

**CLASS 11**

<b>TOPIC</b>	Nature-Based Recreation: Nurturing Health and Well-being in Urban Residents – I. Forest Bathing	
<b>LEARNING CONTENT - DETAILED CHARACTERISTICS</b>	Topic: Discussing the potential of nature-based interventions for improving public health outcomes in urban settings. Examining the design and accessibility of urban green spaces to facilitate recreational opportunities for diverse populations. Urban forest recreation activities	
<b>KEY WORDS</b>	Forest Recreation, Forest Bathing	
<b>SUGGESTED TOOLS</b>	<p>Interactive lecture</p> <p>Power-point presentation</p> <p>Videos and readings</p> <p>Handouts for analysis in groups</p> <p>Discussion</p>	
<b>TIPS / METHODOLOGICAL REMARKS (if applicable)</b>	.....	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLASSES</b>	<b>STEP 1</b>	Presentation. Nature-Based Recreation: Forest recreation activities in urban areas
	<b>STEP 2</b>	Analysis of textual and graphical data and discussion of results: Forest recreation activities in urban areas  Work card 1.
	<b>STEP 3</b>	Presentation: Forest bathing (Shinrin-yoku in Japanese) - a practice that involves immersing oneself in a forest or natural environment and mindfully connecting with nature. It originated in Japan in the 1980s as a response

		to the rapid urbanization and the desire to counteract the stress and disconnection from nature that often accompanies modern living
	STEP 4	Video: What is Japanese “forest bathing” and how can it improve your health (source World Economic Forum) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stuZaKBgjzI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stuZaKBgjzI</a>
	STEP 5	Outside exercise: Forest Bathing in the City Park Work card 2.

#### ADDITIONAL MATERIAL 1 - WORK CARD

### WORK CARD 1. NATURE-BASED RECREATION: FOREST RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN URBAN AREAS

- A.** Read the text focusing on different types of urban forest recreation activities, allowing individuals to engage with nature even in an urban environment:

**Nature Walks or Hiking:** Urban parks and green spaces often have designated trails or pathways where individuals can enjoy leisurely walks or hikes amidst trees and natural surroundings. These walks provide an opportunity to experience the calming effects of nature and benefit from physical activity.

**Picnicking:** Urban parks with trees and grassy areas provide ideal settings for picnics. This activity allows individuals to relax, socialize, and enjoy a meal in a natural outdoor environment.

**Wildlife Observation:** Urban forests and green spaces can support diverse wildlife, including birds, squirrels, and other small animals. Observing and learning about urban wildlife can be an engaging and educational activity that fosters an appreciation for the natural world.

**Photography and Art:** Urban forests offer inspiration for photography, painting, or sketching. Capturing the beauty of trees, foliage, and natural elements can be a creative way to connect with nature and express artistic skills.

**Nature Meditation or Mindfulness:** Practicing meditation or mindfulness in an urban forest or green space can promote a sense of calm and inner peace. Finding a quiet spot, focusing on your breath, and tuning in to the sounds and sensations of the natural environment can enhance the meditative experience.

**Outdoor Yoga or Tai Chi:** Urban parks or designated green areas can serve as settings for outdoor yoga or Tai Chi sessions. These mind-body practices combined with nature immersion can create a harmonious and rejuvenating experience.

**Environmental Education Programs:** Many urban parks and nature centers offer educational programs and workshops on topics such as ecology, plant identification, or sustainable practices. Participating in these programs can deepen your knowledge of the natural environment and promote environmental stewardship.

**B.** Look carefully at the data on the graphs and discuss the results indicated.

*(Source: Arne Arnberger , Renate Eder, Monitoring recreational activities in urban forests using long-term video observation, Forestry: An International Journal of Forest Research, Volume 80, Issue 1, January 2007, Pages 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1093/forestry/cpl043>)*

**Table:** Shares of activity types by weekends and workdays and on days with snow cover based on video monitoring

Activity types	Year		Snow cover	
	Weekends	Workdays	Weekends	Workdays
Nordic walkers	43.2%	56.8%	48.9%	51.1%
Joggers	41.6%	58.4%	49.9%	50.1%
Winter bicyclists			55.6%	44.4%
Bicyclists	41.6%	58.4%	52.7%	47.3%
Walkers	52.2%	47.8%	60.0%	40.0%
Dog walkers	44.1%	55.9%	43.5%	56.5%

Activity types	Year		Snow cover	
	Weekends	Workdays	Weekends	Workdays
Chi-square tests between weekend and workday shares of activity types	$\chi^2 = 1216.58, df = 4, P < 0.001$		$\chi^2 = 319.84, df = 5, P < 0.001$	

