Winter Ecology

Objectives
• Students understand the challenges that winter presents to plant, animal, and human communities
• Students explore the ways plants, animals, and humans have adapted to survive harsh winter conditions
• Students explore the characteristics of snow and understand the effects of snow on winter ecosystems
• Students study animal tracks and signs and draw conclusions about animals' activities in the winter
• Students understand how energy flow changes in the winter ecosystem
• Students enjoy exploring the forest in the quiet of winter, on snowshoes when conditions permit.

Key Concepts
• Plant and animal adaptations to winter
• Human adaptations to winter in the past and present
• Interrelationships
• Seasonal changes in energy flow in the White Mountain ecosystem
• Hibernation, dormancy
• Snow morphology and the subnivean layer
Activities may include

- Animal tracking
- Snowshoe hikes
- Snowshelter history and construction
- Snowflake/snowpack study analysis
- Observation and journal writing
- Winter tree identification
- Student-driven discussions