



## U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service

### Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office

*Conserving the Biological Diversity of the Great Basin, Eastern Sierra, and Mojave Desert*



### Coral Academy of Science School

In April, 2012, Coral Academy of Science, a charter science school located in Reno, Nevada, was awarded \$3,400 from the Service to create an outdoor classroom known as a schoolyard habitat.



**Coral Academy of Science students plant a native penstemon plant in their schoolyard habitat.**

A schoolyard habitat project is a naturalized habitat area that is created by students, for students. It is ecologically sound, integrated into the school's curriculum and designed to provide students with an opportunity to connect

with nature by observing plants, insects, and animals in an outdoor setting.

This year, students planted plants native to the Great Basin in their habitat. Next spring, students will add to the habitat by planting plants native to the Sierra Nevada ecoregion. With a focus on a science curriculum, students observe and experience the entire life cycle of plants from germination to pollination and dormancy. The plants in the schoolyard habitat are expected to provide benefits to pollinators such as bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other insects; in addition, the habitat will be beneficial to a variety of birds, reptiles, and small mammals.

When students were asked what animals and insects they had seen in the schoolyard habitat they responded: "Worms, cause I was digging them up, they were moving around in the soil and helping it; I've seen bees, a cat and a rabbit; and wasps, bees, zillion worms, roly pollies, cats, and X bugs, and a bunch of beetles."

