

## Hands On Activities



American Shad

### Plant a “Shad Bush”

You can plant a “shad bush” (*Amelanchier spp.*) on your school grounds or nearby watershed area to symbolize the connection of the bushes blooming and the return of the American shad to local waterways. The shad bush, *Amelanchier spp.*, is a native shrub or tree that blooms in the spring at the same time that American shad are returning to lay their eggs far up Chesapeake Bay rivers.

American Indians in this region used the blooming bushes as a sign of when it was time to go fishing for shad. The shad bush blooms in March-April and has small white flowers. It produces edible berries that are favored by birds and other wildlife.

Many native plant nurseries carry this plant. There are also several different species of *Amelanchier* you can choose from. Some are tree-like plants, some are bush-like. You can order one or more and plant them at your school. They are easy to grow and grow rapidly.

There is also a book available that discusses the Native American connection to the American Shad entitled "[When the Shad Bush Blooms](#)". Teachers can purchase this book and incorporate it into a learning project.

### Collect Tree Seeds and Plant Native Trees

*Growing Native* is a volunteer project that collects hardwood seeds and plants trees to help restore and protect rivers and streams in the Potomac River watershed. To learn more, go to [Growing Native](#).

### Participate in Watershed Monitoring or Restoration Project

Participate in watershed monitoring projects by using the new Bureau of Land *Hands on the Land* program website. Hands on the Land is a “national network of field classrooms connecting students, teachers and parents to their public lands and waterways”. This site features ideas planning a watershed monitoring or restoration trip for your school and a whole lot more. For more information, visit [handsontheland.org](http://handsontheland.org).