



Environmental education through action

KIDS for the BAY



Newsletter SPRING 2015

www.kidsforthebay.org

A Project of Earth Island Institute

Reaching More Than 3,900 Students with Our School Wide Storm Drain Rangers Program

"Storm Drain Rangers, YES WE ARE!" yelled 458 students at Anna Yates Elementary School in Emeryville. These students were excited to become leaders in our new School Wide Storm Drain Rangers Program (SW SDR). Students learned about the importance of reducing trash and storm drain pollution, led school-wide clean-ups of their campus and neighborhood and helped lead an Assembly that reached the entire school community!

"Today I learned that pollution can harm animals, not only in the bay, but in the whole wide world!"

— Maria Margarit, Fifth Grader, Hirsch Elementary School, Fremont

Funded by the Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program, the KftB program is reaching eight school communities in the 2014-2015 school year, including more than 3,900 students, 200 teachers, principals and school staff members who participate in SW SDR Assemblies. 240 student leaders learn the program and inspire members of the school community to become environmental stewards and make trash reduction part of the school culture.

At their Assembly in San Leandro's McKinley Elementary School students showed pictures of animals affected

by marine debris, explained how to pack no-waste lunches and emphasized the importance of not littering and participating in clean-up activities regularly. At Ocean View Elementary School in Albany, the Assembly audience actively participated by responding to trigger words such as "marine debris" and "storm drain". At Anna Yates Elementary's Assembly, Assistant Principal Larry LaBass dressed up as a whale to bring awareness of the effects of marine debris on ocean organisms. The school community was very excited to be part of a collective effort to reduce litter and take action for the environment!

Each participating school is keeping track of the litter they gather using a



bar chart. In the pre-program clean-up activities, 480 students picked up 8,504 pieces of trash. We expect to see a significant reduction of trash in the post-program clean-up, reflecting the changes in behavior generated by the SW SDR Assemblies.

"I was so pleased to see the Assembly and watch how involved the audience was. Students care about animals and now have a way to help them by reducing litter."

— Jaguanana Lathan, Principal, Anna Yates Elementary School, Emeryville

23 years of environmental education at KIDS for the BAY



2,930 partner
KftB Teachers

8,432 family
members



68,339 Inspired
Environmentalists

18,953 native
plants planted



31,528 invasive
plants removed

1,465,348
pieces of trash
collected



Program Highlights

Am I a Scientist?

Asking questions and formulating hypotheses are two science process skills that our students are passionate about! When learning about adaptations and investigating bay organisms, fourth grade students at Lupine Hills

Elementary School in Hercules were excited to see real bay organisms in their classroom!

After carefully observing a Dungeness crab, a student named Rio exclaimed, "Look! The crab has small hairs!" KIDS for the BAY Instructor Aislinn Sterling helped Rio's group discover why.

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Rio later wrote, "Today I learned that crabs such as the Dungeness crab have small hairs. These are used to feel the waves and motion of the water and to keep sand out of the crab's gills so that they can breathe."

The Wonderful Outdoors

"What a great way to introduce science to these fifth graders!"

Ms. Morales, a parent chaperone from Gregory Gardens Elementary School in Pleasant Hill, was delighted to see how curious and interested students were during their Field Trip to the delta ecosystem along the Martinez Shoreline. By the time they visit the delta, our students know a lot about the organisms they will find. They know the difference between phytoplankton and zooplankton, they have seen how marine debris harms animals, and they have learned how an estuary is formed when salt water and fresh water mix.



The Gregory Gardens Elementary fifth graders were so excited to use field microscopes. They looked at plankton collected from the delta and identified the different types. Students reminded each other of the differences between zooplankton and phytoplankton. They were great scientists, working in teams and labeling plankton together. KIDS for the BAY Instructor, Taufui Halaholo, showed the students how he had originally collected all the plankton. Students and parents were very interested to learn that anytime they swim in the ocean or bay they are probably swimming through microscopic plankton!

Students had a great time identifying birds with their binoculars and observing the landscape around the Martinez Shoreline on an observational hike. One student exclaimed, "I can see a flock of Western Gulls! This is awesome!" Another student stated, "They must be looking for some anchovies for lunch." The hike was an unforgettable experience for the students.

