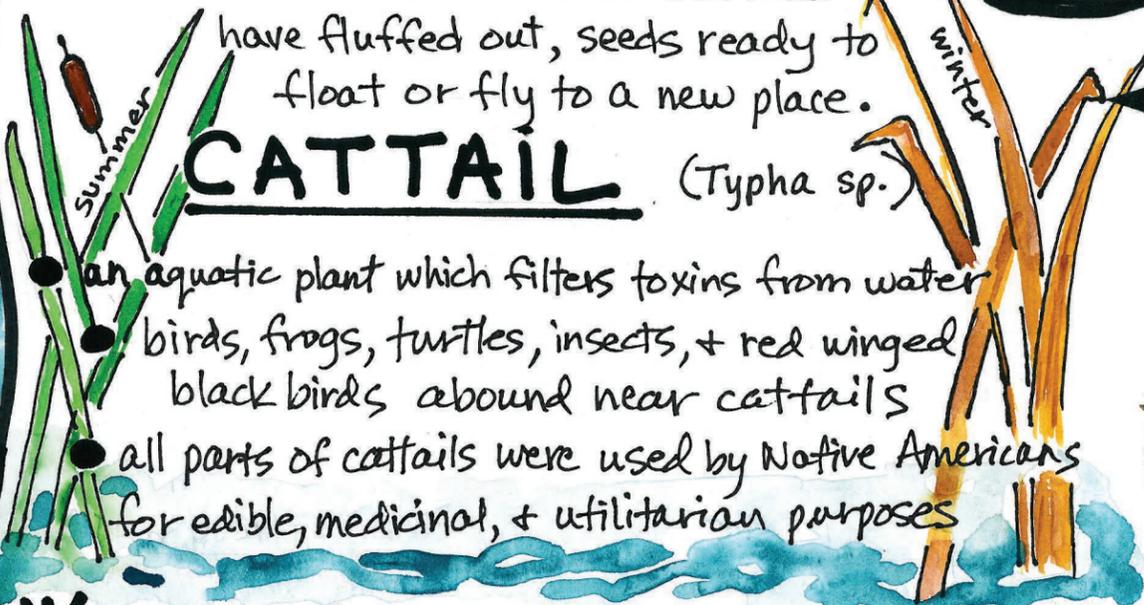


# DO THE *Prairie Prowl* \*

OPEN YOUR SENSES TO PRAIRIE RIDGE! STROLL THE FOREST OR PRAIRIE TRAILS, PERCH IN THE POND'S BIRD BLIND, OR MEANDER AMONG THE ARBORETUM'S NATIVE TREES. WHAT CREATURES WILL YOU SEE OR HEAR? TRACKS TO I.D.? WHO WILL SOAR OVERHEAD? ARE THERE FLOWERS TO SMELL? IT ALL DEPENDS ON WHAT TIME IT IS IN NATURE...

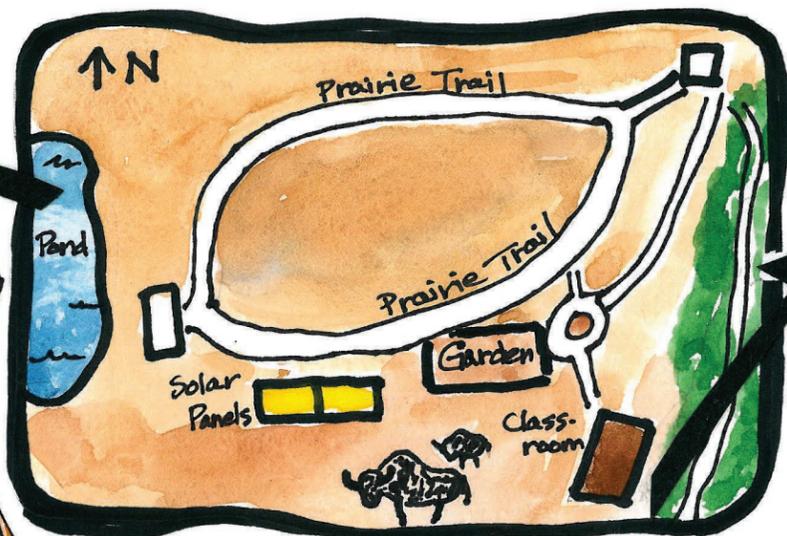
## IN WINTER...

The green cattail leaves of summer have faded to tan and the brown "cattails" have fluffed out, seeds ready to float or fly to a new place.



### CATTAIL (Typha sp.)

- an aquatic plant which filters toxins from water
- birds, frogs, turtles, insects, + red winged black birds abound near cattails
- all parts of cattails were used by Native Americans for edible, medicinal, + utilitarian purposes



Listen. Do you hear the clear, high whistle of the WHITE THROATED SPARROW

singing "Old Sam Peabody, Peabody, Peabody" (Zonotrichia albicollis)

- most songbirds sing in breeding season, this bird also sings in winter
- seen in hedgerows + thickets



### Why → BISON? (Bison bison)

- Bison were instrumental in maintaining NC Piedmont prairies before European settlement.
- Fire is critical to maintain the native prairie plants + to prevent tree growth.
- Every year 1/3 of this prairie is burned, creating good hunting for birds + making way for regrowth.
- So admire the bison sculptures, and imagine...

