



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 38, No. 2

MARCH 2012

NORTHERN NEVADA HAPPENINGS

MEETINGS

We meet in the lab across the courtyard from the herbarium at 920 Valley Road. Social time starts at 7:00 pm and the meeting commences at 7:30 pm. From I-80 take the Wells Avenue exit, go south on Wells and immediately turn right on 7th St. At the stop sign turn right on Valley Road. After the overpass over I-80 take the first entrance on the right into the parking lot. Bear left and look for the courtyard on your right. If you would like to join any of the speakers for dinner beforehand, meet at Carrow's Restaurant on the northwest corner of Wells Avenue and 6th St. at 5:30 pm.

MARCH 1st 2012 - Dean Tonenna, botanist with BLM Carson City District, will give a presentation on "A survey of BLM conservation projects in western Nevada and eastern California".

MARCH 15th 2012 - Field Trip Planning Meeting. If you would like to lead a field trip this summer in the Reno area please join us to plan our field trip schedule at 5pm in the South Valleys Library on Wedge Parkway.

APRIL 5th 2012 - Final spring meeting for 2012.

SOUTHERN NEVADA HAPPENINGS

MEETINGS

Meetings are on the first Monday of every month starting at 6:30 pm. They are held at the U.S. Geological Survey office at 160 N. Stephanie Street in Henderson. Contact Cayenne Engel at Cayenne.Engel@unlv.edu or at 865-250-7625 if you want to be added to the email list.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Lyndsey Boyer, Reno, NV.
Tedi Taylor, Reno, NV.
Kelley Persich, Reno, NV

INFORMATION FROM LAST MONTH'S RENO PRESENTATION

The following flyer contains information about the USFWS Schoolyard Habitats Program, which was the topic of last month's presentation in Reno.



Schoolyard Habitat Program

Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office

Conserving the biological diversity of the Great Basin, Eastern Sierra, and Mojave Desert

What is a Schoolyard Habitat project?

“A Schoolyard Habitat” can mean many different things to many different people, however, for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service there is a specific niche that our Schoolyard Habitat Program fills within the spectrum of resources for schools, as well as a specific need that they fill within the Fish and Wildlife Service mission.

A Service schoolyard habitat project is a naturalized habitat area that is created by students, for students. It is ecologically sound, integrated into the curriculum and designed to encourage long-term stewardship. Typical projects created through this program include: wetlands, meadows, forests and variations among them based on specific ecoregions. Many projects are planned through multiple phases and become more dynamic over time as children from various classes build upon the existing work of past students.

Benefits of a Schoolyard Habitat

Schoolyard Habitat projects are designed to achieve the mission and goals of the school, the Service, and the community. They address multiple environmental and educational concepts that benefit all involved, particularly the students.



- **Ecologically sound:** Schoolyard habitat projects provide habitat for local and migratory wildlife including songbirds, shorebirds, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects and more. In many cases, these habitats also provide a vegetative buffer to nearby streams, helping to reduce pollution reaching these waterways. To be ecologically sound the schoolyard habitats must be large enough in size and scope so they have a lasting impact on the local environment.
- **Integrated into the curriculum:** Schoolyard habitats offer many teaching and learning opportunities in English, science, mathematics, history, geography, social studies and art. The process of planning, creating and using a schoolyard habitat exposes children to unique hands-on experiences. A well-designed schoolyard habitat provides the opportunity for authentic long term data collection, which teachers attest is an important element for effective teaching.
- **Stewardship:** Research has shown that during the formative years of life, students develop perceptions and values about their environment. If designed and managed well by students, schoolyards can provide them with a powerful example of good land stewardship. Experts have demonstrated that young children are driven to explore, discover and play while refining motor skills. A schoolyard that includes a diversity of natural areas allows students to exercise these needs while nurturing the development of a land ethic that values natural spaces.

Restoring a native habitat on a school site provides opportunities for:

- **Children:** to develop knowledge and skills as they undertake an exciting, real-life project.
- **Teachers:** to use the broad context of restoring the school yard to help enliven teaching and learning that can weave through the curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade – and beyond.
- **A school:** to create opportunities for community involvement and diversify the schoolyard environment.

Restoring a school landscape provides the opportunity to engage students in:

- Scientific inquiry in a meaningful context;
- Hands-on, minds-on learning;
- Real-life, important decisions that build confidence and resiliency;
- Interdisciplinary learning in a broad context;
- Work among peers, classes, grades and schools.
- Community involvement through cooperative projects.



Schoolyard Habitat Locations

Schoolyard habitat projects are primarily built on school property. However, as long as the location is accessible to students on a daily basis, projects may be built nearby on private or Tribal lands; in a community park; refuge; or on corporate lands.

Getting Started

The first step to creating a successful Schoolyard Habitat Project is to create a team that includes students, teachers, parents, administrators and community members who will support the project. This team will ensure the project is created with full participation of the school, and will create the foundation of support the school needs for sustainability.

Connecting people with nature is one of the Fish and Wildlife Service's top priorities. The Schoolyard Habitat Program is one of the many ways the Service is achieving this priority. Specific funding has been set aside to complete projects with schools. Funding can be used for:

- **Habitat Restoration:** habitat restoration projects on school grounds for use as living laboratories and a natural environment for plants and animals;
- **Outreach and Education:** training classroom teachers to develop, implement and maintain conservation projects at schools; and collaborative schoolyard habitat conservation planning and training in cooperation with community-based groups.

Schools or organizations serving kindergarten through 12th grade students are eligible for funding and may receive up to \$8,000 for their projects. They must be working cooperatively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be eligible.

Learn More

For more information, contact **Michelle Hunt**, Schoolyard Habitat Coordinator for the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office at (775) 861-6341, or email her at michelle_hunt@fws.gov. More information is available online at www.fws.gov/nevada.

Information about the children and nature movement is available from the Children and Nature Network's website at www.childrenandnature.org.



Nevada Native Plant Society
PO Box 8965
Reno NV 89507-8965

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Name _____

Phone _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Email _____ **Renewal**

Newsletter preference: **Paper** **Electronic**

- Individual, family or group for one year\$15.00
 - Individual, family or group for three years ..\$40.00
 - Student or senior citizen, each year\$10.00
 - Life membership\$450.00
- Dues are for the calendar year in which you join.
Membership expiration dates are on the mailing labels.

Gifts, and bequests are tax deductible.

Your donation in any amount is appreciated \$ _____

Please make checks payable and mail to: NNPS • P.O. Box 8965 • Reno, NV 89507