

1) Title of Project:

Enhancing Ornithology and Owls

2) Project Description:

Dallas County Conservation Board (DCCB) currently has an Ornithology and Owls program where students from Dallas County public schools come and spend a full day with naturalists in one of our parks learning about birds. Two classrooms, approximately 25 students each, come for the day. One class studies owl adaptations, learns their calls and meets a live, education owl. The other class learns how to use binoculars and a field guide outdoors. We model how to use the book by looking at bird size, feet and beaks and field marks.

Currently we are using the Birds of Iowa by Stan Tekiela.

3) Project Goals:

The goals of this project would be to enrich the experience of our learners by using a book that follows taxonomic sequence. The Golden Guide to Birds of North America has birds classified by their beaks and feet which give students the tools to identify birds on their own. It also empowers them to use other field guides, not just birds. The Golden Guide includes all North American birds found in an Order or Family which helps the learner understand that there is diversity even within a related grouping of birds. It can also be used to teach geography and help learners understand that there are different birds in different parts of the country.

Funding from the Iowa Ornithologists Union was used to purchase 40 Golden Guide to Birds of North America with matching funds from Dallas County Conservation Board. These books were purchased from CrawDaddy Outdoors, an Iowa owned recreation business.

4) Project Impact:

We have yet to see the impact of the new books at Dallas County Conservation as the funding cycle for this grant occurred after our April and May Ornithology and Owls programs. I have personally seen an impact at three other programs that I was involved in and anticipate similar results here.