



ANTS Newsletter Fall 2019



4th grade students from Miles Ave Elementary after finishing their sit-spot journal entries.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone! Programs are finally slowing down for us at the Audubon Center. About four weeks ago we wrapped up a VERY busy fall ANTS field trip season. Now we are in the midst of our winter class visits. Here's a little glimpse into what your students experienced this fall on their field trip:



Both 4th and 5th graders began the day using their senses to explore our juniper forest and came back with a story to share with the group. For the rest of the day, 4th graders focused on native plants - including their traditional uses and important plants of our area. They received a journal upon arrival, which they filled with sketches, descriptions, and names of local plants. Afterwards, students explored the concept of habitat degradation, and how both natural disasters and humans can negatively impact a species' habitat. We then trekked over to the Yellowstone river, where the

students picked out their own "sit spots" (which they will revisit in the spring). From there, they journaled about seasonal and sensory observations around them. Here is one such journal entry:

*"Grass is dead, people are around,
Nothing but silence when you're on the ground.
Sitting up like baby birds, ready to eat baby worms.
Come on and play in silence today,
For we are in our sit-spot now."*

4th graders wrapped up the day by reading some verses from the *Haudenosaunee* “Thanksgiving Address,” which offers thanks to plants for providing us with food and medicine.

Our 5th grade ANTS students split the day between water quality testing in the morning and tree anatomy in the afternoon. These young scientists tested the dissolved oxygen, pH and temperature of water in our ponds. In the afternoon, they explored cottonwoods and willows on Norm’s Island and learned about the trees’ habitat requirements, traditional uses by indigenous people, and importance to riparian zones. The days’ wrap-up even included acting out the parts of a tree! 5th graders also received journals that they will continue to use throughout the year.



4th graders from Miles Ave Elementary explore a Plains Cottonwood tree using their senses and applying journaling techniques learned during the field trip (left). The Audubon Center in fall (right).

ANTS 2019-2020 Snapshot

SD2 schools: 22 (all)

Other Schools: 9

Total number of classes: 84

- 4th grade: 66
- 5th grade: 8
- Other: 10

Total program hours (per student):

- Full program: 19
- Partial program: 12

Field trip locations: Montana Audubon Center, Pompey’s Pillar, Sundance Lodge Recreational Area

Standards Alignment: NGSS, MCS and IEFA

Thank you!

Thank you to our wonderful partners at Indian Education for All and BLM for making the ANTS program possible. And thank you to our participating schools, teachers and students for your continued support and participation in the ANTS program, now in its 12th consecutive year! We look forward to a wonderful rest of the year, and invite you to visit us anytime. Follow us on facebook or visit our website (<http://mtaudubon.org/center/>) for current programs and events.

Contact Alina Garner (agarner@mtaudubon.org) for questions regarding the ANTS program and other field trip opportunities.