

Adopt-A-Species Newsletter

“All our efforts to conserve wildlife are for naught if we fail to sow the seeds of an environmental ethic in the next generation.” A. Berkovits

Growing Up Wild

This year, we would like to have your students learn, then mentor peers or younger students about their species' young. The spring artwork will be judged on the student's ability to portray how their animal cares for and rears its young in the wild. Students should also develop an understanding of how their animal is connected to the web of life of the Montana ecosystem. This year's Independent Record insert will come out on Mother's Day to honor all of the mother's that live in our habitat.

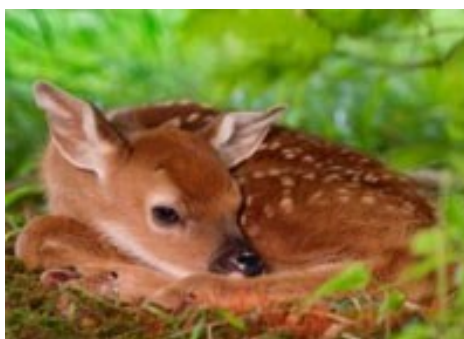
Young and Wild

This year's focus on wildlife young is a unique opportunity for students to learn about a specific life stage of their school's adopted species. Through multi-curricular activities in music, art, science, language arts, social studies, even drama, teachers may wish to focus on several aspects of animal offspring (see page 3 for ideas):

Classification: How do animal babies differ in appearance from their adult parents? Do they change colors in their life? Grow horns or antlers? Are males and females different sizes or colors? How would you tell the difference between young and old animals in a species if you spotted them together out in the wild?

Adaptations: How does each species protect their young, and increase survival rates through adaptations? Does your adopted species use patterns and color for camouflage? Are the young able to stand and run within hours of birth, or are they born in a den in the middle of winter? How many young are born in a litter – several at a time, or just a few?

Human Interactions: How can humans be respectful towards animal babies during their most vulnerable life stage? Is it by providing a safe distance between humans and a parent and its young? Keeping pets away from newborn wildlife?



Sometimes it can even be providing a nesting source to animals like eagles and osprey. As tempting as it may be to “help” seemingly abandoned baby wildlife, in most cases, the best rule of thumb is to leave the young alone. Animal parents know best how to raise healthy babies.

Enjoy learning about your adopted species this Fall, and get ready to teach others through your artwork and writing in Spring. Enjoy **Growing up Wild** this year!

Adopt-A-Species
a
Wildlife
Education
Partnership

September, 2008



Advice you can give to students to prepare for a natural resource career:

- Take math & science classes
- Build communication skills
- GET OUTSIDE!!!
- Volunteer with natural resource agencies
- Participate in service learning projects

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2007-2008 School Contact List

