

KINDERGARTEN SCIENTISTS EXPLORE  
CRELLIN'S ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION  
LABORATORY



2013-2014

# SCENTS, CAMERAS, ACTION!

Kindergarten Scientists Explore Their Schoolyard





## Crellin Elementary's Environmental Education Laboratory

*“Give children a chance to love the earth  
before we ask them to save it.”*

*— David Sobel*



*Dear Reader,*

*Have you ever wondered about nature, wondered about what animals visit your backyard at night, or wondered about the tracks animals leave behind? This year, our kindergarten class wondered those things...and much more!*

*Our “wonders” led us to a yearlong scientific investigation in the fall of 2013. To begin our project we contacted our learning partner, Harry Spiker, and asked to borrow four trail cameras and four animal scents (fox lure, skunk lure, beaver castor, and molasses). We explored our Environmental Education Laboratory (EEL) in search of four areas to set up the scent stations. We chose the following locations; the meadow, the vernal pond, Snowy Creek, and the hemlock forest. The children were divided into four groups and were each charged with setting up a station. Once an area in their location was identified, the children sifted soil until it was fine. They attached a cotton ball to a popsicle stick then saturated it with the chosen scent. The stick was pushed into the ground directly in the middle of the area with sifted soil. It was their hope that an animal would smell the scent and step into the sifted soil leaving behind tracks. The motion-sensor trail camera was attached to a tree and positioned to capture photographs of any visitors!*

*Students eagerly checked the stations and trail cameras weekly and the photographs were saved. As our class viewed the photographs and the tracks, many questions and discussions erupted. For example, weeks passed with no photographs or evidence of visitors at the hemlock forest scent station. The scent was changed but still no photographs. After hypothesizing, researching, and contacting learning partners for advice, we discovered that animals prefer to travel on a corridor. Our scent station had been placed off the beaten path. The students moved the stations located in the hemlock forest, vernal pond, and Snowy Creek to frequently traveled corridors. The students also liked to switch the scents and had ideas regarding which would be most popular with the animals.*

*This yearlong research project taught many valuable lessons, led to additional wonders, inspired teamwork, and taught us to be problem solvers.*

*As children of the Earth, we are expected to care for, respect, and protect our natural world. But first, we must seek opportunities to love it!*

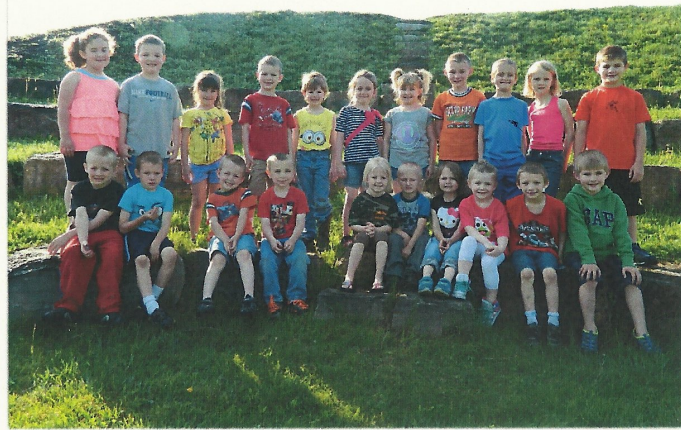
*Love,*

*Crellin Kindergarten Class of 2014*

*P.S. Never stop “wondering”!*

# Authors

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Front Row: Jonathon, Jeremiah, Kane, Elijah, Peyton, Aron,  
Kansas, Braelyn, David, Jaxon

Back Row: Ellen, Michael, Kamia, Gavin, Laurel, Harper, Abby,  
Landon, Preston, Ava, Eli

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# TOOLS FOR OUR STUDY



Tools we used to conduct our study include scents (fox lure, molasses, skunk lure, beaver castor), trail cameras, popsicle sticks, cotton balls, soil, locks, cables, and batteries.



# MEADOW



Meadow Scientists: Kamia, Peyton, Eli, David, Landon  
Our meadow is home to many living things. We saw grasshoppers, butterflies, flowers, and insects.







Setting up our scent station  
took teamwork!





09/28/2013 12:20AM MTN



We saw that a fox and many deer, opossums, rabbits, cats, and crows visited our scent station. They came during the day and at night.





10/30/2013 11:30PM FRA



10/30/2013 11:30PM FRA



31F 10/27/2013 08:21AM FRANK BREN



The animals visited on sunny, rainy, and snowy days.

