



deeriNature

SELF-GUIDED NATURE TRAILS,
SPECIES ALMANAC,
and NATURE ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

Come outside with us! Come let us show you some of the really fascinating things that live here. We'll show you six kinds of mosses you can recognize from your car window, four kinds of trees you can name just from the look of their bark. Listen in as a flock of chickadees keeps in touch with one another. Learn to recognize when a robin is really cross and when the crows are warning that an eagle is about to come flying by. Look at our rocks and not only recognize Deer Isle granite but know what the pink stripes are. And seashells - do you know we have a little clam-like shell that is all pearl, all over? And just think, we haven't even told you yet where you can find an insect-eating plant, a pitcher plant, right here on the Island.

Welcome to *deeriNature*, a package of four parts, a suite of PDFs, a system for learning about our natural world based on recent research into how our brains work.

First, *deeriNature* is an e-book, a leisurely introduction to the Deer Isle natural world, perhaps to be read at home, in off-season, on rainy days. This provides a context and we know now that we learn best by linking facts to concepts and context.

Next, the mobile version is for use on the trails. Here we guide you through the habitats, identifying species and pointing out ecological concepts. Humans are great at assigning categories, perceiving and making patterns. We perceive the parts and the whole simultaneously. This is how our brain works - and repetition is key to retaining our insights.

Third is the *deeriNature* Species Almanac. In the recent digital decades there has been a revolution in field guides. There is a specialized vocabulary for plant (and bird) anatomy that one might eventually want to master, but the beginner is likely to forsake laboriously keying out species and ask instead: What does it look like? How big? What color, what is its context, and give me some little detail that tells me just which of several possibilities I should choose. For this we have the

almanac to help in sorting out what is likely on Deer Isle in a given place, at a given time, so we can usefully approach the vast resources of the Internet.

Finally, learning is not a passive enterprise. You do best if you engage all of your senses and become an active participant. Fun and games! The Web is full of rather lame exercises that look like learning but are far less than ideal. The *deeri*Nature Activities are for this place, for any age or skill level. One person, a family, or a group will enjoy the challenges of investigation with elements of suspense and mild competition.

Why learn? We have been leading nature walks here on Deer Isle for fifty years and we are convinced that the more you know about your natural surroundings, the more you appreciate. Being alive is a remarkable gift that we share with a fascinating host of creatures. Reason enough; now out we go, and enjoy.

—Marnie and Ken Crowell

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