

Spring 2021

# Adopt a Species

Increasing understanding of Montana's wildlife and habitat

## Many thanks to our Teachers

This year has marked one of the most difficult times in teaching history and our local teachers rose to the challenge in ways none of us could have imagined. From adapting to distance learning within days of a school shutdown, to teaching multiple classes simultaneously online and in person, our local teachers gave us more than we could have expect from them. As community members, neighbors, some of us parents, and informal educators, the members of the Adopt-a-Species committee wish we could express all of the gratitude, respect, and admiration our local teachers deserve.

The Adopt-a-Species program has been part of the curriculum in local schools for over 20 years, and was brought to 21 schools in 2021. This program requires the work of several partners. The **Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, Foundation for Animals, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks** and the **Montana Discovery Foundation** bring area schools a different Montana wildlife species to study each year. This year, with all the upheaval, we are incredibly impressed and grateful that teachers, librarians, and other school teaching staff could fit this curriculum into their schedules. Please enjoy this year's Adopt-a-Species Art and Writing Contest winners, in which students produced art of their school's adopted species, its habitat, and messages from this year's theme:

### Helping Hands for Wildlife



Rheona Schoppe, 2nd Grade, Prickly Pear Elementary



Aila Merchant, 4th Grade, Kessler Elementary



Emma Taylor, 4th Grade, Radley Elementary



Clay Thompson, 2nd Grade, Wolf Creek School

### How Can We Help Wildlife and Their Habitat?

By Zoey Heavrin, 4th Grade, Kessler Elementary

We can help our wildlife by cleaning up garbage from our lakes, oceans, and rivers.

We can stop polluting our waters, it's not healthy for the earth or the animals on the planet.

Everyone can help with saving the planet and our wildlife.

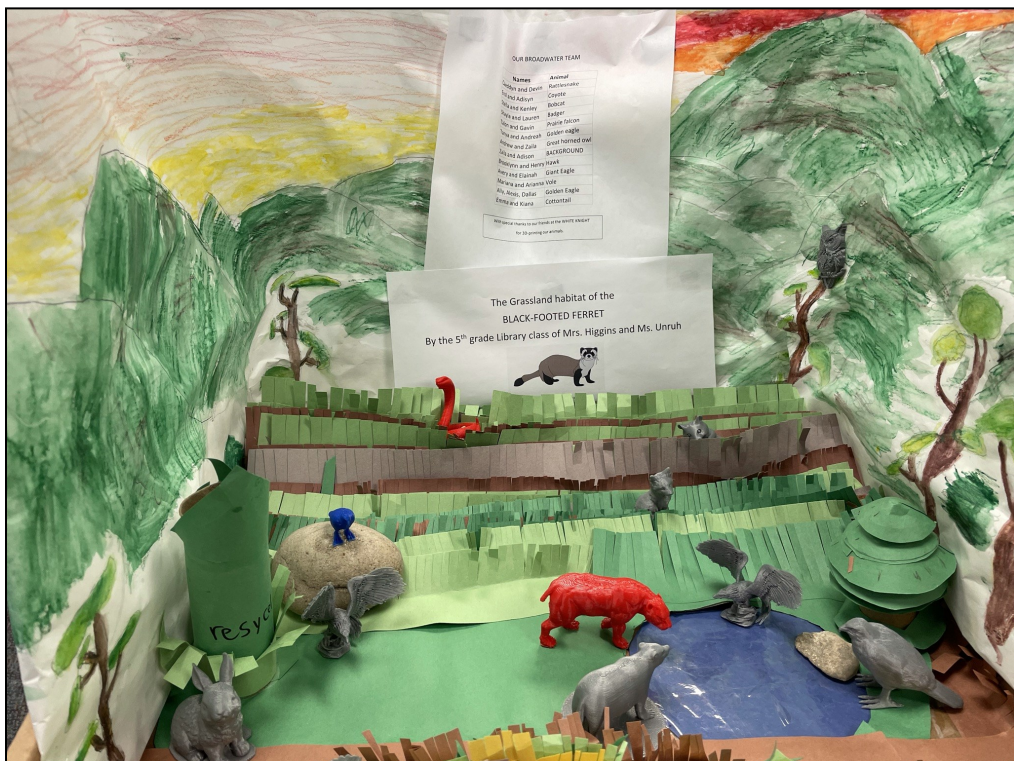
"But how can we do that?" you ask. Well we can make bird houses and bat houses.

We can try to build in other places then where animals had made their dens or homes.

Let's save our wildlife together!



