

Midd-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 approximately 155 2nd graders several aspects of nature and organize an environmental education competition for approximately 155 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 12.



Second Grade Presentations:

At both schools, the students learned about soil, trees, song & game birds, and birds of prey. Each second grader took home a mini greenhouse with vegetable seeds planted into soil, a bag of bones from an owl pellet, a poplar tree seedling, a bird call, and other activity books inside a draw string backpack.

Fifth Grader Envirothons:

A “Fifth Grade Envirothon” was held at each elementary school. Students were assigned into teams of three to five. Weeks before the event, 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.

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.



Fifth graders from Middleburg (above left) and West Snyder (above right) try to identify animals and answer questions at the wildlife station.



Lauren Cheran, SCCD Program Administrator, coordinated both sets of activities. Several of her fellow SCCD colleagues, 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 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 the Snyder County Conservation District at 570-837-3000, or at sccd@snydercd.org. You can also visit our website at www.snyderconservation.org, specifically our Education & Youth webpage.

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Note #1: A special thanks goes to those who helped during these events:

- *John Portzline, Assistant District Forester, Jake Bausinger, Service Forester, and Brady McNaughton, Forest Intern, DCNR Bureau of Forestry, 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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Note #2: On June 12 to 15, 2023, 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*
- *Wildlife scavenger hunt*
- *Make it Rain activity*
- *Build-a-Rain gutter garden*

There will also be snacks, games, crafts, and stories with Miss Jocinda. Thursday June 15's Family Night will include building & painting rain barrels, building a take home rain-gutter garden, 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 Snyder County Conservation District, 10541 Route 522, Middleburg, PA 17842. Financial and other support has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection's 2022 Environmental Education Grants Program.

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