



The Philosophers' Camp in the Adirondacks (1858) by William James Stillman, showing R.W. Emerson in the center.
(Courtesy of the Concord Free Public Library)

The Tradition of the Philosophers' Camp

In 1858, 10 scholars left New England society for a sojourn in the Adirondacks. Seeking to immerse themselves in the natural environment, they hunted, rowed, fished and camped. Participant Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote a poem to commemorate the excursion, dubbing participants “freemen of the forest laws;” they were free of societal and professional boundaries. Thus liberated, they fell naturally into a cross-disciplinary cadence reflecting the style of unity between self, other and world that has come to characterize the Philosophers' Camp and mark its intellectual significance. Our annual revitalization of the Philosophers' Camp draws on the traditions established during the original expedition. Our readings and conversations will be an opportunity to enter into the spirit of the original Philosophers' Camp by engaging in shared inquiry and discovery.

Seminar discussions will be led by Dr. Marianne Patinelli-Dubay, an environmental philosopher with ESF's Northern Forest Institute.

Friday evening into Saturday morning we will follow the philosopher Sophie de Grouchy in search of the *origins of sympathy*, the principle element of morality and the key to ameliorating the suffering of others. Where Adam Smith leaves this aspect of the human moral impulse largely unspoken, de Grouchy gives it gentle voice in *Letters on Sympathy* (1798).

Our Saturday afternoon and evening discussions derive from Susan Fenimore Cooper's reflections from the Mohawk Valley in northern New York state. Through a *simple record of little events which make up the course of the seasons in rural life*, Fenimore Cooper shows what it might mean to extend sympathy to the natural world and what a nation might be born of such sentiment, in *Rural Hours* (1887).

Finally on Sunday morning, Sarah Orne Jewett draws our theme of fellow feeling forward in an enchanting story that is nearly a poem. Sylvy keeps a secret to protect one small white heron and wonders whether *the great wave of human interest which flooded for the first time this dull little life should sweep away the satisfactions of an existence, heart to heart with nature and the life of the forest* in *A White Heron* (1910).

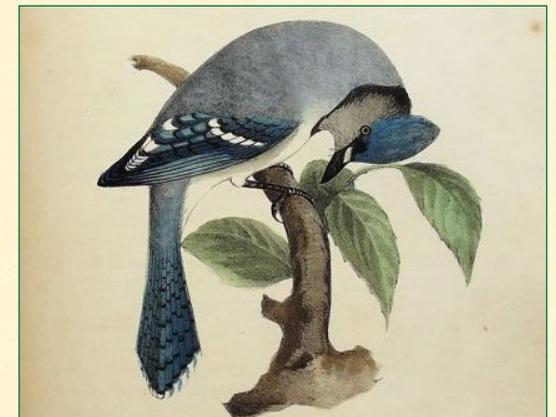
Join us in August, towards the quiet end of summer or in the high autumn of October. Guided field trips in each season include padding, hiking and birdwatching though our destinations will vary. Readings and discussion topics will remain the same.



Golden Oriole (1851) by Susan Fenimore Cooper



Boblink (1851) by Susan Fenimore Cooper



Blue Jay (1851) by Susan Fenimore Cooper

The Philosophers' Camp: Grandly Simple
Aug. 28 - 30, 2020, Oct. 2-3, 2020
ESF's Huntington Lodge
Newcomb, NY

This restored five-bedroom Great Camp in the "Heart of the Park" accommodates up to 10 people overnight. Nestled in a stunning location on the shore of scenic Arbutus Lake, historic Huntington Lodge is ready for your visit. It features Craftsman furniture by L.&J.G. Stickley, a dining room, full kitchen and the original "Trophy Room."

The registration rate of \$750 per participant includes accommodations, catered meals and receptions, advance reading materials, guided seminars and hikes, as well as time to enjoy unparalleled access to the largest protected wild landscape in the lower 48 states.

For additional information visit www.esf.edu/nfi. To register, contact newcomb@esf.edu or call 518.582.4551 ext 108



Above: ESF's Huntington Lodge. Below: Evening seminar, fireside



Newcomb Campus
Northern Forest Institute



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the Adirondack Park Institute

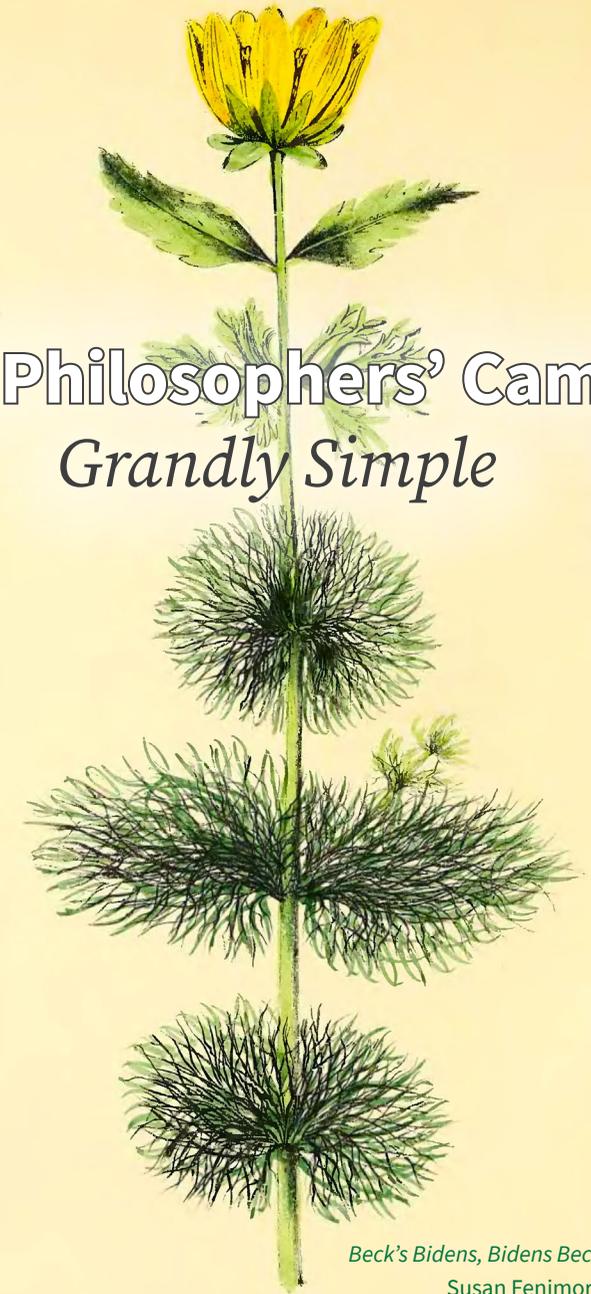
ESF's Northern Forest Institute (NFI) is an interdisciplinary educational outreach program at ESF's Newcomb Campus. NFI is dedicated to providing enrichment opportunities for government and non-government personnel at agencies and institutions with an environmental impact, college students, primary and secondary students and the general public.

NFI's program in Environmental Philosophy, led by Dr. Marianne Patinelli-Dubay, supports and facilitates rich conversations across a range of disciplines. The program's educational initiatives bridge humanities content with field experience to help participants understand the impacts of the relationship between scientific research and the policy it advances.



Philosophers' Camp participants in discussion

The Philosophers' Camp: *Grandly Simple*



Beck's Bidens, Bidens Beckii (1851)
Susan Fenimore Cooper

August 28 - 30, 2020
& October 2 - 4, 2020

Huntington Lodge,
Newcomb, N.Y.



State University of New York College of
Environmental Science and Forestry