Wednesday, July 23, 2025

Nicksen Nature Accessibility Audit Case Study

https://www.niksennature.com/

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dGzxob-05DsBW6kQQjCnX-7WlQGTh6y-VP8XmBW_TJ0/edit?gid=0#gid=0

Project Overview

- A fellow graduate of a bootcamp I attended came across my LinkedIn page and asked me if I would be willing to take a look at her website and identify any accessibility issues. When I visited her site, I noticed it was hosted through Weebly, a popular site hosting platform.

Accessibility Enhancements

- This audit was conducted to be compliant with WCAG 2.1 and 2.2 accessibility guidelines.
- I used both automated and manual testing methods to complete this audit.
- A first-time issue for me, I noticed while going though with a screen reader that some of the text on the pages would repeat twice after it finished a section. After some research, it seems like this is a known issue with certain site hosting platforms like Weebly, due to built-in backend code that isn't accessible to edit by the user.
- I identified forms that were missing labels (specifically the search function, which also used an image for the search button), which is essential for screen reader users to understand and navigate the site properly.
- Some images only had the alt text of "Picture", which is not sufficient alt text for people using assistive technologies, per guideline 1.1.1. I recommended descriptive alt text for each image.
- On the 'Blog' page, proper heading structure wasn't used (it began with <h2> and skipped <h1>, which affects navigation with assistive technology. I recommended editing the code and using CSS to style accordingly.

- Some links throughout the site rely solely on color to be distinguishable, which affects people with low vision or color blindness (1.4.1). I recommended adding an underline or background color change to add focus to the element instead of relying on color alone.

Skills and Tools Used

- HTML
- VoiceOver Screen Reader (macOS)
- CSS
- Semantic HTML
- axe DevTools
- WCAG 2.1 Guidelines
- Chrome DevTools
- WAVE - Lighthouse
- WebAIM Contrast Checker

Reflection

This audit provided a new challenge for me, as it was a site hosted through a third party with built-in backend that can't be easily accessed. While I wasn't able to offer a more solid solution to the repeated screen reader texts other than reaching out to Weekly's customer support, I was happy to be able to provide guidance on how to easily improve the site's accessibility and usability for all users, regardless of their abilities.