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Program Highlights

Taking Action for Arroyo Viejo Creek

Arroyo Viejo Creek, which flows through East Oakland, near Cox Academy Elementary School, also flows through the grounds of the Oakland Zoo. Third grade students from Cox Academy had a wonderful experience helping the environment by restoring the creek, and visiting the zoo!

Students used their hands to simulate a watershed and demonstrate how the rain falls and fills creeks like Arroyo Viejo, where a diversity of organisms lives. KIDS for the BAY Instructor Aislinn Sterling explained that students would be helping the creek by pulling out invasive plants, which make it difficult for other plants that keep the creek healthy to grow. Students, teachers and parents got to work and discovered all kinds of organisms. They investigated fallen galls from oak trees, mushrooms, spiders and beetles, as they worked to help the creek.

As students walked along the path beside the creek as part of a scavenger hunt, they found flowers, blackberry bushes, birds, squirrels, spider webs, bird nests and other flora and fauna. Several California newts, with bright orange bellies, were discovered in the creek. Ms. Sterling reminded students that these were some of the animals they were helping by keeping the creek healthy!

To end a wonderful day of stewardship, students, parents and teachers visited the zoo. As they studied all the beautiful animals, Ms. Sterling asked the students to identify some possible adaptations. Students named the giraffe's long tongue and the elephant's trunk as adaptations that aid in the survival of these organisms.

The visit to the zoo was a wonderful treat for our hardworking scientists and environmentalists from Cox Academy.



Be an Environmentalist!



Reduce and Reuse with No-Waste Lunches

According to Duke University's Center for Sustainability and Commerce, the average American generates 4.3 pounds of waste a day. *This is 1.6 pounds more than we generated in the 1960s!* You may be surprised to know that 55% of this waste ends up in one of 3,200 landfills. You can reduce the amount of trash you generate by packing a no-waste lunch for your children and for yourself. A no-waste lunch generates zero trash and saves money! You need reusable containers of different

sizes, reusable silverware, a cloth napkin and a reusable water bottle. You can save up to 50% of your grocery shopping costs by packing a no-waste lunch. Our students participating in the School Wide Storm Drain Rangers Program teach their school communities how to pack a no-waste lunch, and are leading initiatives in their entire school community to make no-waste lunches part of their school culture!

According to Duke University's Center for Sustainability and Commerce, the average American generates 4.3 pounds of waste a day.

Program Highlights

"Am I a Scientist?" Continued from page 2

Meanwhile, in another group, fourth grader Tia noticed that her striped bass fish was darker on the top and lighter on the bottom. She came up with a hypothesis: "Maybe it is darker on the top because it blends in with the ocean floor when a predator looks from above."

In the scientific process, asking questions is very important. Through hands-on science, our students make observations and connections that lead them to questions and hypotheses. We are so proud of our students for using critical thinking and scientific inquiry to learn about their surroundings.

"The Wonderful Outdoors" Continued from page 2

Mr. Halaholo discussed two storm drains that the group found during the hike. One student made a comment, "Look! It is connected to the creek that comes from the hill." Another student observed, "The water must be flowing to the delta." When it was time to do a clean-up, students were eager to pick up trash near the storm drains to help birds and other animals. Students found bread bags, chip bags, cigarettes, candy wrappers, golf balls, soda cans, and many other things. They were surprised and saddened by the amount of trash they had picked up, and pledged to keep the storm drains around their schools and homes cleaner. The Field Trip was a wonderful day enjoying nature and taking care of it!



Summer Camp 2015

Register today!

Let's Get Outside!

Join KIDS for the BAY for a fun-filled summer of hands-on science and nature exploration in the outdoors!



Campers will learn how every living thing is interconnected, and become **Inspired Environmentalists!**

We offer summer camp sessions for 5-7, 8-10 and 11-14 year olds. Our summer camp takes full advantage of the amazing natural spaces in our own backyard. Campers will explore bay and ocean shorelines, including Muir Beach and Angel Island, hike along beautiful creeks, study insects in ponds, kayak on the bay and swim in a lake!



Check out our **NEW** Hiking Explorers day camp with one overnight adventure for 8-11 year old campers and our **NEW** five-day backpacking trip for campers ages 11-14.

Take advantage of our multi-session and sibling discounts!



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