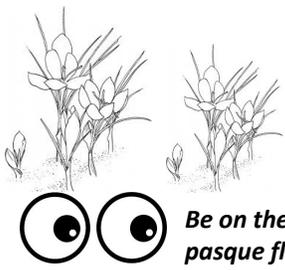
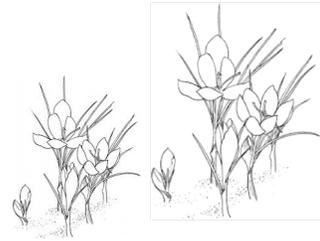


School in the Woods Field Notes

March 2020



Be on the lookout for pasque flowers!



Dear Parents:

We have been in the midst of reading a few very engaging and information-packed novels. The three novels being read are Sign of the Beaver, Stone Fox, and Charlie's Raven. Our naturalists get to read and participate in a variety of language arts activities.



We had two visits from a very special guest expert visitor, Scott Davis. Mr. Davis is our Colorado Springs resident skull expert with vast experience observing wildlife in wild places. He found a muskrat skull when he was the age of our naturalists and has been interested in them ever since. Scott, aka the "Skull Guy", presented an extremely informative slideshow to our naturalists that featured interesting information about



various North American mammals and how body and skull types vary. The naturalists then had the opportunity to identify and examine many skulls, mandibles, and even individual teeth. They used skull structure, measurements, and dental formulas to determine to which animal species a skull or mandible belonged. It was exciting to watch the groups work collaboratively together to solve the mystery of species identification. Mr. Davis was so impressed and told the naturalists that he brags about them with the college students he visits.



Science/Social Studies - In science our naturalists continue to conduct electrical experiments with various materials. Naturalists are learning how electricity works and how it travels. They have been discovering how conductive and insulated materials affect electrical current movement.

We have been learning about Colorado history, our state's geographical regions, and about our state government. In our naturalists' studies of our Colorado state government they have been learning how representatives and senators propose bills and how laws come into being. The students are using a similar process to propose a school name for this year's group of naturalists. It has always been amazing to see naturalists work together and write bills for various names. We will announce the 2019-20 SITW school class name after it has been voted on.

Math - Naturalists have made excellent progress learning about fractions, improper fractions, and mixed numbers. Having the students work with students in similar ability groups helps increase confidence and promotes deeper and more meaningful experiences for all our SITW students. Naturalists are also practicing the computer skills needed to

feel confident as they navigate the information on during this year's CMAS testing which occurs in early April 2019. Thank you for your partnership!

Conferences - We are excited to offer naturalist-led conferences this spring. Each naturalist and parent(s) have been invited for a 60-minute time period. There will be specific Spring Field Project information shared at the beginning of each session. After this brief presentation, various learning activities and information will be shared and discussed.

Spring Field Projects - Your naturalist has recently selected his or her topic for the Spring Field Project. This is an area of natural science that is of particular interest to your child. Be sure to ask them about the topic they selected and are especially curious about. More details about the Spring Field Projects will be sent home and shared during the conference time. We would especially welcome the help of any of you who are able to volunteer afternoons in April to assist naturalists with their projects. We have project time Mondays-Thursdays, 1:00-3:00. Please watch for a SignUpGenius email with dates and times to volunteer on one or more afternoons to help out. **The more adult helpers we have, the more individual attention we can give to each naturalist.** Be assured that you do not need to be knowledgeable about the various topics. Most importantly, we need parents here to help supervise small groups of naturalists in the field, while they research, write, and type.

April Assessments - School in the Woods students will participate in the CMAS Assessments this spring. Naturalists will be doing ELA and Math testing April 1 – April 13 during the mornings. If possible, please try to avoid scheduling doctor or dentist appointments for your child during those periods of time. We appreciate all the ways you support our school and naturalists.

April Events – We plan to have a Saturday workday at our school during the month of April. Work would include planting trees, shrubs, and native grasses, spreading dirt and installing matting, trail work, and other various landscaping tasks. The date will be determined by the end of March as we consider upcoming weather and temperatures. Possible dates include April 11 or 25. Also, we will have a table and display at the Garden of the Gods Visitor Center on Saturday, April 18. We educate people about what we do at our school. We'll be asking for some naturalists and their parent(s) to join. Watch for a SignUp Genius for each event.