



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
110 S. Amity Road, Suite 300
Conway, Arkansas 72032
Tel.: 501/513-4470 Fax: 501/513-4480



January 1, 2015

Dear School Principals,

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will celebrate the 10th annual Endangered Species Day on May 15, 2015. This will be the eighth year that Endangered Species Day celebrations have occurred in Arkansas and the sixth year we have hosted an Endangered Species Day Art Contest. The past several years' contests have been a great success. We would like to encourage your school to participate in our sixth annual art contest.

Endangered Species Day provides opportunities to celebrate our rich natural heritage of fish, wildlife, plants, and the ecosystems on which they depend. Endangered Species Day is an opportunity for people young and old to learn about the importance of protecting endangered species. Everyday actions that people can take help protect our nation's disappearing wildlife and their last remaining habitats. The protection of America's wildlife and plants is a legacy we leave to our children and grandchildren, so that they can experience the rich variety of native species that help define our nation.

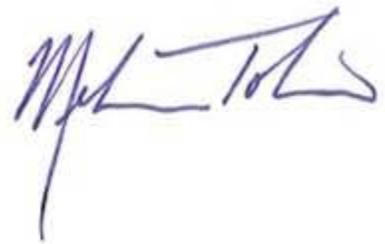
This year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Arkansas Ecological Services Field Office is partnering with the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to focus attention on youth education regarding the importance of protecting wildlife, plants, and habitats of species in Arkansas. A curriculum developed by the Endangered Species Coalition, a non-profit organization that works closely with the USFWS to celebrate Endangered Species Day, is available on our website www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/esday.html. Partners for curriculum development include the National Association of Biology Teachers and National Science Teachers Association, among others. Other environmental education program curricula such as Projects WET, WILD, WOW, and Project Learning Tree may complement lessons focused on endangered species and provide supplemental activities and materials. **We provide teacher packets with endangered species information (specifically about Arkansas' endangered and threatened species and habitats), coloring books, and other related information on our website.**

We request your support by disseminating this information to your teachers and other interested instructors and encouraging their participation. Teachers of all content areas and grade levels are encouraged to participate. **To encourage our state's educators to promote Endangered Species Day, our office is sponsoring a state art contest. The requirements for the Arkansas student's art contest can be found on our website www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/esday.html. Entries must be postmarked by April 4, 2015.** Art work will be evaluated based on the following age groups: K- Grade 2, Grades 3-6, Grades 7-9, and Grades 10-12. We will award 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place plaques for each age group. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each age group will also receive \$100, \$50, and \$25 Acorn Naturalist gift cards,

respectively. We will award an overall winner a \$250 Acorn Naturalist gift card. Our office will work with local, regional, and state newspapers to recognize the contest winners.

Information and resources regarding this event are available on our website www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/esday.html and the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission website www.naturalheritage.org. We appreciate your support and cooperation in promoting endangered species conservation. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Lombardi at 501-513-4488 or melissa_lombardi@fws.gov.

Sincerely,



Melvin Tobin
Acting Field Supervisor

Thank you to our partners for helping us with
the Arkansas 2015 Endangered Species Day Art Contest

