

Designing Schoolyard Habitats in Urban Areas

A collaborative, community-based process

Georgia Basso
USFWS



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Southern New England-NY Bight Coastal Program

Northeast Region

The Schools

- Are located in one of the most urban areas on the East Coast
- Have diverse communities and include native & non native English speakers
- Are within the EPA Long Island Sound Study National Estuary Program Area (13 schools certified to date)



Springdale School



Stark School

Rogers
International
School



Stamford High School

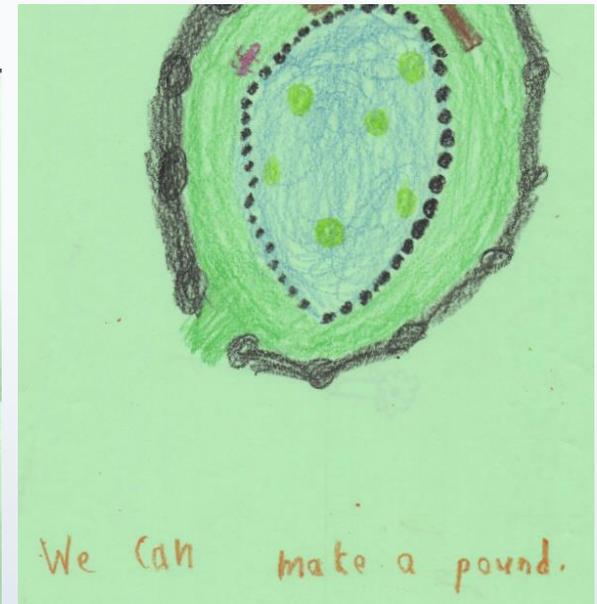


Rippowam Middle
School

The Process: In the Fall the schools gathered ideas in a number of ways. Some designed community idea boards where teachers, students and staff could write their ideas



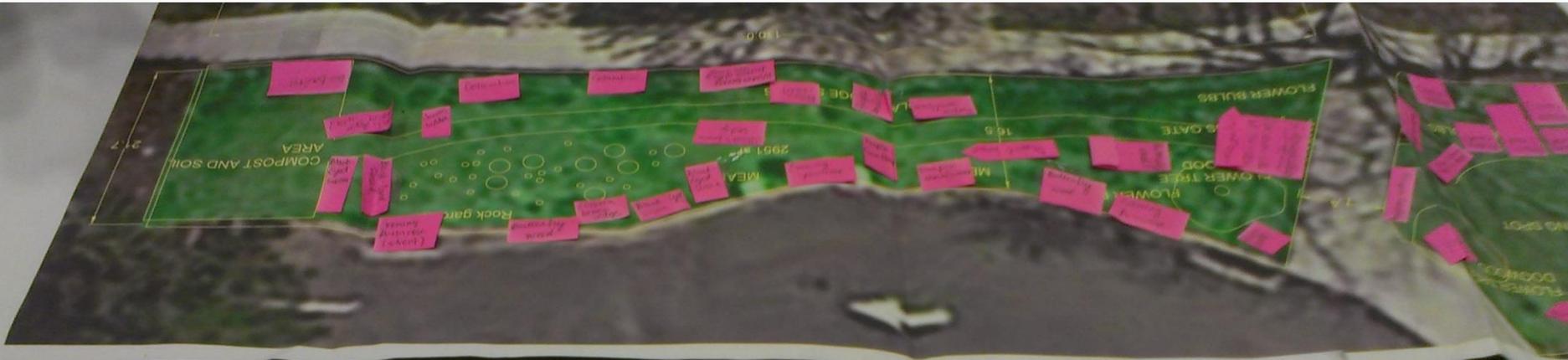
Others collected the student's ideas through art



In the winter teams of teachers, parents and administrators took the ideas that students brainstormed, turned them into goals and used the goals to create a Master Plan Site Map like the one on the next slide



The leadership team at this school used the crayon master plan drawings made by the third graders (below) to develop a digitized planning map (above)





“Our third grade class had to work really hard to make our Schoolyard Habitat. First, we went outside to explore the space. As we were doing this, a wave of excitement went through our bodies. We felt this way because we were making our own outdoor classroom where we could learn about nature and about all different kinds of animals”. – Third grader in New Haven CT

“The next day we started making our dreams come true! We started digging and planting all the flowers. I especially enjoyed digging holes. I liked feeling that I was a part of something important that was going on and I felt happy doing it.” – Third grade student. New Haven, CT



As a component of the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership in New Haven the students work closely with designers at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History to create interpretive signs for their site.

These students won a school wide art contest to have their drawings featured on the sign.



“During the Schoolyard Habitat dedication, the student artists were recognized by name. Seeing pride on the faces of the students and their parents, and knowing that their confidence will be lifted each time they walk past that sign, this is the moment that stands out the most for me.”