Mary Mac Lozar, 1st Grade, Jefferson Elementary



Broadwater Elementary students build a diorama this year to learn about the Black-footed ferret!



Alec Anderson, 5th Grade, Four Georgians Elementary



# Adopt-a-Species Art Contest 2021

Helping Hands for Wildlife



*Messina Sattler, 2nd Gr., Wolf Creek*



*Nick Wirth, 2nd Gr., Wolf Creek School*



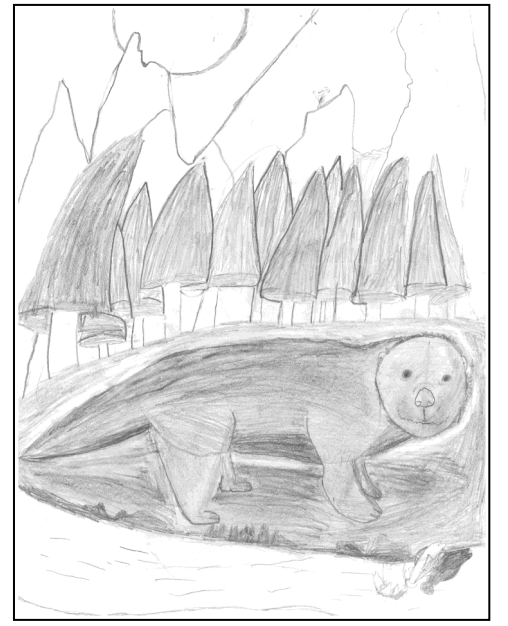
*Brayden Overduyn, 2nd Gr. Wolf Creek School*



*Nyssa Fothergill, 2nd Grade, Smith Elem.*



*Alia Gumeringer, 1st Grade, Smith Elem.*



*Justin Traynor, 4th Grade, Smith Elem.*



*Kaiden Kuntz, 4th Grade, Smith Elem.*



*Claire Wisemiller, Kindergarten, Smith Elem.*



*Anna Malea Radley, 5th Gr., Smith Elem.*

## Teegan David, 4th Grade, Four Georgians

Have you ever been fishing? It's really fun! I'm going to tell you when my dad and I went fishing. I was only 5 or 6 and it was probably my 2nd time fishing. So, we went down to the lake and set up a chair. I was in footie pj's. I was fishing and I caught one and another and another, soon I had caught 5 fish and my dad only caught 2 fish. Trout are very cool, and they are interesting.

Now I'm going to tell you what they look like and things about their bodies. A trout has really good eyesight and they have razor sharp teeth so they can get food. They have dark spots and scales. Trout also have a fin in the back called an adipose fin. An average trout weights about 8 pounds and is 24 inches long. Trout are carnivores, so they eat insects, fish eggs, fry and plankton crawdads.

Let's talk about habitats now. Trout like to live in lakes, streams, and rivers and they like cool, fresh, fast water. A trout's nest is called a redd. Female trout need gravel beds to lay their eggs. Did you know baby trout are called fry? That's cool, huh. Now, let's talk about fish in Montana.

There are 16 different types of trout. But I'm only

going to name 5 trout: Rainbow, Brook, Brown trout are introduced. Arctic Grayling are native in the trout family and Cutthroat are also native. Cutthroats have red markings under their throats. Missouri River, Prickly Pear, and Ten Mile Creek have trout. Trout are very cool and interesting. I think fish are cool to learn about and I'm glad we got to learn about trout.

Trout are cool looking and my favorite one is the rainbow trout. Rainbow Trout are my favorite because they are beautiful fish. And I wish I could see one in person. That's all for this week's story. Thanks for listening to this week's story.

## Miles Seyler, 5th Grade, Four Georgians/Hawthorne Distance Learning Class

Have you ever caught a Rainbow Trout? I have, and it was 21 inches long! Rainbow trout are a nonnative species to Montana. Rainbow trout live in freshwater streams, lakes, and rivers. Trout are important because they are a food source for many Montana species.

All trout have three distinct features: adipose fin, spots, and big eyes. Rainbow trout are rainbow colors and have spots on their backs. The rainbow trout has strong teeth and excellent eyesight. A rainbow trout

eats insects, fish eggs, and plankton. A rainbow trout can grow to be 8 pounds and 24 inches.

Trout live in a variety of waters, from oceans to freshwater lakes and rivers, but most spend their entire life in freshwater. In order to spawn, rainbow trout must have areas with gravel and water flow. The female rainbow trout digs a hole to spawn called a redd. Baby trout are called fry. Freshwater lakes and rivers provide trout with their food: insects, lizards, small birds, other fish, and crustaceans.

