

Sept/Oct, 2004

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Wild Wise

The Woodland Park Zoo's Outreach program Wild Wise made its annual stop at the Outdoor Learning Center this September. All fifth grade classes got the chance to share their knowledge with the Wild Wise educators. The highly interactive multimedia programs was a success as usual. Students learned about the major habitats in Washington State as well as some of the wildlife that call Washington home. Students honed their skills of observation and scientific survey as they learned about some critical species in our state such as; the ferruginous hawk and western pond turtle. We will welcome Wild Wise back again next year for more wildlife fun! If you would like more information on the Wild Wise program please visit the Woodland Park Zoo's official website.



www.zoo.org

Outdoor Learning Center

Back to School and Back to the OLC for Outdoor Fun

It is that time of year again! Fall is finally here and students and teachers are getting settled into the school year. Here at the OLC we have been doing just the same. Our programs began the second week of school with the Kindergarten crew learning about plants. Kindy made their way here to learn about plant parts and plant needs. They played plant games, made plant books, and taste tested roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and seeds. Kindy will round out their plant experience with their annual trip to Carver Farms.

Second graders have also made their first trip to the OLC and then out into the Shrub Steppe. For more information on that trip check out page 2.

We have also been making improvements to our grounds. There is a new trout viewing pond and stream that will be finished shortly as well as a presentation deck on the Hawk and Owl Sanctuary. We will soon be adding an outdoor viewing mew for our raptor residents, in particular our juvenile bald eagle, for more information on him and our

other new raptor residents see page 3.

We look forward to all of our visitors this year so when you come by be sure to check out our new improvements.



Picture of the Month: Checking the Field Guide



Second grade students investigating the shrub steppe habitat near Fishtrap Lake try to determine what animal has left their scat behind. Students compare the scat to the pictures in their Shrub Steppe Field Guides to determine that a Mule Deer lives in this habitat. Photo credit: Lori Baker of the Bureau of Land Management

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Ness second grade investigators participated in a scavenger hunt to learn the history of Folsom Farm and what life was like in the shrub steppe.

Albert's Pellet **Coughing it up Monthly**



Ahh, relief from the summer heat, finally fall is here. Hanovi and I have been enjoying our view from our window perch in the Hawk and Owl Sanctuary. As the leaves turn to bright gold and red then fall to the ground many migratory birds feel the urge to head south for the winter. Now of course great horned owls like Hanovi and myself are a particularly hearty bird and we will stick out the winter here. But, lets not digress back to fall migration. Fall is a fantastic time to head out to a local natural area and observe migrants passing through and those that stay in our area for the winter. At local lakes and wetlands you can expect to see many waterfowl such as ruddy ducks, golden eyes, and Canada geese. We will also see some raptors come through our area this winter such as the rough legged hawk and bald eagles, which will gather in Coeur d'Alene in December. So take this opportunity to enjoy the fall migration, not from your window, but at your local natural area.

Adventures at Folsom Farm: Shrub Steppe Field Trip

To gear up for the second grade desert unit the OLC staff planned a field trip to Washington's own the shrub steppe habitat. That's right I said shrub steppe, didn't you know that Washington has it's own desert habitat less than an hour away? This unique habitat has a lot to offer second graders or anyone else for that matter studying deserts. Just ask any second grader in the district and they can tell you that the shrub steppe habitat can be classified as a desert because it receives less than 9 inches of precipitation a year. After a short introduction to the shrub steppe habitat at the OLC students were turned loose to investigate the plant and animal communities that live there. We took our second graders to a fantastic interpretive area called Folsom Farm near Fishtrap Lake that is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Once students arrived the scientific investigation was underway. Investigators followed interpretive signs on a Folsom Farm scavenger hunt to learn more about the people who lived in the area. They learned how people affected the land and the difficulties of living in the shrub steppe. Students also, learned about the plant communities of the shrub steppe. Investigators practiced their drawing skills and learned adaptations of desert plants. Observation skills were also practiced at a station overlooking the habitat that included a restored wetland and basalt outcrops. Here they could compare and contrast different habitats within the shrub steppe. The final station second grade investigators participated in was an animal tracking activity. Investigators used binoculars and field guides to discover what types of animals live in the shrub steppe community.

These second grade investigators were also incredibly lucky to have special BLM scientists each of the 5 days we were there. With lots of help and organization from BLM education coordinator Laurie Baker, the shrub steppe field trip was a huge success. Laurie organized the BLM scientists for each day so we would like to hand out a huge thanks to the BLM team. Scientists that took time to share shrub steppe information were: Gary Yeager - Soil Scientist, Theresa Mathis - Wildlife Biologist, Mike Sweeney - Geologist, Glenn Paulson - Rangeland Specialist, and Fire and Weed Specialists, John Hanke and Debbie Plummer. So a huge thanks from the OLC staff making our field trip a success.