School	2008-2009 Adopted Species	School Contacts	Address
Broadwater 324-1132	Red Tail Hawk	Annie Tague rtague@helena.k12.mt.us	900 Hollins Helena 59602
Bryant 324-1179	Mountain Goat	Matt Ventresca mventresca@helena.k12.mt.us	1529 Boulder Helena 59601
Central 324-1237	Black Footed Ferret	Deb Johnson djohnson@helena.k12.mt.us	402 N. Warren Helena 59601
Four Georgians 324-1324	Otter	Helga Stimson hstimson@helena.k12.mt.us	555 West Custer Helena 59602
Hawthorne 324-1390	Osprey	Christy Benning cbenning@helena.k12.mt.us	420 Madison Av Helena 59601
Jefferson 324-2079	Beaver	Sherri Haller shaller@helena.k12.mt.us	1023 Broadway Helena 59601
Jim Darcy 324-1429	Moose	Shelly Sharp ssharp@helena.k12.mt.us	990 W. Lincoln Road Helena MT 59602
Kessler 324-1687	Bald Eagle	Susan Beckstrom sbeckstrom@helena.k12.mt.us	2420 Choteau Helena 59601
Radley 227-7710	Lynx	Kate Dartman kdartman@ehps.k12.mt.us	PO. Box 1280 East Helena 59635
Rossiter 324-1514	Bald Eagle	Cynthia Mulvaney cmulvaney@helena.k12.mt.us	1497 Sierra Road Helena 59602
Smith 324-1528	Mountain Lion	Jodee Martello jmartello@helena.k12.mt.us	2320 5 th Ave. Helena 59601
Warren 324-1616	Grizzly Bear	Sue Nyland snyland@hotmail.com	2690 York Road Helena. MT 59602
Boulder 225-3316	Pine Marten	Janice Crawley	205 S. Washington Boulder MT 59632
Canyon Creek 368-2230	Big Horn Sheep	Katrina Chaney katrinachaney@yahoo.com	PO Box 523 Canyon Creek, MT 59633
Clancy 933-5531	Bison	Lisa Heitt lheitt@clancy.k12.mt.us	6 N Main Clancy, MT 59634
Lincoln 362-4201	Prairie Dog	Annette Gardner agardner@lincoln.k12.mt.us	P.O. Box 39 Lincoln Mt 59639
Montana City 442-6779	Red Fox	Jan Martineau jmartineau@metnet.mt.gov	11 McClellan Creek Rd Clancy MT 59634
Townsend 266-3942	Wolf	Jennifer Anderson janderson@townsend.k12.mt.us	201 N. Spruce Townsend MT 59644
Wolf Creek 235-4241	Black Bear	Nellene Hickel nellenehickel@hughes.net	PO Box 200 Wolf Creek MT 59648

Committee Contacts

Organization	Contact	Address & Phone	E-mail
Foundation for Animals **classroom visits	Marilyn Evans Diane Nickman **Carla Wambach	PO Box 389 Helena, MT 59624 443-6532	mkfa@mt.net www.montanawildlife.org
Helena National Forest	**Liz Burke	2880 Skyway Drive Helena, MT 59601 495-3713	lizburke@fs.fed.us
Montana Discovery Foundation	**Debbie Anderson **Samsara Chapman	2880 Skyway Drive Helena, MT 59601 495-3711, 495-3718	debbieanderson@fs.fed.us samsarachapman@fs.fed.us
MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks	**Kurt Cunningham	PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620 449-1312	kcunningham@mt.gov

Kick-Off Assembly Schedule—September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
		11 am Jefferson	8:45 am Hawthorne	9:00 am Lincoln	8:30 am Broadwater	
	2:30 pm	2:25 pm Central	2:35 pm Warren	pm/Montana City	2:00 pm Rossiter	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			am/Boulder		8:30 & 9:10 am Four Gs	
	2:00 pm Bryant		2:30 pm Townsend	2:30 pm Radley	2:30 pm Jim Darcy & Canyon Creek	

Classroom Ideas

Language Arts and Science: Pick a habitat, such as a Prairie Dog Town, then make a list of “potential buyers (interested inhabitants): Red Tail Hawk, Black Footed Ferret, Prairie Dog, Bison, Golden Eagle, Burrowing Owl, Coyote, Swift Fox, Pronghorn, Rattlesnake, Badger. Then write up a few classified ads, or better yet, have the students write the ads—here are a few examples:

Hilltop Estate—Large home constructed on ledge near top of butte.

Overlooks miles of grassland. Safe, secluded, with room to raise a family.

Hillside Condo—Cozy hideaway built into hillside. Low ceilings, retains heat in winter, cool shade in summer. Single entrance. Good view of surrounding community.

Great Deal! Undeveloped Land! Great Views! Miles and miles of grass! No trees.

Land Available—Mix of short vegetation and bare ground. Easy to excavate.

Apartment Complex—Over one dozen good-sized mounds with tunnels underground. Many entrances. Immediately available. Previous occupants have moved to new construction nearby. Dark 24-7. Protection from extreme weather.

Tree Top Mansion—Built from local materials. Sturdy. Built to last.