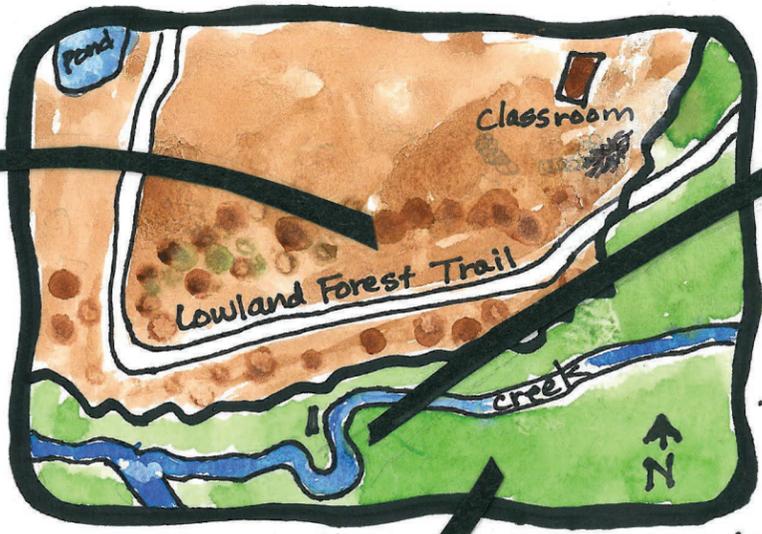
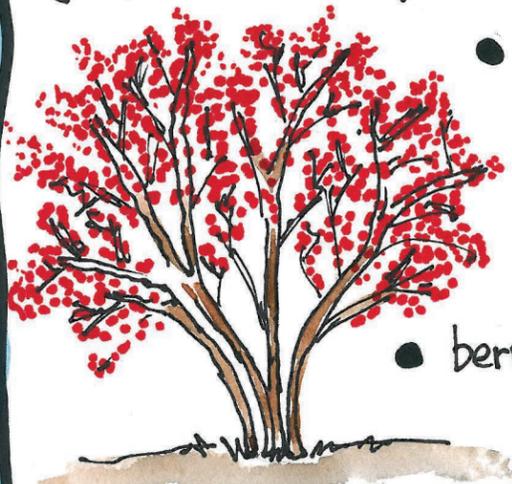


\* prowl - "to roam as if in search of whatever may be found" - Merriam-Webster Dictionary

What's that cheery blur of red in the bare winter Lowland Forest? This shrub that gives visual joy to the landscape is

# WINTER BERRY

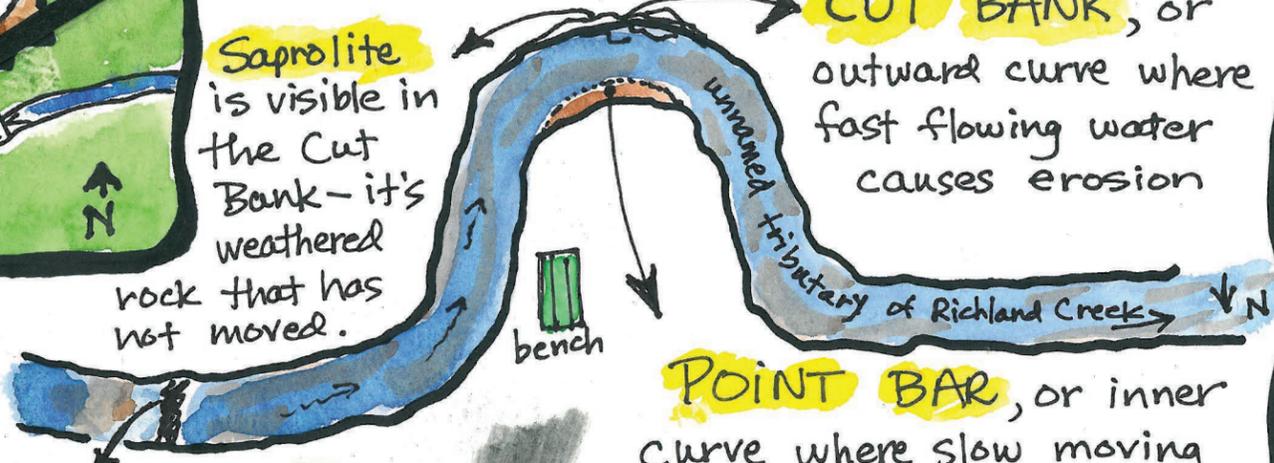
- (*Ilex verticillata*)
- is a deciduous holly
  - provides emergency food for birds + deer
    - grows 3-15' tall
    - prefers acidic soils in moist areas, + its berries, 1/4", are poisonous to humans



Winter is the best time to observe **GEOLOGY** ...

Lowland Forest Trail ... green bench ...

... S curve in creek ...



**Saprolite** is visible in the Cut Bank - it's weathered rock that has not moved.

**CUT BANK**, or outward curve where fast flowing water causes erosion

**POINT BAR**, or inner curve where slow moving water leaves deposits, creating a beachlike area. Here are sparkly mica bits, quartz chunks, + graphite pieces. Look for another **CUT BANK-POINT BAR** pair on the creek. Animal tracks on the Point Bar?

ledge of **Graphite**, historically mined in this area - as in Lead Mine Road.

# Save Our Snags!

Snags - standing dead trees - play a vital role for wildlife. Snags are also called "wildlife trees".

- Many birds forage on wildlife trees for insects, spiders, ants, etc.
- Mourning doves + swallows use snags for resting perches.
- Small snags provide song posts during mating season.
- Loose bark offers cover for bats, butterflies, tree frogs, etc.

• Brush piles are beneficial for wildlife, too. Check out the brush pile by the classroom bird feeders ...



great horned owl 20-23" long



red bellied woodpecker 8.5" long



mourning dove 12" long



white breasted nuthatch 5-6" long



Pileated woodpecker 15" long

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