

A Note from Canuche



hank you for being an engaged and generous part of the Wenatchee River Institute (WRI) community. We have accomplished so much together!

Thanks to your support, we successfully secured the

Traveling Naturalist in the Classroom Program for the 2025-2026 school year! Making sure every child grows up with a chance to get outside and see themselves as a naturalist is what motivates me, and you made that dream a reality for students across North Central Washington.

This fall, I look forward to building community together by sharing time in the Red Barn for films and presentations, joining you for a pint and learning some new things in Wenatchee at a Science on Tap event, or for a crisp morning Snowshoe Stroll with a naturalist this winter.

Read on to see what your support made possible. Thank you, community!

Canuche Terranella Executive Director



4th Annual Sunset & S'mores

The 4th annual event blended learning, play, and community connection, leaving families with fun memories, new knowledge, and a deeper appreciation for WRI's hands-on experiences on the first stormy night of the season.

Ninety people of all ages attended and explored some of WRI's programming through engaging activities like using stereoscopes, viewing the Watershed Model, experimenting with the interactive Stream Table, and examining real animal skins and skulls. Attendees also participated in an activity passport which helped them explore our campus in new ways. We hope to see you at this community event next fall!



A special thank you to the Events Committee and staff for such a wonderfully planned, executed, and decorated event. We couldn't have done it without you!

Traveling Naturalist Continues

We asked, and you pitched in! We couldn't have done it without you. The Traveling Naturalist in the Classroom (TN) Program is back for another exciting school year, and we're thrilled to continue bringing hands-on environmental learning to classrooms across North Central Washington.

Did you hear? Our goal was to raise \$100,000 by September 30th. With the help of a local family, we were able to match donations up to \$30,000. We reached nearly \$80,000 in donations! Coupled with generous support from the Fordham Street Foundation, National Recreation Foundation, and Thriving Together NCW, we went beyond our goal. This impactful youth program is continuing for another year with thanks to you.

"The hands-on approach and real-life application of the learning activities are a perfect fit for our students' learning styles and are engaging to students!"

Local School Principal

Students from Brewster explored Lake Chelan State Park, journaling their nature observations.



Fall fun at Confluence State Park. Students from Ancient Lakes celebrated the season with laughter, leaves, and plenty of playful energy.

WRI's goal is to sustain this impactful program with our eight partner schools, where over 750 students become curious observers, critical thinkers, problem solvers, young scientists, ecologists, engineers, and stewards of nature.

The TN program has a two-year structure that helps students deepen their connection to the natural world. WRI Field Educators witness the students' growth from one year to the next. As they build on past lessons and experiences, their curiosity grows – and so does their confidence in exploring science.

"Over time, students begin to observe and interpret the natural world through a more comprehensive naturalist lens, and it is a joy to observe this take place."

Dragonfly Dee, Youth Programs Coordinator

Because of the community's generosity, students across North Central Washington will continue to experience the wonder of outdoor learning, asking big questions, and building lifelong connections to nature. Thank you for investing in the next generation of environmental stewards and making this transformative program possible.

About the Traveling Naturalist in the Classroom Program

The Traveling Naturalist in the Classroom (TN) Program brings hands-on environmental education directly to 4th and 5th grade classrooms across North Central Washington—especially those that face barriers to visiting WRI's campus. WRI Field Educators lead interactive science lessons in over 30 classrooms per month, and at least one outdoor Field Day per year that connects students with their local environment. Since 2019, the program has inspired thousands of young naturalists to explore, ask questions, and care for the natural world.

Summer Camps, Nature Style!

WRI's Youth Summer Camps bring the campus to life with laughter, creativity, and discovery. Campers spend their days exploring the WRI campus, the Wenatchee River, and exploring nearby natural treasures like Lake Wenatchee State Park.

The foundation of WRI Summer Camps is simple: to connect campers with meaningful outdoor experiences. During the school year, many kids spend most of their time indoors. Summer provides the perfect outlet to run, explore, and engage their senses in the world around them. Each camp centers around a unique theme, ranging from hiking and outdoor skills to art and water play, and encourages teamwork, problem-solving, and social connection through shared adventures.



At Lake Wenatchee State Park, campers in Adventurous Artists Camp discovered a large log along the shore and decided to turn it into their very own "ship." Working together, they hauled it into the water, took turns riding it along the shoreline, and later practiced "Leave No Trace" by returning it to its original spot (see photo above!).

"It was awesome to see them all come up with the idea together, work as a team, and take turns."

Jackrabbit Jack, Field Educator



Campers took their climbing skills from the gym to the granite.
With guidance from Northwest Mountain School, they practiced outdoor climbing in Icicle Canyon in Leavenworth.

Summer Camps introduce kids to new activities, sparking passions and confidence. Emma, WRI's After School Program Lead Educator, met Cohen at Rock On! Camp. At first, Cohen was unsure about climbing, but on the final day outdoors with Northwest Mountain School, encouragement from peers and instructors helped them give it a try, and Emma immediately noticed a change.

"Cohen was scaling higher than most other students—and by the end of the day, they had completed all four routes, multiple times! They left camp loving rock climbing and asking their mom when they could do more."

Eagle Emma, After School Program Lead Educator

WRI is grateful for another summer season filled with growth, laughter, and adventure. Each camper who joins us takes home more than memories. They gain confidence, curiosity, and a deeper connection to the natural world. Stay tuned for the 2026 Summer Camp Lottery announcement in February/March!

2025 Summer Camps Impact



15

Camps



30

Pay What You Can Discounts Used



Campers



114

Lottery Entries

FIELD NOTES Fall 2025

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Connecting People, Communities and the Natural World

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WRI's Nature Journal

Entry No. 8: Aniseed Funnel Mushroom (Collybia odora/Clitocybe odora)

This strikingly beautiful, edible mushroom is a real treat to run into and is easily identifiable due to the following characteristics:

Appearance: Blue-green gills (sometimes stem) and hints on the cap, fading to tan/brown with age.



• Habitat: Shady hardwood and pine needle litter, often

- Wildlife: Attracts flies, beetles, and small rodents; often contains maggots or grubs.
 - Cooking: Best fresh in lightly seasoned dishes; can be dried/powdered, flavor fades over time.
 - Season: Late September-early November, with October as peak.

Disclaimer: Please refer to an official guide while foraging for edible materials. Eat foraged items at your own risk.