

Exploring the Prairie Island Refuge

"The land is where our roots are. The children must be taught to feel and live in harmony with the Earth. The senses, being explorers of the world, open the way to knowledge."
-Maria Montessori

The heavy rain stopped last week just long enough for the Erdkinder class to get some drier time to explore the world at Prairie Island and the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. "Ranger" Ed coordinated an educational adventure where students got to hike, fish, observe nature and discuss aspects of the refuge - the land, the species, the management, the value. Reflective journaling followed and student journal excerpts are included in italics.



"The fishing wasn't great with the high water and wind, but at least I didn't get skunked."

"The eagles and heron were really cool! I've never seen a heron that close."

"I had a really fun day, even though it was a bit cold!"

"I knew some species were invasive but I learned a ton about why it matters and

what we can do."



"I learned it's good to spend some time alone. It was peaceful and calming."

"I noticed a teeny tiny spider and a hole in the ground at the base of the tree. There were piles of flotsam where the heavy rain water had flowed."

"My favorite part was just sitting in the woods and the silence but hearing things of nature like the wind blowing on the leaves."

"Refuges are important because it gets people to see the importance of what they have and learn how to take care of it. You can wonder and reflect on how your life has such a big impact on future generations."

"I think it was a great trip and I'm glad we went. I learned a lot. Refuges are important for many things."

"Refuges are great places to protect species and enjoy. They belong to all of us and we're all responsible for them. We all benefit from them and the animals that live there."



Concepts introduced on the trip will be expanded on in classes throughout the year as we explore the aspects of karst geology, watersheds and government.

We will be travelling to Whitewater State Park near the end of October to continue our investigations.

Thanks to the Erdkinder class for persevering through the damp weather and thank you to "Ranger" Ed for another interesting



and informative experience!