Trout live throughout Montana's lakes, rivers, and streams. Some trout are native to Montana and others are not, such as rainbow and brown. Rainbow trout were introduced from other states. Rainbow trout is not a species of concern, but it is the most popular species fished in the summer months in Montana. Brown trout were introduced in 1889 in the Madison River. Brown trout live in the slower and larger rivers, lakes, and reservoirs.

Trout are important to Montana. Trout feed lots of Montana wildlife. Trout are important for Montana's economy because tourists from around the world like to fish for trout. Rainbow trout have many distinct features and that is why I feel rainbow trout are an interesting species. They are also fun to catch.



*Weston Clark, 2nd Grade, Prickly Pear Elem.*



*Bridger Anderson, 2nd Grade, Prickly Pear Elem.*



*Tryston Fleurisma, 2nd Gr., Prickly Pear Elem.*



*Robert Hawkins, 1st Grade, Prickly Pear Elem.*



*Ky, 2nd Grade, Prickly Pear Elem.*



*Lizzie Davis, 2nd Grade, Prickly Pear Elem.*





Rivers Brown, 1st Grade, Jefferson Elem.



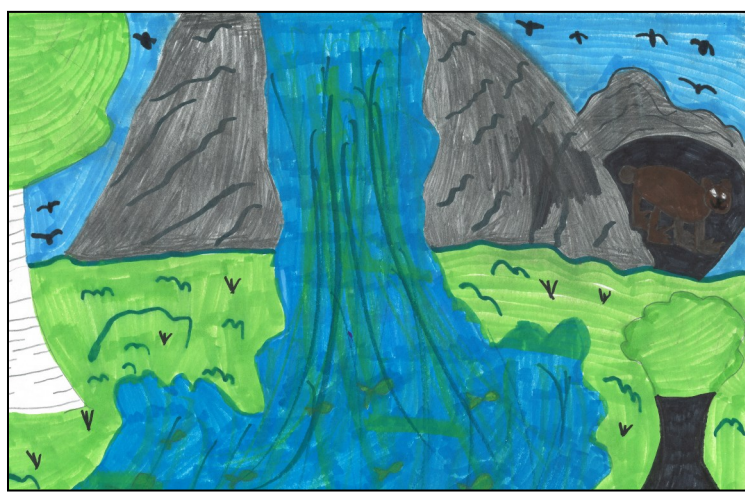
Gavin, 5th Grade, Jim Darcy Elem.



Olivia Hellwinkel, 5th Grade, Jim Darcy Elem.



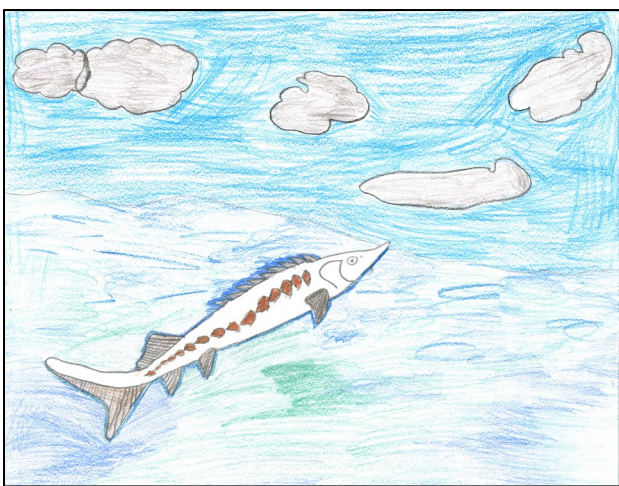
Kimber Mershon, 3rd Grade, Jim Darcy Elem.



Emma, 4th Grade, Four Georgians Elem.



Scarlett Brown, 3rd Grade, Jim Darcy Elem.



Wyatt Erickson, 3rd Gr., Four Georgians Elem.



Lila Miller, 5th Gr., Four Georgians Elem.



Greta Gerken, 3rd Gr., Four Georgians Elem.



Isabella Smith, 5th Gr., Four Georgians Elem.



Baylinn Rowe, 2nd Gr., Four Georgians Elem.



Bostyn Brooke Mee, 2nd Gr., Four Georgians El.



Darby, 4th Grade, Radley Elementary



Natalia Westcott, 3rd Grade, Radley Elem.



Xavier, 3rd Grade, Radley Elementary



Kienan Bowser, 3rd Grade, Radley Elem.



Hunter, 3rd Grade, Radley Elementary



Maxwell Spatz, 3rd Grade, Radley Elem.