Have the ads look like they came from the local newspaper (come up with a catchy name for your newspaper that matches the habitat i.e., Dog Town News), at the top of the page have a sentence that explains what you are looking for—“Prairie dog towns provide homes for many animals. Each animal requires a different kind of home. Help each animal find a place to live. Some of the ads may appeal to more than one animal.” List the potential buyers down the page, have the ads in columns next to the list, then have the students draw a line from the animal to the classified ad that might help them find a good place to live. You could do the same exercise with a riparian or woodland habitat.

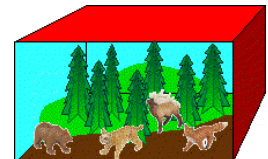


Art and Science

Wildlife Diorama—Supplies & Directions

- heavy paper stock or clay
- a shoe box or slightly larger box
- crayons and/or markers
- paste
- scissors
- tape, thread, pipe cleaners, cotton puffs, sticks, rocks, let their imaginations run wild for materials

Find a box at least as big as a shoe box - a slightly bigger box works even better. This will be the stage containing habitat for your school's animal. Have the students draw, collage, or print out a habitat scene, then have them draw their critter on sturdy paper or cardboard and cut out or sculpt their animals and place in their appropriate habitat.



Program Mission, Goals & Standards

Program Mission:

To increase student awareness and understanding of Montana wildlife and the need for habitat stewardship

Goal 1: Participating students will increase their awareness of Montana wildlife through study of their adopted species.

Goal 2: Participating students will increase their awareness of native habitat and how to be good stewards of the land.

Goal 3: Participating students will improve and utilize their science, art and writing skills to teach others about their adopted species.

State Standards Addressed:

Science Content Standard 3: (1) A student must be able to demonstrate knowledge of characteristics, structures, and function of living things, the process and diversity of life, and how living organisms interact with each other and their environment.

Writing Content Standards 1, 2, 5: A student must be able to write clearly and effectively. A student must apply a range of skills and strategies in the writing process. Students recognize the structures of various forms and apply these characteristics to their own writing.

Art Content Standards 1, 3: A student must be able to create, perform/exhibit, and respond in the Arts; develop and refine art skills and techniques, ideas, pose and solve problems, and discover meaning.

Social Studies Content Standards 1, 3: Students will access, synthesize, and evaluate information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real-world situations; Students will apply geographic knowledge and skills (e.g. location, place, human/environment interactions, movement, and regions).

The Pine Marten

Did you know that pine martens are in the mustelid or weasel-like mammal family? Martens are related to mink, otters, badgers, wolverines, weasels, and skunks.

What do martens look like?

Pine martens are very agile and can climb high up in the tree tops. They are slender with a pointed face and a bushy tail. Their tail helps them balance in the trees. Male martens are larger than females. They are about the same length as a house cat. These animals are between 19-27 inches long including their tail which is from 5-9 inches long. They weigh between 1-3 pounds. They are brown with paler underparts and dark brown legs. They have small rounded ears and sharp teeth for eating meat.

Where do martens live?

Martens prefer old coniferous forests in Northern climates. They live in most of Canada, the northwestern United States, the Rockies and New England. Martens like old growth forests best because there they find plenty of dead trees for food and shelter.



What do pine martens like to eat?

Pine martens spend a lot of time searching the forest floor for rodents. Martens prefer voles, but will eat mice, birds, flying squirrels, reptiles, and rabbits. Martens will eat honey, insects, conifer nuts, worms, eggs and even berries.

When are young martens born?

Martens give birth to their young in March-April. They usually have litters of 2-5 young. The mother finds a suitable tree hollow or an abandoned den to raise her young. The young martens nurse for the first 6 weeks of their lives. Adult martens begin to mate when they are 1-2 years old. They mate in the middle of summer. The young are born 8 months later. It is quite unusual for an animal of this size to have such a long gestation period. This 8 month delay is important because it allows the young to be born during the spring when there is plenty of food and the weather conditions are favorable.

