

Teacher's Note

As teachers of science, one of your goals is to teach students the scientific method, no matter what your area of focus—biology, chemistry, physics, etc. The scientific method can best be taught by focusing on inquiry and investigation. This allows the learner to be independent and to seek answers to questions throughout the world we live in. As educators, you are constantly faced with engaging your students in scientific inquiry in new and different ways. Standard teaching strategies can become monotonous to today's learners in an age of abundant technology. *The Natural Inquirer* gives a fresh approach to science and a view of the outside world bigger than the classroom that can be used while still in the school setting.

The Natural Inquirer is a science education resource journal to be used with learners from Grade 5 and up. *The Natural Inquirer* contains arti-

cles describing natural resource research conducted by USDA Forest Service scientists. These are scientific journal articles that have been reformatted to meet the needs of an audience new to science. The articles are easy to understand, are shortened, are more aesthetically pleasing to the eye, contain glossaries, and include hands-on activities. The 2002 Olympic Winter Games sidebars show how science is applied to the real world. The goal of *The Natural Inquirer* is critical thinking about scientific inquiry and investigation while learning about our natural resources and the environment.

Past issues and articles from *The Natural Inquirer* are available by visiting the following website: www.naturalinquirer.usda.gov.

Science Education Standards and Evaluations:

In the back of the journal, you will find a matrix that allows you to identify articles by the national science education standards they address. You will also find evaluation

forms in the back of the journal. Please make copies of these evaluation forms and have your students complete them after they complete an article. Please note the form for teachers to complete also. Please send the evaluation forms to the address listed at the end of the forms. You and your students may also complete the forms on-line by visiting www.naturalinquirer.usda.gov.

This journal was created by the Urban Tree House, an education program of the USDA Forest Service. If you have any questions or comments, please contact:

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Teacher's Manual:

Please visit *The Natural Inquirer* website at www.naturalinquirer.usda.gov. From this site, you may read the teacher's manual online or download it.

Visit www.naturalinquirer.usda.gov for previous issues of the *Natural Inquirer*, sample lesson plans, word games, the teacher's manual, information about the Forest Service, and other resources.