Mason Doppler, Warren Elementary



Aiden Elliott, Warren Elementary



Makell Guymon, Warren Elementary



# Go Hiking on a Self-Guided Interpretive Trail!

www.montanadiscoveryfoundation.org/interpretive-brochures



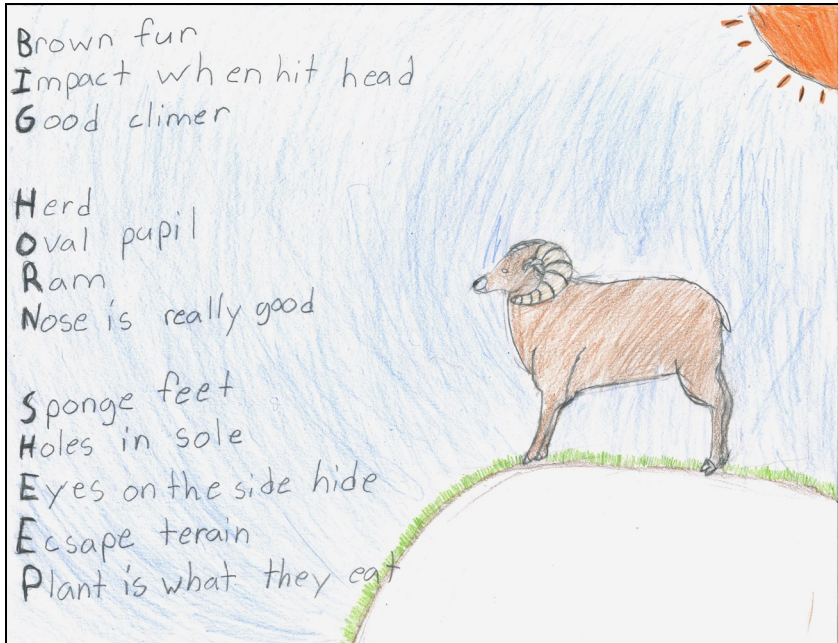
Seeley Johnson, Kindergarten, Rossiter Elem.



Korbin Lynch, 3rd Grade, Rossiter Elem.



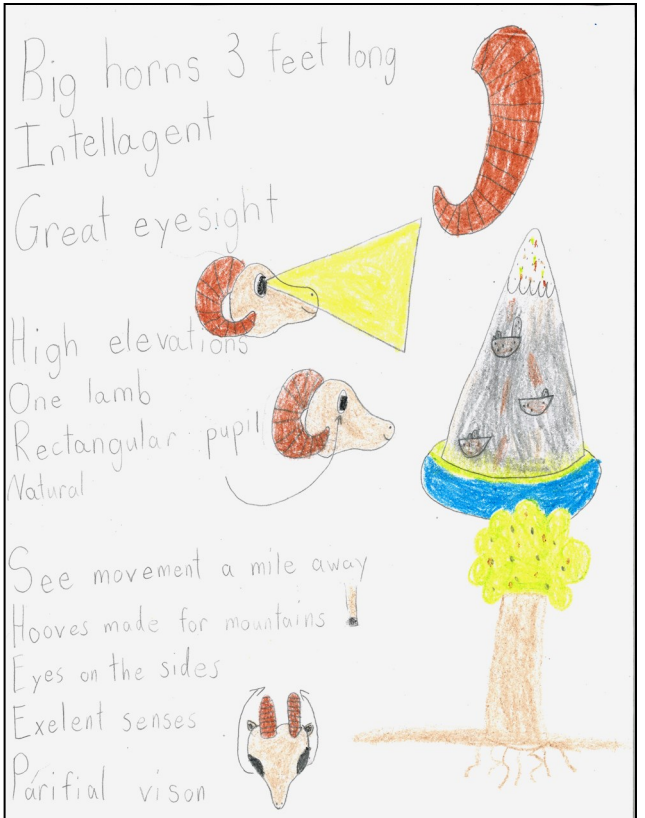
Maddy Clinch, 3rd Grade, Rossiter Elem.



Avery Harlow, 3rd Grade, Rossiter Elem.

