

Woodland POV

“They’re here again.”

“Oh no, not again!”

“Who’s here?”

“The naturalists.”

“Och, not them. They’re the worst!”

“Naturalist wannabes, you mean.”

“Let’s give them a little test...”

Hey, naturalist, remember the last time you were here? I think you thought you could count us oaks. Yeah, that was fun—you with your little books trying to name us! Stomping on our toes and crushing our children. Making fun of our knobby knees. The nerve! But we fought back. We hope you enjoyed your nature experience with our tick friends...

Then there was your winter ex-per-i-ment... Us squirrels had a good laugh! You buried nuts we were supposed to eat. But it was 20 below—no way were we leaving our dens. We enjoyed watching you, though. You were bundled up counting all those nuts. We ate them a few weeks later when the cold snap broke.

But your visit tonight was the best—a hike ‘n write class. We were able to drive you out in a matter of minutes. We snickered listening to your descriptions—“the earthy smell, the prolific mayapples, the song of the indigo bunting”—blah, blah. We’d like to read your description of our mosquito brothers. Bzzzeeee....

Just remember, we are the woods. We’re not just a pretty picture. We’ve learned to fend for ourselves and we’re not your private playground. We *are* nature and when you visit it’s on our terms.

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