Description

- **a defined planted area 500 sq. ft or more**, (rather than a linear strip or a border planting bed) planted with a diversity of understory vegetation typically found in woodland ecosystems

Purpose

- to provide **a protected natural habitat for cross curricular study** (for example - to observe, write and collect data, to see ecosystem change over time)

Considerations

- **provide topographic variation** - to maximize potential for exploration within a small area

- select smaller varieties of trees and shrubs to **allow for diversity in limited space** and less maintenance as plants mature (use shade plants as needed)

- introduce a **range of plant characteristics** to stimulate curiosity - form, structure, flower, leaf type, bark, seed type, etc.

- **green practices** - design so run-off water replenishes beds; use native plantings; local sourcing of materials; etc.

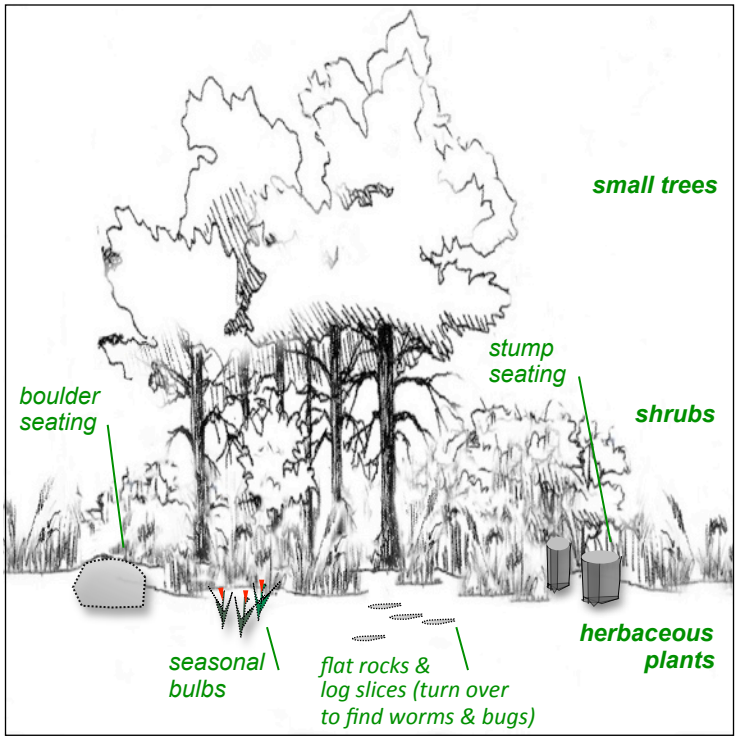
- **dispersed seating** - boulders, durable fallen tree sections & stumps - to allow students to work independently or in small groups

- pathways (stepping stones) to **delineate walk zones** for circulation, to protect plantings from foot traffic, and direct students to dispersed seating

Design checklist

- ☐ size: planted area 500 sq.ft. or more
- ☐ includes a diversity of plants: deciduous, evergreen and cone-bearing -- utilize plant list (BSI workbook)
- ☐ trees and shrubs in clusters, not as individual specimens
- ☐ provide topographic variation
- ☐ provide secondary pathway to encourage student exploration
- ☐ provide boulders and stumps for seating. (see seating page)
- ☐ include flat stones or log slices (locate adjacent to pathways) for students to turn over to find worms and bugs (1" - 2" thick x approximately 10"-15" dia.)
- ☐ provide heavy mulch layer
- ☐ exposure: may be located under existing larger tree(s)
- ☐ add new soil (see Soil Specifications)
- ☐ provide area for seasonal bulb planting (by teachers/students)

Illustrations




fall interest & variety of leaf shapes


stepping stones (rough fieldstone) through sample woodland


students observing insects in forest litter / fern bed with decomposing logs (willow stump and maple slices) and thick wood chip mulch


Witchhazel, fall bloom


cone-bearing trees