



*"The More You Carry In Your Head,
The Less You Carry On Your Back"*

What Makes Us Different From Other Wilderness Survival Schools, Guide Services, And Outdoor Adventure Companies?

There are numerous wilderness survival schools, guide services, and outdoor adventure companies loudly proclaiming that they're the best and feverishly courting your hard-earned dollar, with new ones seemingly hanging out their shingle each month. But how do you determine which of them are honest, professional, reputable, and would best meet your needs? Below are a few points about us and what sets us apart from the pack.

Note: I use the pronoun "we" for our business because it includes my entire family. I use the pronoun "I" when writing about myself.

1. We're the most experienced, best trained, and most qualified outdoor school and guide service you've never heard of. We've relied on word of mouth for all of our business referrals so you may not have heard of us before. We don't have a marketing department or professional web designer, but we've been in this business full-time since 1999. We run the longest, most comprehensive, and most intense Earth Skills Education and traditional wilderness survival courses in North America. We draw on years of experience, from growing up in rural New Hampshire, to several extended primitive wilderness living experiences and years spent in Alaska, to experience as a professional guide and running canoe and snowshoe trips, to provide you with instruction and experiences unavailable elsewhere.

2. We're a small, family business. Other schools advertise that they're the biggest. We take the opposite approach and are proud of the fact that we're among the smallest. Instead of trying to give an introductory class to a thousand people each year, we prefer to offer the most advanced training available anywhere to a select few. After all, bigger doesn't mean better and any course is only as good as the instructor teaching it. With large organizations you run the risk of ending up with an instructor who's just been hired or lacks the knowledge and years of experience necessary for competence and professionalism. That's not the case with us, as I personally teach all of our courses and guide all of our trips. I also draw upon an extensive network of specialists and guest instructors who add invaluable knowledge and experience to your time with us. If a student or client doesn't have a great experience with us I take it personally and work to make it right. In other words, the buck stops with me. With all of our programs group size is intentionally kept small, ensuring personal attention and minimizing our impact on the land. Unless otherwise specified all courses and trips have 10 or fewer people, and the Earth Skills Semester Program is limited to 6. We don't want to be bigger, just better.

3. We do this full-time, year-round, and have since 1999. There are many outdoor instructors and guides who teach a few workshops each year or run outdoor businesses as a second job or seasonal hobby. Others have taken a few day or weekend seminars and though it would be a "cool job" to teach what they've just learned. Most of these people mean well, but because they lack the experience and knowledge you can only gain by time spent in the bush they often end up simply parroting what they were taught, sometimes nearly word-for-word. Some aren't so well-meaning, and operate fly-by-night outfits looking to make a quick buck, often at the student's expense. By hiring a good web designer and printing a flashy brochure, they're often made to look like full-time professionals, but the vast majority of them are not. I do this full-time, year-round, and have since 1999. Before that I offered courses and trips part time since 1995. This means that I'm teaching and guiding in the bush in all seasons, in all weather conditions, and have been for a number of years. These factors ensure a level of professionalism unmatched by the majority of wilderness survival schools, guides, and instructors.

4. We're a leader and an innovator in the outdoor industry. We designed and ran the original semester-length Earth Skills Education course, the Earth Skills Semester Program, and we continue to develop new courses to meet the needs of our students. Being responsible for all aspects of planning, outfitting, and teaching semester-length courses, we've learned a lot of important lessons, sometimes the hard way. You benefit from this experience, as we've faced and overcome a wide variety of operational and logistical

challenges. As a result we've developed course guidelines and parameters that function smoothly both in the field and at our home base.

5. We're a professional business and have the certifications to prove it. I'm a registered Master Maine Guide and registered New Hampshire hunting and fishing guide. I'm also a lifetime member of the Maine Professional Guide's Association, on the board of directors of the New Hampshire Guides Association, and an active member of the Wolfeboro Chamber of Commerce. More important than these certifications are the years of experience I have studying, learning, and experiencing life in the outdoors.

6. We understand the teaching and learning process, allowing us to offer structured, focused instruction. Some enduring myths persist about survival and wilderness education and bring to mind uneducated hillbillies and other unsavory characters. We simply don't fit into this mold. I have a Master's degree in education and am a member of American Mensa. Our courses are designed to maximize learning for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles.

7. We have a strong background in wilderness medicine to ensure your safety. I was a registered Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician for 7 years and currently am a registered Wilderness First Responder. I've maintained these certifications through regular training and recertification testing.

8. We offer customized courses and trips to fit your individual needs. We've designed and run personalized programs for individuals and groups from around North America and Europe. If you're looking for something specific and we're not well suited to provide it, we'll help you find someone who is.

9. We offer professional and well-maintained gear and accommodations. I personally choose and purchase our gear and am discriminating in doing so. For example, on a nine-day snowshoe trip several years ago I decided to put a sleeping bag manufacturer's claims to the test before recommending them by sleeping out in the snow three nights in a row in forty degrees below zero temperatures. That particular bag didn't pass the test as these were three cold, fitful nights. From canoes and tents to survival equipment to our home base, everything we provide for students is a reflection of us, and we aim to make it a positive one.

10. We treat our clients and students with professionalism and respect. Spending time in the bush builds a sense of group cohesiveness very quickly, especially when the tone is one of respect. We've built strong and lasting friendships with past clients and students, and consider these to be our most important assets.

11. We have a lot of fun. Often survival and related fields are associated with paramilitary groups and stoically dealing with miserable circumstances. We realize that some people are drawn to that type of experience, but have trouble figuring out why. We work hard to make our courses and trips exceptional learning experiences, and at the same time fun and enjoyable.

12. We don't think (or act like) we know it all and are actively learning all the time. This is a way of life for us, not just a job. I consider students and clients to be fellow learners and avoid intellectual and experiential arrogance, trying instead to be inclusive and accommodating. My research interests include the myriad skills of our hunter/gatherer and early agricultural ancestors and how they used the resources available to them to live comfortably in nature. This includes the skills and "how-to" knowledge as well as background information on plants, animals, fish, weather and the rest of the natural world.

13. Our home base is easy to get to. We're within easy driving distance of Boston (2 hours), New York City (5 hours), Montreal (4.5 hours), Portland (1.5 hours), and Manchester (1 hour), and their respective international airports.

If you have any questions about us or what we do, don't hesitate to email, call, or write with them.