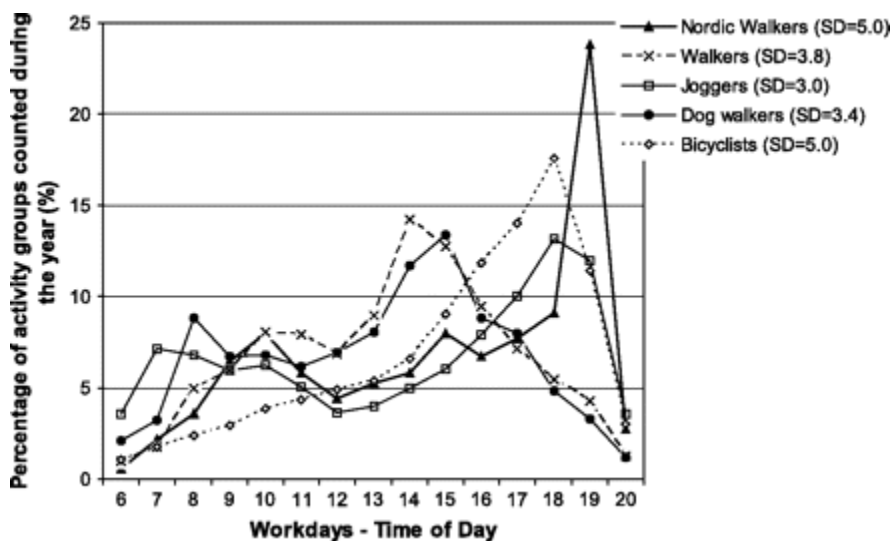


Fig.1 Daily use patterns of activity types on workdays (SD = standard deviation).

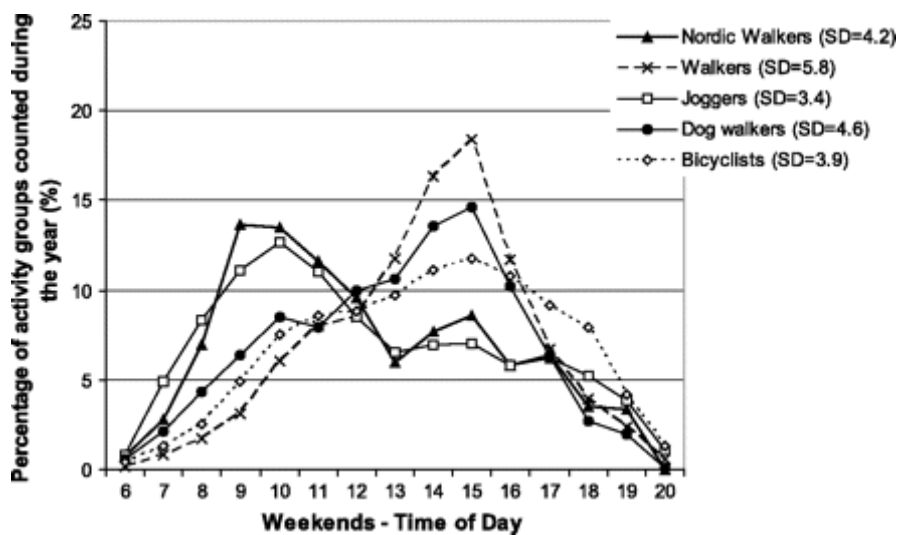
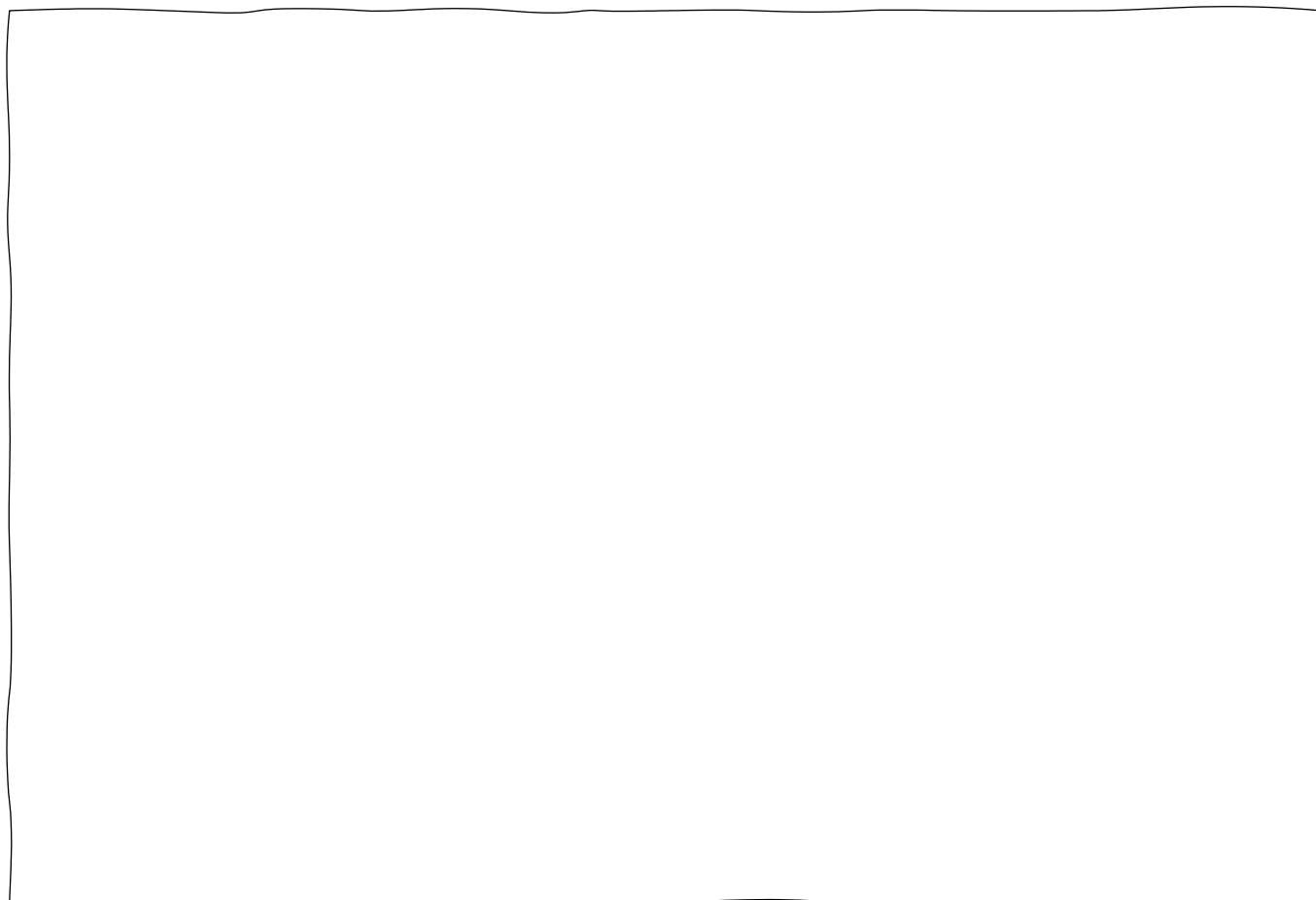


Fig.2 Daily use patterns of activity types on weekends (SD = standard deviation)

**C.** What are the most popular forest recreation activities among the population in your city?  
How would you explain people's preferences?



## ADDITIONAL MATERIAL 2 - ASSIGNMENT

### Exercise: Forest Bathing in the City Park

**Objective:** To experience the calming and rejuvenating effects of nature through a guided forest bathing exercise in a city park.

Materials needed:

- Comfortable clothing and footwear suitable for walking
- Notebooks or journals (optional)
- Pens or pencils (optional)

#### Instructions:

1. Introduction (5 minutes)
  - Gather the students in a designated meeting area within the city park.
  - Introduce the concept of forest bathing and explain its purpose in promoting relaxation and well-being through connection with nature.
2. Mindful Arrival (5 minutes)
  - Lead a brief guided mindfulness exercise to help students transition into a present and receptive state of mind.
  - Encourage students to focus on their breath, notice their surroundings, and let go of any distractions or stress.
3. Slow Walking (15 minutes)
  - Guide the students on a slow and mindful walk through a designated forested area of the city park.
  - Encourage students to walk at a leisurely pace, paying attention to the sensations in their bodies and the sounds and sights of the natural environment.
  - Prompt them to engage their senses fully, noticing the textures of tree bark, the rustling of leaves, the scents in the air, and the play of light through the trees.

#### 4. Mindful Observation (15 minutes)

- Choose a specific spot in the park, such as a grove of trees or a tranquil area and invite students to sit or stand quietly.
- Encourage them to observe their immediate surroundings with a sense of curiosity and wonder.
- Prompt them to notice the details—the shapes, colors, and patterns in the natural elements, as well as any wildlife or signs of life.

#### 5. Guided Reflection (10 minutes)

- Guide the students through a reflective exercise, allowing them to process their experiences in writing or quietly contemplating their thoughts.
- Encourage them to express their feelings, observations, or any insights that arose during the forest bathing experience.
- If desired, provide optional writing prompts related to their connection with nature or the impact of the exercise on their well-being.

#### 6. Sharing and Discussion (15 minutes)

- Offer students the opportunity to share their reflections, insights, or any notable moments from their forest bathing experience (optional and based on their comfort level).
- Facilitate a group discussion to explore common themes or observations, allowing students to deepen their understanding of the benefits of forest bathing and the connection between nature and well-being.

#### 7. Closing and Integration (5 minutes)

- Summarize the key takeaways from exercise, emphasizing the importance of regular nature connection for personal well-being and stress reduction.
- Encourage students to incorporate elements of forest bathing into their daily lives, such as taking mindful walks, finding moments of stillness in nature, or exploring local green spaces.