Forest Nursery

**Ages:** Grades 7 + (adaptable for all ages)  **Time:** 45-60 minutes

**No. of participants:** 15+ **No. of additional adults:** 1+

**Required supplies:**

* Book: *Journey Through the Northern Rainforest* by Karen Pandell (copied pages)

**Objective:** To learn more about nurse logs and their role in the forest. To calculate the age of trees.

# Lesson Plan Procedures

1. *Introduction:*
   1. Take the group to one of the nurse logs we have in the DCC loop.
   2. Read excerpt from *Journey Through the Northern Rainforest* by Karen Pandell.
2. *Main Lesson*:
   1. Today we are going to learn take a look at some of the giants we have living in the Drift Creek forest, starting with this nurse log.
   2. Allow a few minutes for everyone in the group to take a close look at the nurse log.
   3. Ask them what they noticed about it.
      1. Why might there be so many things growing on it? (The nutrients within the tree can now be used to give other organisms life. – *The circle of life*)
      2. Why do you think it’s called a nursery/nurse log?
      3. What else does this nurse log offer to the forest? (shelter to animals, etc.)
   4. Explain that this tree would’ve had to have fallen 100’s of years ago because of the size of the other trees growing out of it.
   5. I want to show you how old trees this size actually are...
      1. Take them to look at the tree that fell by Cedarwood.
      2. Explain how counting the rings is a way to figure out the age of trees.
      3. Count the rings to determine the age of the tree.
   6. Walk over to the huge tree between Cedarwood and Yamhill.
      1. Discuss how old that tree might be in light of the tree you just looked at.
      2. Talk about how that tree was probably growing here before Oregon was even discovered by the early explorers. Etc.
   7. For fun – see how many students it takes to wrap completely around the tree.
3. *Conclusion:*
   1. Today you’ve studied and touched a piece(s) of ancient history!
   2. What did you learn about the trees in this forest?

\* Option for extending the lesson – identify organisms growing on/living in the nurse log using field guides.