



Bluebirds Bring'em Back

Level: 3rd Grade

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

This program is a Conservation Action Program, where students learn the about the Eastern Bluebird and improve the habitat for the nesting season. The program opens with a slide talk presentation on "The Blue Birds of Michigan", where students learn how to identify bluebirds, what their habitat needs are, and how man has effected their population by our use of the land. Students next role-play bluebirds seeking nesting shelter and encounter all sorts of difficulties nesting as in each round of our action-game man does something to habitat. Students will also work in teams of three to construct a bluebird house using hammers and nails and pre-cut wooden bluebird nest box kits. After lunch students get watch a short video clip of live bluebirds. In conclusion, the students take their boxes out to the I-75 Bluebird Trail to hang the boxes with our naturalist staff.

PROGRAM GOALS:

To instill in the students who participate an awareness and appreciation for natural wildlife heritage resources.

To demonstrate to students how man and wildlife can share the environment.

To show students how man's actions impact animal populations.

To instill in the students the spirit of stewardship for our natural resources.

To increase the Eastern Bluebird habitat in Bay County.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be able to list four components of habitat.
2. Students will be able to identify three "blue" birds, which live in our area.
3. Students will be able to identify the limiting factor for the bluebird population in Michigan.
4. Students will be able to list three things which caused the bluebird population to crash.
5. Students will be able to list two things which people have done which made the bluebird population increase.
6. Students will be able to define "alien" species and list two "aliens" which have affected the bluebird population.
7. Students will construct a bluebird box working in teams of three.
8. Students will be able to describe a habitat improvement project.
9. Students will be able to define "conservation".

PRE-VISIT SUGGESTIONS:

1. Each student should be dressed for weather conditions, which are generally 10 degrees cooler near the Bay. Wind can be much harsher and a jacket or coat should be worn regardless of weather conditions at your school. Bring a box of trash bags with square bottoms to use as emergency rain ponchos. Shoes should be selected for outdoor exploration and boots worn when weather is snowy or muddy.
2. Arrange to bring one adult for every three students participating in the program.
3. Discuss the meaning of the phrase "endangered species".
4. Have the students brainstorm all the changes man has made to the land since man first came to Michigan. Go down the list and ask them whether the change helped or hurt wildlife populations.
5. Have each student create a "blue bird" by first listing its food, water, shelter and space requirements. Then have them draw or paint their imaginary blue bird.
6. Practice driving nails into a piece of wood or log using a hammer.

POST-VISIT SUGESTIONS:

1. Make a list of the different animals that along the shores of the Saginaw Bay. Give each student an animal to research. Have them find out what it needs to survive. Have them draw a picture of their findings.

2. Compose a class mural of the Great Lake Huron shoreline by having each student draw a special plant or animal which lives there on the paper.
3. Create a class book entitled: "Something Special by the Bay is..." and have them each compose a page.
4. Have the students locate pictures of "bird houses" in books, magazines, and in catalogues. Help them decide if the house would be a good home for a bluebird based on the size of the hole, the ventilation, and the height off the ground.
5. Put bird feeders up near a classroom near your classroom window. Have the students keep a log of any birds that come to it on a chart where they can list the birds field marks. Are any of them "blue bird?", woodpeckers, aliens (starlings or house sparrows)?
6. Start a Bluebird Trail around your school yard.
7. Write a poem about the bluebird using rhyming words.
8. Have students find out what other kinds of animals find shelter inside trees. Create a tree apartment mural on a tall sheet of floor to ceiling paper and have the students draw their animal and its hole somewhere on the tree.
9. Project Wild: *Oh Deer!*: Students role-play deer looking for food, water, shelter and space, (try it as bluebirds instead); *Planting Animals*: students write a letter to a state agency for information and make dioramas of transplanted animals in new habitats; *Improving Wildlife Habitat In the Community*: students design and accomplish a project to improve wildlife habitat in their community.

COORDINATING WITH THE MICHIGAN SCIENCE GRADE LEVEL CONTENT EXPECTATIONS:

Science. Inquiry Process: S.IP.03.11, S.IP.03.12, S.IP.03.14, S.IP.03.15, S.IP.03.16
 Science, Inquiry Analysis & Communication: S.IA.03.11, S.IA.03.12, S.IA.03.13, S.IA.03.14, S.IA.03.15
 Science. Reflections & Social Implications: S.RS.03.11, S.RS.03.14, S.RS.03.15, S.RS.03.16, S.RS.03.17, S.RS.03.18, S.RS.03.19
 Life Science. Organization of Living Things: L.OL.03.32

COORDINATING WITH M.E.A.P. SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT STANDARD BENCHMARKS:

Geographic Perspective

- II.1—l.e.2
- II.2—e.e.2, e.e.3, l.e.1, l.e.2, l.e.4
- II.3—e.e.1
- II.4—e.e.1, e.e.2, e.e.3, l.e.5
- II.5—e.e.1, l.e.1

Inquiry

- V.1—e.e.2