



EXPLORE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

*Helping students develop an EYE for observation, appreciation,
and conservation of our natural world
Designed for students in Grades 3-5*

Let us bring an environmental program to your classroom, and then follow it up on another date with a visit to one of the Boulder County Parks & Open Space properties. The program is free—you just need to make reservations at least one month in advance. You can choose from three main topics. Lessons and activities are flexible and can be arranged to complement your curriculum. Below is a brief description of each topic with suggested activities.

1. **Wet and Wild**—Explore the Wetland and Riparian Habitats

Possible Classroom Activities/Lessons:

- Demonstration with a wetland model
- Wetland metaphors
- Introduction to wetland mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and insects and their importance to the ecosystem
- Exploring ponds or puddles in or near the schoolyard

Possible Field trip sites: Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat, Pella Crossing, Stearns Lake at Carolyn Holmberg Preserve at Rock Creek Farm

- Look for signs of life on land and in the water
- Pond dipping to discover macro-invertebrate life and health
- Investigate and explore different habitat types: wetlands, riparian, prairie

Curriculum Connections: *3rd grade—how organisms develop and change over time, collect and analyze data; 4th grade—similarities and differences between species, comparing different habitats; 5th grade—how the structure of an organism helps it survive, preservation of natural resources.*

2. **Our Wild Neighbors**—Find Your Place in Foothills Ecology and the Food Web

Possible Classroom Activities/Lessons:

- Food Web activities/games
- Living Map activity (room-sized map of Boulder County, with emphasis on life zones)

Possible Field trip sites: Heil Valley Ranch, Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain, Bald Mountain Scenic Area, Walker Ranch, Betasso Preserve

- Hands-on learning about several species that live in the foothills
- 1.5 mile hike to experience the foothills life zone

Curriculum Connections: *3rd grade—life cycles; 4th grade—what plants and animals need to survive, how organisms adapt to their habitat; 5th grade—how structure of an animal helps it survive, interdependence of plants and animals.*

3. **Story in the Rocks**—Discover how Geology is the

Foundation for Everything

Possible Classroom Activities/Lessons:

- Living Map activity (room-sized map of Boulder County, emphasis on geologic features)
- Hands-on activities featuring different types of rocks, uplift and erosion
- 3-D map of Boulder County

Possible Field trip sites: Heil Valley Ranch, Rabbit Mountain Open Space, Caribou Ranch, Mud Lake

- Comparing posters of ancient Colorado landscapes with current topography
- 1.5 mile hike to observe and investigate different types of rocks, erosion, and landforms

Curriculum Connections: *5th grade—identifying how and why Earth's surface changes through a variety of processes and forces.*

To make arrangements to participate in EYE, please contact Larry Colbenson, Natural History Program Coordinator, at lcolbenson@bouldercounty.org or 303-678-6214.

Bus funding is available through the Boulder County Parks and Open Space Foundation for schools needing assistance with transportation costs. For information, contact Deborah Price, Education Liaison, at dprice@bouldercounty.org or 303-678-6215.