# HEMLOCK FOREST



Hemlock Forest Scientists: Elijah, Michael, Gavin,  
Aron, Laurel

Our hemlock forest is home to many  
living things. We saw trees, roots, moss,  
pine needles, leaves, rabbits, and birds.



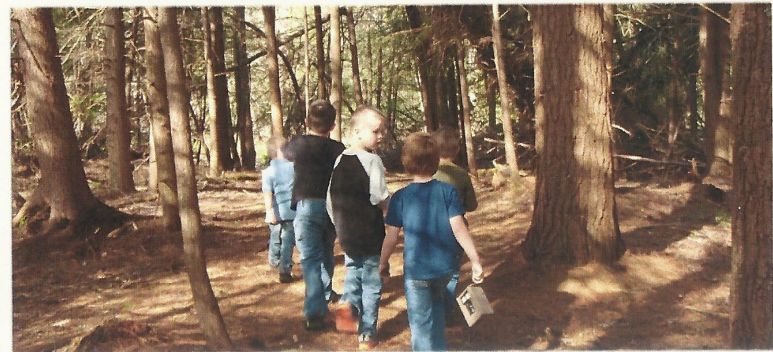


Setting up our scent station took teamwork!





Something must have moved! Where is it? We had a problem. Where are all the animals? We learned that our scent station was not in a corridor, so we moved it!

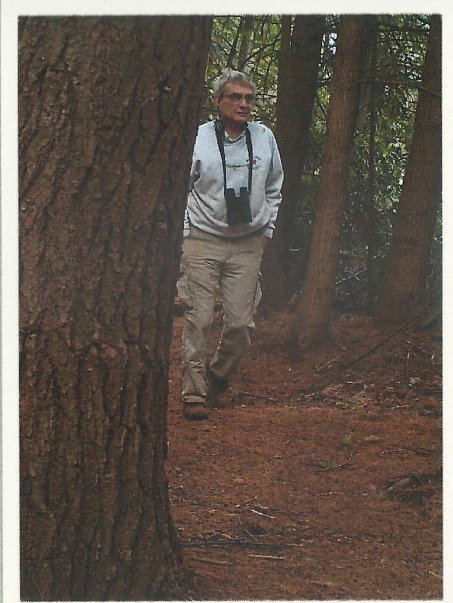




A dog visited.



A cat visited.



Dr. Pope walked by.



Two deer smelled the scent.



Unidentified visitors!

After moving the station we had many visitors!

# VERNAL POND



Vernal Pond Scientists: Ellen, Preston, Kane, Kansas, Braelyn, Mrs. Friend

Our vernal pond is home to many living things. We saw trees, leaves, insects, tadpoles, frogs, and cattails. We heard the wind. We heard frogs croak.







Setting up our scent station  
took teamwork!





We had a problem. No animals visited our scent station! We looked for a new spot.





Something must have moved! Is it in the trees?

We saw a cat. We saw a deer peeking around the corner.

Can you find him?



# SNOWY CREEK



Snowy Creek Scientists: Jonathon, Abby,  
Jeremiah, Jaxon, Ava, Harper, Mrs. Sherwood

On the bank of Snowy Creek we saw  
birds, insects, and grass. We heard  
the creek water.





Setting up our scent station  
took teamwork!





The camera caught us!

We saw evidence of an animal and we saw deer!





We moved our station. But no animals visited. We wondered why....



## Kindergarten wonders...

Ellen: "I wonder if we should choose a new spot"

Preston: "I wonder if they thought the scent was food"

Aron: "I wonder what the dog thought about the scent"

Braelyn: "I wonder if we should use another scent"

Jonathon: "I wonder why no animals came"

Abby: "I wonder why the animals didn't come to the Creek"

Kamia: "I wonder if there were fox tracks"

Gavin: "I wonder if the deer liked the fox scent"

Michael: "I wonder what the unknown visitors are"

Jaxon: "I wonder if we would get more animals with another scent"

Kansas: "I wonder if there were two deer"

Landon: "I wonder if we could find deer tracks"

Harper: "I wonder why we didn't get more deer"

Laurel: "I wonder if the unknown visitors are cats"

David: "I wonder if we could catch a bear"

Elijah: "I wonder if we can use other scents"

Jeremiah: "I wonder why we didn't get more animals"

Ava: "I wonder if they didn't like the scents"

Eli: "I wonder if we will see a fawn or a cub"

Peyton: "I wonder if a puppy would visit"

Kane: "I wonder what is in the woods"