Top: Investigators learn about erosion with BLM soil scientist. Center: Students take time to draw plants and their adaptations for deserts. Bottom: BLM wildlife biologist helps to determine what animals live in the shrub steppe

New Additions to the Hawk and Owl Sanctuary

There are new residents at the OLC this year. We have acquired a rough legged hawk, juvenile bald eagle, and juvenile golden eagle. These birds will continue to live their lives here as education birds.

Pantelones, our rough legged hawk, is a female and came to us from the Animal Hospital of Omak, with a partial wing amputation. She was shot by local hunters and a wing injury was the result. Rough legged hawks spend their springs and summers nesting and hunting in the Arctic Tundra. During late fall they migrate to the Northwest and stay through the winter. While here they compete with one our native broad winged hawks the red tail. Pantelones is working hard on training to be a presentation bird and hopefully by spring she will be ready to show off.

Both the bald eagle and the golden eagle came to us from the Colville Animal Hospital. The bald eagle is roughly 2 years old and suffered a wing injury that resulted in a partial amputation. He will be used strictly as a display bird in a new outdoor mew planned to be built soon. Our "bald" friend should attain his majestic adult plumage by the time he reaches 5 years of age. Our golden eagle is fully flighted but sustained an eye injury and is now blind in one eye. He is about 1 year old and he will also be practicing with Pantelones to be a presentation bird. If you get a chance stop by and welcome our new birds to the OLC



From Top left down:
juvenile bald eagle, juvenile golden eagle, and rough legged hawk, Pantelones.
Email your eagle name suggestions to Brook Beeler at the OLC.



Enjoy the Waning Warmth with and Outdoor Experience

We are fortunate to have so many opportunities available for a weekend day trip to the outdoors right in our own Spokane backyards. Why not pack up the family for a short drive and a great hike or bicycle ride before winter weather sends you inside or to the ski trails.

Turnbull NWR near Cheney offers lots of hiking and bicycling opportunities. There is lots more bicycling available on the paved paths of the Centennial Trail or on over 70 miles of the Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes, which runs between Mullan and Plummer, along the Cd'A river and east of the C'dA lake. Liberty Lake County Park, Riverside State Park, and Mt. Spokane State Park offer more opportunities to see changing leaves and get some fresh air and exercise in those last warm days of 2004. Add a few good memories with a short drive and great walk through some of this areas outdoor gems.

OLC Wish List

Thanks to our project sponsor, The Big Horn Foundation all donations are tax deductible. The Bighorn Foundation is a nonprofit 501c(3) Corporation, "Educating Today's Youth for the Wildlife Resources Of Tomorrow"

- Nature related story books
- Rain Ponchos
- Reams of Recycled Paper
- Native Animal Puppets
- Garden Tools
- Fish Mounts



www.bighornfoundation.org



Indoor Changes at the Outdoor Learning Center

With the beginning of school this fall, Jami Ostby Marsh, having completed the requirements for teacher certification, moved from Paraprofessional to certificated teacher. Brook Beeler, an AmeriCorps volunteer at the OLC from last year is now filling the Paraprofessional position. Together Jami and Brook provide great continuity for the outdoor education programs.

Two new AmeriCorps volunteers are now in position as of October first. Tom Brattebo, a familiar substitute teacher around the district has committed to the OLC for the next year. Coming out west for the very first time is Rob Swearingen for an AmeriCorps tour at the OLC. Rob is a native of Arkansas, graduating from Hendrix College with a degree in biology. He has worked for the last two years at Ozark Natural Science Center as a field instructor. Rob is hoping after his commitment to AmeriCorps, he will be able to attend graduate school somewhere in the Pacific Northwest.

Calendars - November / December

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursdays	Friday
1 Latah Creek	2 Latah Creek	3 Latah Creek	4 Latah Creek	5 Latah Creek
8 Seth— Mammals	9 OC— Mammals	10 OC— Mammals	11 No School	12 PP- Mammals
15 PP- Mammals	16 Ness— Mammals	17 Ness— Mammals	18 Ness- Mam- mals	19 Seth- Mammals
22 Confer- ences	23 EWU	24 Confer- ences	25 Thanksgiv- ing	26 Thanksgiv- ing
29	30 Ness- Mam- mals			

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 Seth- Eagles	2 Ness—Eagles	3 Seth-Mirich
6 Ness—Eagles	7 PP-Eagles	8 PP—Eagles	9 OC-Stokes	10 OC-Jordan
13 Holiday	14 Break	15 XXXXXXXX	16 XXXXXXXX	17 XXXXXXXX
20 XXXXXXXX	21 XXXXXXXX	22 XXXXXXXX	23 XXXXXXXX	24 XXXXXXXX
27 XXXXXXXX	28 XXXXXXXX	29 XXXXXXXX	30 XXXXXXXX	31 XXXXXXXX



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