


## Permaculture Immersion Apprenticeships



**Permaculture  
Ongoing immersion apprenticeships  
Summer 2010**

Openings for 4-8 serious students wishing to learn/experience skills & insights useful for developing self reliance in the coming paradigm change

Site: Earth Advocates Research Farm, a 48-acre, off-grid Permaculture lab, campus and playground established by Adam and Sue Turtle in 1991 near Summertown, Tennessee.

Info: Ellie at 806-282-2061, [ellie.thefarm@gmail.com](mailto:ellie.thefarm@gmail.com)

**EARF**

**Dates:** Ongoing from 2 May 2010

**Location:** Earth Advocates Research Farm, Summertown, Tenn.

**Description:** This spring through fall 2010 four to eight people at any one time may join two-week to two-month long apprenticeships at Earth Advocates Research Farm. The apprenticeships will seek to develop stewardship and one's own resourcefulness. Physical work will be balanced with book time, videos, and creative discussions. Time and focus will be responsively designed to accommodate each participant's wants and needs.

Our apprentices will focus on preparation for paradigm change with emphasis on developing skills, knowledge and insights leading to increased capacity for sustainable self reliance, i.e. learning to re-inhabit the land symbiotically through understanding of and participation in natural cycles.

Earth Advocates Research Farm is a 48-acre off-grid lab/campus/playground where we screen candidate species for cost effective applications in neglect tolerant scenarios. Participation/learning in: soil building, water management, effective body and hand tool use, forest observation/interaction (incl. pruning, propagation and guilds), building techniques, organic gardening, bamboo growing and using are among the opportunities offered – along with access to staff experience, an extensive library and a beautiful site in southern middle Tennessee.

Limited to 7 paying and 1 scholarship at any one time.

**Link to web site survey:** <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KWWJQLK>

**Instructors:** Adam Turtle FLS, Sue Turtle, Ellie Early

**Cost:** \$200/week includes bunk, food, materials (bus station pick up only)

**Contact:** Ellie Early  
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## Earth Advocates Research Farm – Mission Statement

Many years ago:

- As awareness of the abuse and fragility of the planet's ecosystems became inescapable, and
- Noticing that our land grant universities were paying less and less attention to the needs of small land holders, and
- Realizing we lacked reliable information on sustainability or even what might actually constitute good stewardship:

We, as advocates for the planet and in service to the sacred, dedicated our farm and our lives to researching strategies, techniques and insights to address these shortcomings, with a specific focus on the needs of the people and land of middle Tennessee (USDA zone 6). To this end we research, try, demonstrate, and teach information and insights that have proven appropriate for middle Tennessee. We seek to understand the processes, relationships, and natural cycles so we can better realize our potential as responsive co-participants and hopefully become better stewards. Much of our work is on the elemental level – i.e. fire, water, earth, air, spirit – and, of course, their complex interconnected relationships. Realizing that we are part of it all ... we'd like to get better at it.

## People at EARF

**Adam Turtle FLS** (Fellow of the Linnean Society) - A former Boy Scout, cowboy, fisherman, truck driver, chef, woodworker, sculptor, preacher, theosopher and general trouble maker, left mainstream in 1970 to pursue a quest for insight into good stewardship -- this led to ethnobotanical studies (on the land primarily with occasional forays into academia) -- lots of woods lore, wild crafting, gardening, etc. Began working with bamboos in '79, Permaculture in '81 and again in '88 (both with B. Mollison), Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in '93, soil building and water management on going. He aspires to becoming a better earth citizen and general systems synthesist. Sue and Adam organized and hosted the Eastern Permaculture convergences in 1991 & 1995.

**Sue Turtle** - Coming from a background in Administration Sue is a good organizer. She has experience organizing, catering, and hosting local, regional and national gatherings. She is a former Health Educator, dancer, musician (flute & piano), elder caregiver, a gardener, and an avid reader. Sue has been trained in the basics of Solar Photovoltaics and helped building the greenhouses, gardens and house here at EARF. She completed the Permaculture course twice – 1984 and an advanced course in 1988.

Sue has been a seeker of Truth for over 30 years – studying (and graduating - 1983) at Hippocrates Health Institute in Boston, Massachusetts where she was introduced to the concept of Permaculture – and since then has been a student of healing and wholeness: Healing our selves, our Earth and our relationships – body/mind/spirit as One. She has studied with Tibetan Buddhist, Native American and Shamanic teachers (as well as various healing modalities such as Polarity, massage, structural alignment, etc.) endeavoring to learn to better walk in balance and harmony on this Earth journey she is on, participating in various ceremonies where called and creating rituals and ceremonies for healing.

**Ellie Early** - She grew up and spends winters in Texas, and has a BFA in Textile Design from University of Massachusetts. For the past two summer/fall seasons she worked and lived at The Ecovillage Training Center of The Farm as an ecovillager and member of the educational coop in 2009. She completed a Permaculture Design Certification in 2009 in Hohenwald, Tennessee and an Ecovillage Design course in 2008 at the Ecovillage. This season at EARF she

will be a coordinator keeping the bunk house, kitchen and people there in harmony, as well as continuing the study of Permaculture and leading some sessions. email: [ellie.thefarm@gmail.com](mailto:ellie.thefarm@gmail.com)

## **EARF Site Description**

Starting with 48.46 acres of abused, thickety regrowth forest (dry oak/hickory ridge) on rolling hills with a highly erodable and very cherty soil, interior road placement and water management were high initial priorities. We now have about 1¼ miles of interior roads, 4 ponds ranging in size from 20' diameter to 2 acres with which we are experimenting, trying to create a balanced ecology – growing fish for the table and aquatic plants along with a steadily increasing number of other water features.

All major structures (house, conference center, classroom, equipment shed, office, greenhouses, and guest buses) are guttered and feed into 13 cisterns of varying capacity with a current total capacity of approximately 98,000 gallons. Greenhouse, classroom, conference center, house and office are all fitted with photovoltaic panels and battery storage. One greenhouse is of solar passive, original design based on 20 years of observation and study in our climate (inside: light frost while outside: 0°F with no supplemental heat). Extensive terracing and the construction of raised beds help address our water situation, which is sometimes over abundant (as much as 8.5" in 24 hours) or droughty (3 months no rain).

We continue our work begun at Nobody's Mountain of identifying, screening, and trialing candidate plant species and cultivars that are not only useful to the small land holder but are also neglect tolerant and suitable to integration into Permaculture design schemes. For instance we are screening vacciniums, fruiting roses, hardy cactus, 40+ varieties of figs, hardy kiwis, hazels, and we currently grow over 250 species and cultivars of bamboo – selling surplus plants, mainly bamboo under the dba 'Our' Bamboo Nursery as the source of our primary funding. (We are not mail order.)

Our web site is at [www.growit.com/bamboo](http://www.growit.com/bamboo).

We are developing a Bamboo Park and Education Center, and try to host at least one conference each year relating to bamboo and/or Permaculture. We also have published *Temperate Bamboo Quarterly*, a forum for sharing information and views about bamboo. Observation and study of both the natural and the man-made world continue to occupy most of our time.

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