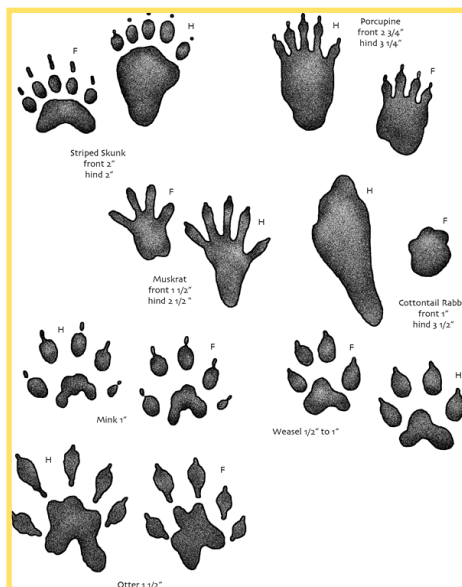


Daniel Grotbo, Kinder., Rossiter Elem.



Samantha Salley, 3rd Grade, Rossiter Elem.

"We could help the wolves' home by not littering and picking up trash when you see it."  
- Lyric Paddock, 2nd Grade, Prickly Pear



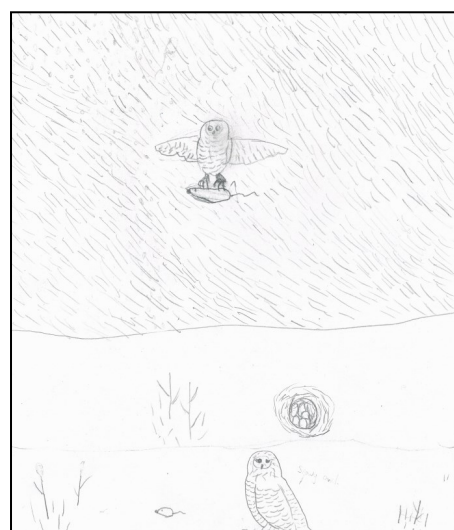
"River Otters play in rivers, people must keep water clean!" - Alia Gumeringer, 1st Grade, Smith Elementary



Annie, 1st Gr., Kessler Elem.



Joline Sheffield, 4th Gr., Kessler Elem.



Nara Kauffman, 3rd, Kessler Elem.



Ginny, Kinder., Kessler Elem.



Kaden, Kindergarten, Kessler Elem.

**Owl Habitat**  
By Crimson De Yong, 3rd Grade, Kessler Elementary  
Resical plastic and do not leave trash in owl habitats.  
Don't posin small mammals or other owl food.  
Leave owls alown in the wild.

**Helping Wildlife**  
By Declan Kuntz, 4th Grade, Kessler Elementary  
We can have a field trip where we go out and plant trees and, if you cut down a tree, plant a tree. We can also have a few field trips a year where we pick up trash.



Zoey Heavrin, 4th Gr., Kessler Elem.

## The Partners

### Foundation for Animals

The Foundation for Animals is a unique nonprofit foundation dedicated to addressing the critical needs of animals, both domestic and wild. The Foundation provides assistance to well-managed projects that promote animal welfare, prevent animal suffering, and provide improvements for animals.

The Adopt-a-Species program encourages K-5 school children to learn about Montana's wild animals and habitat needs. The Foundation for Animals has been involved with the program since inception, and has been instrumental in bringing educational films and eco-entertainers to local students, highlighting the importance of Montana habitat conservation for wildlife. Find more information about Foundation for Animals at our website: [www.foundationforanimals.org](http://www.foundationforanimals.org).

### Helena-Lewis & Clark National Forest

Straddling the Continental Divide, the HLCNF is rich in natural and cultural resources. Its diverse topography and geology provides majestic scenery where recreational opportunities abound.

The Forest's mountain ranges contain a wide array of plant and animal life. Native cutthroat trout and other fish species populate clear mountain lakes and streams where wildlife is abundant.

HLCNF is committed to providing quality visitor information, education, and outreach to the community. As part of these efforts, HLCNF has been involved with the Adopt-a-Species program since inception and appreciates how current partnerships have revitalized a great education program focusing on habitat. For more information, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/hlcnf>

### Montana Discovery Foundation

The Montana Discovery Foundation is a nonprofit that provides hands-on experiences in nature, improves wildlife habitat and watershed health, promotes responsible recreation, and interprets nature for students of all ages.

MDF provides free environmental education to diverse audiences. Providing a multitude of programs in many area schools, guided hikes

and events year-round, MDF hopes to lead people to value and promote Montana's natural resources. Keep up with Montana Discovery Foundation opportunities at: [www.montanadiscoveryfoundation.org](http://www.montanadiscoveryfoundation.org)

### Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations.

It is the belief of FWP that safe, knowledgeable, involved, and responsible participants are essential for effective management and conservation of Montana's natural resources, and that active participation leads people to develop an interest to conserve and manage those same resources. For more information visit [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov).