

The **Wisdom of the Oak** Program is fundamentally about restoring our relationship to the natural world and to what feeds us. Students embark on an ecological and culinary adventure to explore the oak web of life and compare how different societies have approached living within this web to create food and agricultural systems. This deep ecology program expands the concept of school gardens to include our wild landscapes that nurture us in many ways. Go Wild Consulting has offered Oak Ecology and Acorn food workshops to hundreds of children, educators and nature lovers since 2008.



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Wisdom of the Oak workshops can be tailored to meet the needs of 1st to 12th grade students. We begin by exploring the oak web of life and our past and present human role within it. Students are introduced to Native Californian food systems, land management regimes, culture and mythology. Students prepare and eat acorn food. Native food systems are contrasted with mainstream agricultural systems in terms of sustainability, nutrition and ecological health and land ethics.

A wonderful thing about oaks is that you can begin with a humble acorn and branch out anywhere from ecology and chemistry to the cosmos. Oaks present a wide array of educational opportunities. Depending on the needs of the class field trips, science experiments and ethnobotany can be integrated. Any school with an oak tree can be a research station and native food garden. Because world mythology is steeped in oak lore, California oaks present a portal into mythology and religion. Go Wild is currently working with land management agencies to develop a hands-on restoration component of this program.

What can be gained from the Wisdom of the Oak

- 🌿 Understanding of the web of life and our human role within it
- 🌿 Knowledge of California native cultures and natural history
- 🌿 Opportunities for students in schools to have hands-on, real world environmental education experiences and link ecological concepts with classroom education
- 🌿 Exploration of our relationship to the land and how this impacts our choices about what we eat.
- 🌿 Meaningful conversation and critical thinking about food, food systems and what feeds and nourishes our society.
- 🌿 A deeper sense of connection to nature

"After taking this workshop I will never look at the oaks the same way. I used to think that acorns were poisonous and now I look our oak lands as a source of food"
Participant at Wisdom of the Oak workshop

"I learned that Oak Trees need love like everyone else"
Participant at Oakland Zoo Oak Ecology and Acorn Food Workshop.