

Mid-West School District 2nd & 5th Graders Learn About Environment & Have Fun

The Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD) was invited to West Snyder and Middleburg Elementary Schools to coordinate and teach 150 2nd graders several aspects of nature and organize an environmental education competition for 153 5th graders in May 2022. SCCD staff, as well as staff from cooperating agencies, visited West Snyder Elementary School in Beaver Springs on May 11 and Middleburg Elementary School on May 13.

Second Grade Presentations:

In both schools, the topics the students learned about were as follows: soils, trees, song & game birds, and birds of prey.

Middleburg Elementary students also listened to a presentation on macroinvertebrates. Each second grader took home a mini-greenhouse with vegetable seeds planted into soil, a bag of bones from an owl pellet, a bird call, and other activity books inside a draw string backpack. Trees were handed to West Snyder 2nd graders and a magnifying glass was given to Middleburg 2nd graders.



Above Left: Tim Hornberger (seated on chair), SCCD Resource Conservation Technician, reads a story about “Sammy the Soil” to West Snyder 2nd grader. Above Right: A Middleburg 2nd grader looks at a bone found in an owl pellet.



Fifth Grader Envirothons:

At each school, a “Fifth Grade Envirothon” was held. Students were assigned into teams of three to five. Weeks before the event, the students and teachers were given materials to read, discuss and study regarding soils & agricultural conservation practices, aquatics, forestry, and wildlife. Middleburg 5th graders also had information about vernal pools.



Top Left: Jeff Osborne (standing next to easel), DCNR Service Forester, explains answers to questions to West Snyder Elementary 5th graders at the Forestry station.



Bottom Left: Middleburg Elementary 5th graders attempt to identify the following birds (left to right: ruffed grouse, male ring necked pheasant, and great horned owl) at the Wildlife station.

After each school’s Envirothon, they were given the correct answers to many questions. Each group’s answers were scored and the top teams at each school were given prizes.

Lauren Cheran, SCCD Watershed Specialist, coordinated both sets of activities. Several of her fellow SCCD colleagues, a local aquatics scientist, and individuals from USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service), Penn State Extension, and PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources’ (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry helped with the five activities.

SCCD has given presentations to young people in schools, at school sponsored events and at other events throughout its history. For more information regarding this event and other potential environmental educational opportunities for youngsters, contact Lauren at 570-837-3000, extension 2, or at watershed@snydercd.org. You can also visit our website at www.snyderconservation.org, specifically our Education & Youth webpage.

Note #1: On June 13 to 17, 2022, a Kids' Enviro Camp will be jointly held by the Snyder and Juniata County Conservation Districts for those entering grades 1 through 4. Hands-on and interactive activities will be held throughout the week. They include:

- *Investigate what lives in a stream*
- *What creatures are out there?*
- *Learn how to cast a fly-fishing rod*
- *Make seed bombs that help butterflies*
- *Learn about what lives in the soil*
- *Build a Mason bee box*

There will also be snacks, games, crafts, and stories with Miss Jocinda. Friday June 17's Family Night will include pollinator gardening, conservation trivia, refreshments, etc.

Pre-registration is required as space is limited. Visit our website or Facebook page to register. A separate waiver form must be completed for each child in attendance. You may electronically submit the waiver at the time of registration or mail it to SCCD at 10541 Route 522, Middleburg, PA 17842.

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Note #2: A special thanks goes to those who helped during these events:

- *Jeff Osborne, DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Service Forester, Bald Eagle Forest, Laurelton*
- *Kathy Weller, 4-H Coordinator, Penn State Extension, Snyder County*
- *Shane Eia, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician, Middleburg Field Office*

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