

Nature Rx: Boost your well-being through nature

Helping you live well to learn well

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Your Cornell Health provider is recommending (or “prescribing”) spending time in nature to help support your health and well-being. Read on to find out why, and how!

Benefits of spending time in nature

Have you ever felt refreshed after taking a walk in the woods? Find yourself in a brighter mood after sitting outside in the sun?

Research shows that time spent in nature can have real, tangible benefits for your physical and mental well-being.

Experiences in nature can:

- Elevate your mood and improve your sense of overall happiness
- Reduce stress and help you feel calm
- Support your ability to concentrate and increase your attention span
- Increase social connections and relationships
- Boost your physical health and well-being

How to experience nature at Cornell (in all seasons!)

- Take a stroll around Beebe Lake.
- Explore the Botanic Gardens at the East end of campus.
- In the winter, build a snowman, have a snowball fight, or rent snowshoes or cross-country skis from Cornell Outdoor Education.
- Check out the tropical plants in the Liberty Hyde Bailey Conservatory greenhouse on Tower Road.
- Sit on a blanket on Libe Slope.
- Walk the path along Cascadilla Gorge between Collegetown and Fall Creek.
- Eat your lunch on a bench in the Willard Straight Rock Garden.
- Spend some quiet time in the A.D. White House Gardens.
- Try an outdoor “Let’s Meditate” session if you’re on campus during the summer.
- If you can’t get outside, sit by a window to study so you can take nature viewing breaks. Or search “Cornell Lab of Ornithology bird cams” and stream it in the background while you study.

You don’t need to spend lots of time in purely wild places to experience benefits. Even taking time to notice the trees on the way to class, or pausing



Even brief experiences in nature can elevate your mood, relieve stress, and help you feel calm.

to take in the sunset over Libe Slope, can boost your mood and relieve stress.

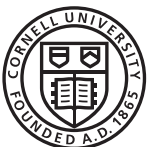
Find more ideas for connecting with nature on or near campus by visiting naturerx.cornell.edu.

How to maximize nature’s benefits

Research shows that spending at least 10-15 minutes in nature can help maximize its positive impacts.

Additionally, practicing mindfulness when engaging in nature can boost its benefits. Try the following:

- Put your phone aside and focus your attention fully on the nature around you.
- Notice and allow yourself to become intentionally immersed in the sights, sounds, smells, and sensations you’re experiencing.
- Invite feelings of wonder and gratitude for the beauty of our natural world.
- Spend time watching a bird or a squirrel interact with its environment, and try to imagine the world through its eyes.
- Find a peaceful spot to sit and journal, sketch, or doodle, using the nature around you as inspiration.
- Pick out a cloud in the sky. With each breath, watch whether the cloud changes shape or size. Breathe until the cloud drifts or fades away.
- In the winter, notice the stillness around you, the crunch of snow under your feet, and the silhouette of the trees against the sky.



About Nature Rx “prescriptions”

In recent years, the evidence-based benefits of nature have received attention from medical and mental health communities in the U.S. and abroad, with a growing number of providers suggesting that their patients and clients spend time in nature as a sort of “nature prescription.”

Inspired by this global movement, Cornell Health’s medical and mental health providers recommend – or “prescribe” – spending time in nature to students to help reduce stress, improve mood, and boost concentration. Learn more at health.cornell.edu/naturerx.

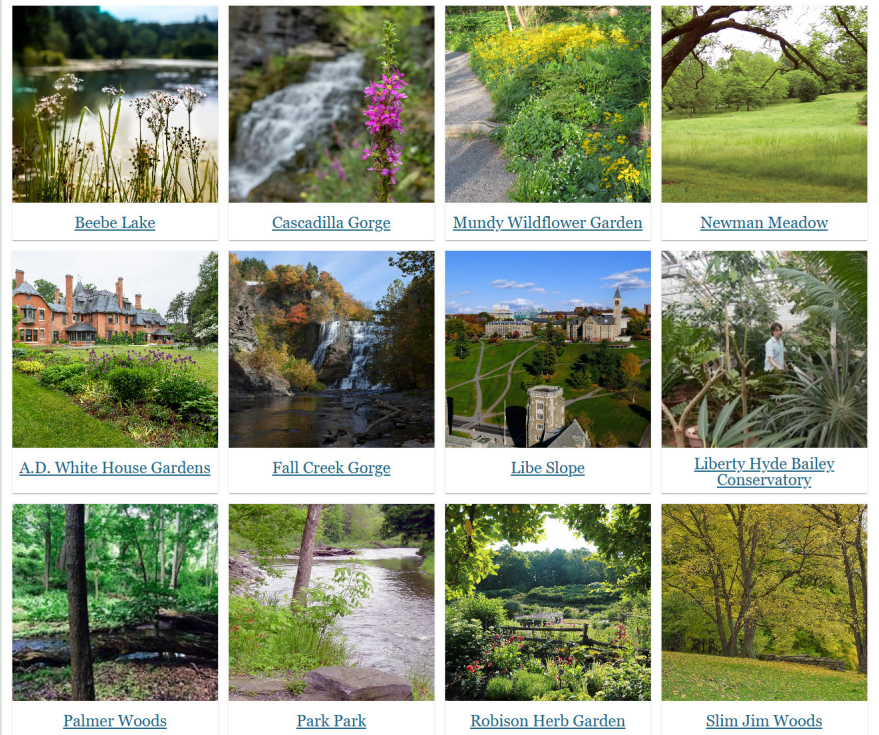
Students can also “self-prescribe” by making goals for themselves to spend more time in nature. For example, you might commit to taking a 10-minute, phone-free nature walk after dinner on a campus nature path once a week, with a friend or by yourself.

About Nature Rx @ Cornell

Nature Rx @ Cornell is a campus-wide initiative that promotes holistic well-being through connection with nature. The initiative includes a nature prescription program, a student organization, academic and physical education courses, and campus-wide events. Find more information at naturerx.cornell.edu.

As a Health Promoting Campus, Cornell recognizes that the well-being of people, places, and the planet are interdependent, and that Cornell community members can benefit from exploring, connecting to, and learning through nature. Learn more at healthpromotingcampus.cornell.edu.

Visit Cornell’s Nature Rx website!



Visit Cornell’s Nature Rx website to find opportunities to engage with nature on campus and beyond, including a map of natural areas, suggested activities, events, resources, and more.

naturerx.cornell.edu