



Victoria Mew: Connecting Children to Nature



Victoria Mew is a Nature Connection Mentor and Co-Author of the book *Learning with Nature: A How-to Guide to Inspiring Children Through Outdoor Games and Activities*. She has extensive experience working with the Eight Shields Model of regenerative design and has been Leading an Outdoor Mentoring Program for children and young adults over the past 8 years. She is also the mother of an 8-month-old baby. Be inspired and empowered to cultivate connective experiences in nature with children.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Go to the same place in nature every day. Sit, observe, notice, and expand your senses.

Extinction of Experience: the Heart Issue for Change to Emerge

- Children have less access and free-roaming time to natural environments.
- Being in nature is important in increasing our resilience, self-confidence, wellbeing, and healthy risk-taking.
- ***“No one will protect what they don't care about and no one will care about what they've never experienced”***
-David Attenborough.

Lived Experiences of Nature: Middle Childhood and Adolescence

- Returning to spots and being still for opportunities to observe nature and be close to wild animals.
- Making fire and building shelters, being trusted with tools offers confidence to young people, and develops skills.
- Rites of passage in nature: Having ceremony experiences. Doing night challenges. Connecting with life and others.
- Having adults who became role models who were awake and connected to nature.
- As a young person **feeling respected as being Self, true to your heart**

Creating a Culture of Connection

- **Monthly Nature Mentoring Program for Children:** a full day a month in the same location with adult mentors.
- Key identifying opportunities for cultivating curiosity, learning through demonstration, questioning, and following threads. **Relationships are formed over time with mentors and the natural environment.**

Program Structure: Important Elements

- Arriving with our senses, gratitude sharing, games, free play, breathing out, exploring the environment, celebrating the seasons, connecting with the elements, developing skills.
- Fire lighting and tending, whittling, foraging, shelter building, nature awareness, and tracking, caretaking - giving back, reflections, and sharing of the day.

8 Attributes of Connection: Gilbert Walking Bull / Lakota Lineage

- Love and forgiveness, a quiet mind, childlike happiness. Vitality, paying it forward/ mentoring. Empathy and respect for nature, being truly helpful, feeling fully alive.

Resources:

- ❖ **Books:** [Learning with Nature](#)
- ❖ **Website:** [Victoria Mew](#) **Social:** Facebook: [Red Squirrel Resources](#)
- ❖ **References:** [8 Shields](#), [Last Child in the Woods](#), [512project.com](#), [Coyote's Guide](#), [Gilbert Walking Bull](#), [The Children's Forest](#).



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The initiative was founded by Nicoleta Carpineanu (aka Nico de Transilvania), a Romanian, UK-based DJ/Producer who grew up in the forests of Transilvania. We began our first key project in Romania in April 2019 and in our first year planted over 25,000 trees. We reforest land that has been clear-cut, where natural reforestation would not occur. We only plant native, biodiverse species, grown locally and cared for until maturity in legally protected areas, adjacent to existing natural forests. Our aim is to plant one million trees in the Carpathians and beyond by 2025.

OUR MISSION is to preserve our forests and the people and wildlife they nurture, and to promote connection with nature through music, art, and culture.