~ David Heiser, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, interpretive sign lead

Columbus Family Academy Before & After

- Impervious surface reduced
- Native species increase
- Students engaged in all steps





Worthington Hooker School Before & After

- Turf grass reduced
- Native species increase
- Students engaged in all steps



The school community including parents, students, teachers, and even neighbors comes together on workdays





Outdoor Classrooms Before & After

- Designed by 6th grade students
- Students work with USFWS volunteers, Refuge Managers and the City of New Haven to install classrooms across the city
- Students have class outside

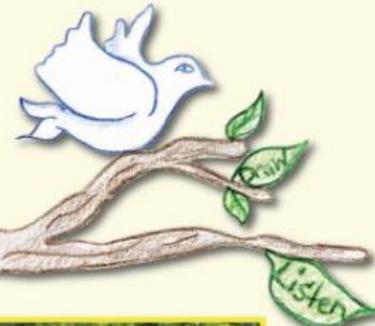


Welcome to the Barnard Schoolyard Habitat!

Our Mission: **To provide an interactive outdoor learning space that engages our school community in the exploration of the natural world and fosters environmental stewardship.**



Balancing
People and Nature



Here at Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School we have created a Schoolyard Habitat that will encourage our school community to enjoy nature, be respectful, observe, listen, question, learn and explore.

This space helps foster a balance between humans and the natural habitat. It provides a safe place for wildlife to rest and refuel in a busy urban landscape, but it is also a place for people to enjoy nature.

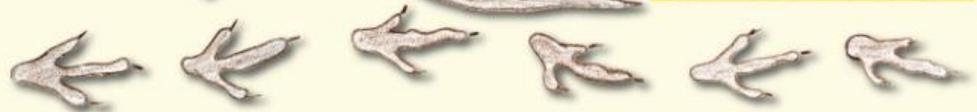


Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School students and community partners worked together to create the schoolyard habitat and outdoor classroom.

Photographs by Ed Young



Discover, Respect and Enjoy



Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School is part of The New Haven Harbor Watershed Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership, one of eight Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships in the nation! This is a group of public and private partners working together to connect people to nature, restore open spaces and inspire the next generation of conservation leaders.

This Schoolyard Habitat was made possible by—



Some of the signs are bilingual to better serve the communities where the signs are installed



Our Schoolyard Habitat Nuestro Hábitat del Patio Escolar

Christopher Columbus Family Academy

A Dual Language School • Escuela de Dos Idiomas

Image: Katsuhisa Ito, Los Angeles, California, USA
© 2008-2010, by Wetlands Connection

Columbus Family Academy Schoolyard Habitat Program:

Mission: The schoolyard habitat promotes outdoor learning, hands-on experience and motivation through scientific inquiry, artistic investigation and literacy exploration that continues to develop bilingual brains through discovery.

Programa Hábitat del Patio Escolar de Columbus Family Academy:

Misión: El hábitat del patio escolar promueve el aprendizaje al aire libre, la experiencia práctica y la motivación a través de la investigación científica, artística y la exploración literaria que continúa desarrollando cerebros bilingües a través de descubrimiento.

You can find other schoolyard habitats at the following New Haven Schools:

Usted puede encontrar otros hábitats de patios escolares en las siguientes escuelas de New Haven:

Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School
170 Derby Avenue

Worthington Hooper School
180 Conner Street

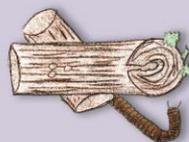


Christopher Columbus Family Academy is part of The New Haven Harbor Watershed Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships, one of eight Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships in the nation! This is a group of public and private partners working together to connect people to nature, restore open spaces and inspire the next generation of conservation leaders.

What can you find here?

Life Under Logs

Life Under Logs is a place where you can look under logs, leaves, and moss to find what living things are hiding there.



Vida debajo de los troncos

La vida debajo de los troncos es un lugar donde se puede ver debajo de troncos, hojas y musgo para encontrar a seres vivos que se esconden allí.

Lore Plants

This is a garden area filled with plants that have a connection to folklore—plants our forefathers and many of today's doctors believe to have medicinal or healing qualities.



Plantas Tradicionales

Esta es una zona de jardín lleno de plantas que tienen una conexión con el folclore—plantas que nuestros antepasados y muchos de los médicos de hoy en día creen que tiene cualidades medicinales o curativas.

Herbs and Planter Boxes

This garden area within our outdoor classroom is filled with savory herbs in addition to various planters with fruits or vegetables. These help you learn about plants that you can use in the preparation of your everyday meals.



Especies y Jardineras

En nuestro salón de clase al aire libre se encuentra una zona del jardín llena de especias culinarias además de varias jardineras con frutas o vegetales. Estas nos ayudarán a aprender acerca de las plantas que se pueden utilizar en la preparación de nuestras comidas.

Butterfly Garden

This is a garden area where you will find all the native plants and necessities a butterfly will need to survive from its larval stage to adulthood.



Jardin para las mariposas

En esta zona del jardín se encuentran todas las plantas nativas y lo que necesita una mariposa para sobrevivir desde su estado larval hasta la edad adulta.

