

Crosslake Community School

Savaloja Grant Final Report for
2019



Submitted by:
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Middle School Science Teacher
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Overview:

The Crosslake Community School's Mission statement is to "Grow Environmentally Literate, Community Impacting, Learners of Excellence". We are an Osprey Wilds authorized school with an emphasis on increasing the knowledge and skills necessary for our students to positively impact the environment around them. Environmental Education (EE) is a huge pillar on which we stand on at our school.

Our school sits in the heart of Crosslake and there are many exciting projects that are happening around our school. Our main neighbor is the Army Corp of Engineers campground where the U of M will be building a National Loon Center. Crosslake currently has an active bird club (Crosslake Bird Club) who worked tirelessly to obtain Crosslake a Bird City designation. Lastly, our school's Environmental Education (EE) committee designated close to 3 acres of land as a School Forest with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

All of these bird projects, coupled with our school's mission, is a perfect recipe for further student learning about birds and a partnership with the Crosslake Bird Club.

One section of our science curriculum, as well as our school's EE goals, focuses on birds native to our area of the state, in particular the Common Loon. Our desire was to increase the level of engagement our students have with local bird habitat beyond intensive study of the Common Loon and this request greatly enhanced our ability to study birds and local bird activity. The \$1720 grant helped us do just that.

Paying It Forward

In order to obtain our objective of studying birds and local bird activities, our staff had to be trained.

In partnership with the Crosslake Bird Club and Audubon Minnesota, we devoted a half of a day of professional development to learning about the diversity of birds, bird anatomy, bird behavior, and birding resources. Each teacher obtained a copy of the Flying Wild curriculum, in which we had time to study and experience actual lessons. Teachers were also able to touch and see, hands on, various bird artifacts. We also learned about many birding resources for teachers to use in their classroom including books and programs from the U of M Raptor Center.

At Crosslake Community School, we take pride that EE is a school wide pillar, and all teachers are trained in various initiatives in order for students to experience them in various aspects of their school life. As you will see, all teachers were trained. The Flying Wild book has many lessons that allows teachers, now matter what they teach, to incorporate birds in their units.

Teachers who participated:

Grades taught	Teacher
Pre-Kindergarten	Heidi O'brien
1st and 2nd	Patty Durham
1st and 2nd	Annette Klang
3rd and 4th	Marie Washek
3rd and 4th	Mara Powers
Middle School Science	Miranda Graceffa
Middle School Math	Tracy Moreland
Middle School Social Studies	Lance Swanson
Middle School Language Arts	Ronda Veit
Kindergarten-8 Physical Education	Lisa Schumacher
Kindergarten-8 Music	Kate Davis
Title 1 Program	Beverly Loeffler
Special Education Program	Tory Beasely

Teachers were also asked to test out and become experts with various Flying Wild lessons. Lessons that teachers tested out included:

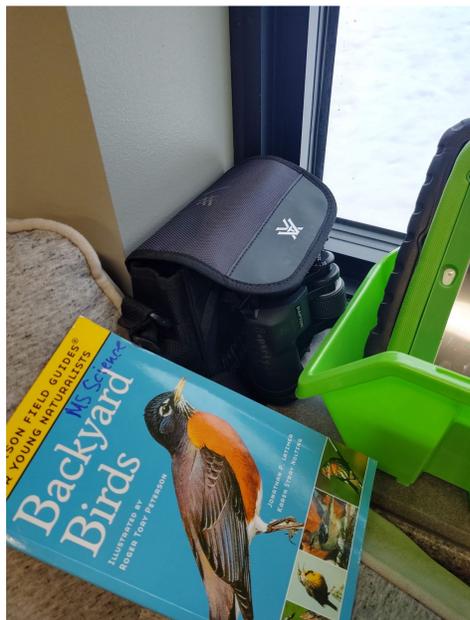
- Bird Beak Buffet
- The Great Migration Challenge with a bird art project to finish
- Feeder Frenzy
- Creation of bird feeders
- Who Was that Masked Bird?
- Migratory Mapping

Birding Stations



In further partnership with the Crosslake Bird Club, we were able to obtain 2 birding stations to utilize our binoculars and further study birds. Our middle school has an Environmental Education class. For that class, a group of 8th grade students researched bird needs and field studied our school forest in order to find the

perfect place to watch birds. The bird stations continue to be maintained by students in the Environmental Education class.



Purchase of binoculars

Our school was able to partner with Vortex Optics in which we got a great deal to obtain 20 binoculars. The great part about partnering with Vortex Optics, is that the binoculars have a lifetime warranty! Because of this, the grant money will never go to waste-no broken or thrown away binoculars ever! The binoculars are housed in an open spot in our solarium, where teachers have easy access to them. The kindergarten teacher keeps a pair of binoculars in her classroom for students to use for observing birding station and nature journaling, as they have a clear view of our feeding station. This is where the majority of the grant money was spent.

Results:

The utilization of our new birding knowledge and the binoculars is ongoing. Our school continues to partner with the Crosslake Bird Club to maintain the birding stations. We even get donations of black bird seed from the families at our school to maintain the bird stations. Middle school students in our Environmental Education class continue to utilize the binoculars to identify and count birds that come to the birding stations (although we have not done this so far for SY 20/21 due to COVID-19). Students throughout the school also use the binoculars for their phenology journaling (another initiative) in our school forest.

Acknowledgements

The staff at Crosslake Community School are very appreciative that we were chosen as recipients of the grant. Birding and phenology have always been a forefront at our school. Over the years, we have slowly built up our birding curriculum by purchasing bird boxes from Cornell Lab of Ornithology and bird identification books and posters. We were missing the main item to get the students even more excited about birds-binoculars! Thank you for helping us build our program to influence the next generation of birders!

We are also very grateful for our ongoing support and partnership with the Crosslake Bird Club. In particular, we would like to thank Michael Blassey and Pam Perry for their specific support and belief in our birding program and our school.

Total Purchases

20 Items	Vortex Optics Raptor 8.5x32	\$77.99	\$1559.80
Staff development	Flying Wild Curriculum/training	\$120	\$120