



Scouting for flora and other natural elements on the way can redirect your attention from your exhaustion.



Learning experience



Topics

Flora

Nature connectedness and environmental engagement

MTB specific activity



10-30 min



Participants

- Know more about local flora
- Have an increased awareness of local nature
- Know about adaptation strategies of flora
- Know about invasive species



Suitable for outdoor sport instructors and course participants



Practical sessions



Outdoor F2F



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Materials needed

Pen & paper (or phone), an app that recognises plants, trees, flowers (optional)



Preparation

Long climbs can be exhausting on a bike, particularly in Alpine regions. Offer your group an excuse to stop and teach them something about the local environment.

Activity instruction

Divide the group in smaller groups and give each group a different exercise.

Group 1 needs to take a picture of every different tree species they see alongside the trail they are climbing.

Group 2 will do the same for wild flowers etc. Optional: Have them question whether they think it is native or alien to the area without looking it up on their phone.

Evaluation at the top of the climb.

Ask how many different species they have scouted, if they can name them and not, recommend using a 'plant app' to learn more about fauna.

A recommended app to use for this exercise is 'Plant Net' <https://identify.plantnet.org/>

Reflection and discussion

In the reflection and discussion phase, the educator asks each group to explain what they found.

Were they able to identify an invasive species from an indigenous species? The educator will inform the participants of any current invasive species in the area and how this impacts the natural systems balance.



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Questions:

As mountain bikers, what can we do to help monitor and/or control the spread of invasive species in an area?

What is the potential impact we as mountain bikers, can have on spreading invasive species? (e.g. unintentionally spread an invasive species via mud/ soil sticking to the bike/tyres etc.).

On a long climb, you might also have the possibility to discover different zones of vegetation. Discuss with your group how plants adapt to height, wind, evaporation and temperature differences.



Background knowledge

Adaptation strategies of flora might be helpful (smaller leaves, near to the ground etc.)

Invasive species, how MTBers might unintentionally "help" them to carry away their seeds and what needs to be done to prevent this might also be helpful if this topic is addressed.



Key words

#flora
#invasive species
#MTB, #hiking



Source

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