

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
of Cook County, Illinois

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS



The Board of Commissioners

JERRY BUTLER
ALLAN C. CARR
EARLEAN COLLINS
JOHN P. DALEY
GREGG GOSLIN
CARL R. HANSEN
TED LECHOWICZ
ROBERTO MALDONADO

¹
WILLIAM R. MORAN
JOSEPH MARIO MORENO
MIKE QUIGLEY
HERBERT T. SCHUMANN, JR.
PETER N. SILVESTRI
DEBORAH SIMS
BOBBIE L. STEELE
CALVIN R. SUTKER

JOHN H. STROGER, JR. PRESIDENT

536 NORTH HARLEM AVENUE, RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS 60305
773-261-8400 / 708-366-9420 / 800-870-3666 TDD 708-771-1190

Joseph N. Nevius, GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

October 2002

Final Report
Wildlife Preservation Fund Grant #02-042W
Backpack Explorers Program

1. Introduction (materials, methods, results, discussion, summary):

This Wildlife Preservation Fund grant was used to develop a new permanent educational program called **Backpack Explorers**. Five backpacks were equipped with binoculars, hand-held tape recorders, magnifying lenses, hand lenses, animal tracks, leaf specimens, field guides and field cards. The backpack, along with a lesson plan, provides teachers with the equipment, materials and information they need to conduct field studies with their students while visiting the Forest Preserve District of Cook County's Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center.

The Backpack Explorers curriculum is designed for elementary grades and focuses on our region's natural resources and the threats to its biodiversity. The purpose is to help teachers lead engaging activities that teach their students about our native wildlife and habitats and help build an awareness of the importance of biological diversity. The selection of lesson plans includes: Trees and Leaves, Insects, Mammals, Birds, and Biodiversity. The curriculum is also designed to help teachers meet the Illinois State Goals and Standards for Science (#12).

In addition, this program can be incorporated into the Mighty Acorns curriculum for those students involved in stewardship activities.

This program is made available, free of charge, to all teachers and their students that visit the Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center.

To date the backpacks were used by the following:

Willow Springs School - 3rd graders (60 students)
Clay - 3rd graders (50 students)
Minooka - 3rd graders (90 students)
Burr Ridge Park District Pre-school (30 students)

The backpacks were also used during a Teacher Training Workshop for 6th- 8th Grade Science Teachers (15 teachers).

RECEIVED
NOV 07 2002
FEDERAL AID

2. **Enclosed:**
- a. An outline of the "Trees and Leaves" lesson plan
 - b. Photocopies of receipts
 - c. Slides of program

3. **Expenditures:**

Materials costs: \$997.95

Backpacks:	\$87.00
Binoculars:	\$240.41
Magnifying Glasses:	\$37.92
Compact Magnifier:	\$5.52
Pocket Magnifier:	\$74.10
First Field Guides:	\$142.80
Peterson Guides -Tracks:	\$72.00
Replitracks:	\$60.00
Repliscat:	\$35.00
Tape Recorders (hand held)	\$149.50
Cassettes Tapes:	\$6.99
Insect Models:	\$24.75
Early Elementary Story Books	\$38.73
Shipping and Handling:	\$23.23

In house costs: \$ 734.85

Replication of tracks:	
Silicon:	\$25.00
Lumber:	\$10.00
Lamination of Field Cards:	\$150.00
Stationary:	\$200.00
Volunteer Hours:	\$300.00
Peterson Birding By Ear:	\$30.00
Storage Boxes:	\$19.85

Total expenditures: 1,732.80

4. **Reimbursement request: \$997.00**

Submitted by: Cathy Geraghty, Director of Grant Development, 708.771.1097

Tree and Leaves

A. Brief Orientation of Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center and Forest Preserve District

B. Description of day's activities - PLANT LIFE IN THE FOREST PRESERVES

1. Why are we here?
2. What are we going to do?
3. How are we going to do it?
4. When will we do these activities/finish up?

C. Break into two groups (by class)

D. Group A

1. Exploration Nature Walk

A. Forest- Forest Layers

- I. Moss/lichen /fungi (hand lens activity)
- II. Shrubs and under story
- III. Trees - (Get to know a tree activity)

B. Wetland

I. Trees/Shrubs

II. Aquatic plants (net dipping activity)

C. Prairie *** Mighty Acorns Activity

I. Flowers (plant anatomy)

II. Grasses (Illinois History)

D. Plant Life History and Seeds

I. Dispersal

1. Dispersal Game (relay)/ Maple Seed Mix Up

III. Seed I.D.

IV. Seed collection

A. Restoration

Group B

1. Plant Life Investigations

A. Flowers, grasses and trees (plant taxonomy)

B. Food Factories

1. photosynthesis
2. wildlife
3. people

C. Trees - Simple Keys - Walk

1. Coniferous - evergreen
 - a. single needles
 - b. bundled
 - c. branching

2. Deciduous -broad leaf

1. Opposite
2. Alternate
3. Simple
4. Compound
5. Lobed
6. Toothed

3. Leaf Rubbing Activity

D. Tree Identification Activity

1. Key to solve tree mysteries

E. Group B

1. Flowers, grasses and trees
(plant taxonomy)

- A. Food Factories

1. photosynthesis
 2. wildlife
 3. People

2. Trees and their leaves

- A. Trees - Simple Keys - Walk

1. Coniferous - evergreen
 - a. single needles
 - b. bundled
 - c. branching

2. Deciduous -broad leaf

- a. Opposite
 - b. Alternate
 - c. Simple
 - d. Compound
 - e. Lobed
 - f. Toothed

- B. Leaf Rubbing Activity

- C. Tree Mysteries - Tree Identification Activity

F. Break

G. Group Rotation

H. Wrap Up Activity

1. Leaf Relay - activity for entire class















Maple Seed Mix-Up 4

Open Prompt

Describe Conditions: Warm Spring Days, Wind, Sunlight, Good Soil, Drought, Lawn Mower, Hungry Deer, Water, Good Soil

Open-Ended Question

The effect of the game is for the "maple seed" or "seed" to grow into a tree! How? What does it need? List the conditions that maple seeds need to grow and give.

Directions

1) Explain the elements of the game to the students.

2) Challenge them to create a story around the game.

3) Have each student create a story around the game.

Warm Spring Days

Lawn Mower

Hungry Deer

Water

Drought

Poor Soil

Maple Seed

Sunlight

Good Soil

Warm Spring Days



Several paragraphs of text, likely describing the bird's characteristics or behavior. The text is arranged in a column and is somewhat faint due to the lighting.



