects called 'scales'. The same way that a tick can give humans lyme disease, this tree gets sick when it is attacked by these insect parasites.

8) The forest we just hiked in contains 560 acres. This area wasn't always a forest. What was here just over 100 years ago?

- A) It was solid ice under a glacier.
- B) Most of it was farmland that was abandoned
- C) It was flooded under the Connecticut River

D) The forest grew back after a volcanic eruption destroyed it

B. Only a hundred or so years ago, the land here was cultivated by farmers. We can still see evidence of their work left behind in the form of stone walls. Thousands of years before any humans lived here, this area was in fact under a glacier, but this was much, much longer ago.

9) What plant is Connecticut's state flower?

- A) Mountain-laurel
- B) Tuliptree
- C) Black Cherry
- D) Charter Oak

A. Mountain-laurel is Connecticut's state flower. It is very common and presents a huge number of flowers in the late-spring and early summer. If you are lucky enough to see it, it is quite a sight to behold, usually in mid-June.

10) Along the hike, we saw a large open area with grasses and streams running through it. This habitat was created by the old beaver dam. What is that area called?

- A) Swamp
- B) Beaver flood zone
- C) Wet Meadow
- D) Early successional forest

C. This beautiful area is called a 'wet meadow'. This habitat is not very common in Connecticut and we are lucky to have one in Camp Sequassen. It is important to protect and appreciate this rare habitat that we have.