¿Qué puede encontrar aquí?

What is a schoolyard habitat?

A schoolyard habitat is an outdoor place of learning. This is an area where students have the opportunity to investigate native plants and wildlife in a natural environment and learn to care for these living things.

¿Qué es un hábitat del patio escolar?

Un hábitat del patio escolar es un lugar al aire libre para aprender. Esta es un área donde los estudiantes tendrán la oportunidad de investigar sobre plantas y vida silvestre nativas en un entorno natural y aprender a cuidar a estos seres vivos.



This Schoolyard Habitat was made possible by—
Este hábitat del patio escolar fue hecha posible por —



Welcome to Our Schoolyard Habitat

Our Mission

Worthington Hooker School is committed to nurturing the growth and development of our students through the study of the environment, awakening in them their responsibility for environmental stewardship through the design and care of a schoolyard habitat, using our space as a vehicle to learn about, and care for, the natural world.



American Robin
By Matt [CC-BY-SA 3.0], via Wikimedia Commons



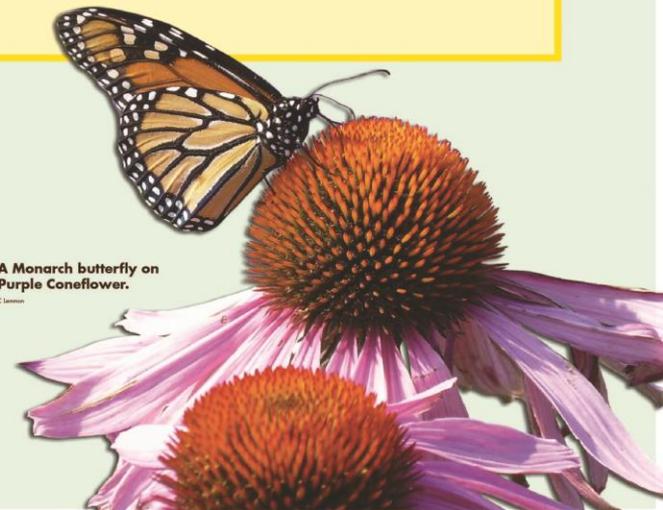
Black-eyed Susan (yellow),
Cardinal Flower (red) and
other plants.



Red-tailed Hawk
By John Kane [CC-BY-SA 3.0], via Wikimedia Commons

What is a Schoolyard Habitat?

- 🐞 Natural spaces where students can observe their surroundings
- 🐞 A rest stop for migratory and local wildlife
- 🐞 A safe haven for animals and insects
- 🐞 An outdoor classroom where students can learn and grow



A Monarch butterfly on
Purple Coneflower.



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This Schoolyard Habitat was made possible by—



COMMON GROUND
YALE UNIVERSITY, YALE SCHOOL OF
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AND FORESTRY
Yale PEABODY MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY



Audubon
CONNECTICUT

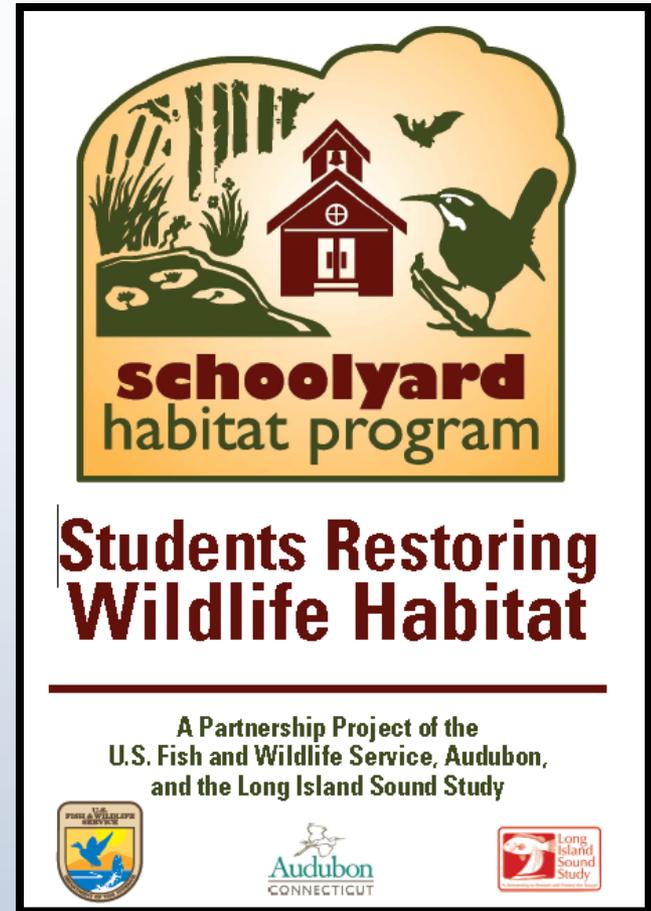
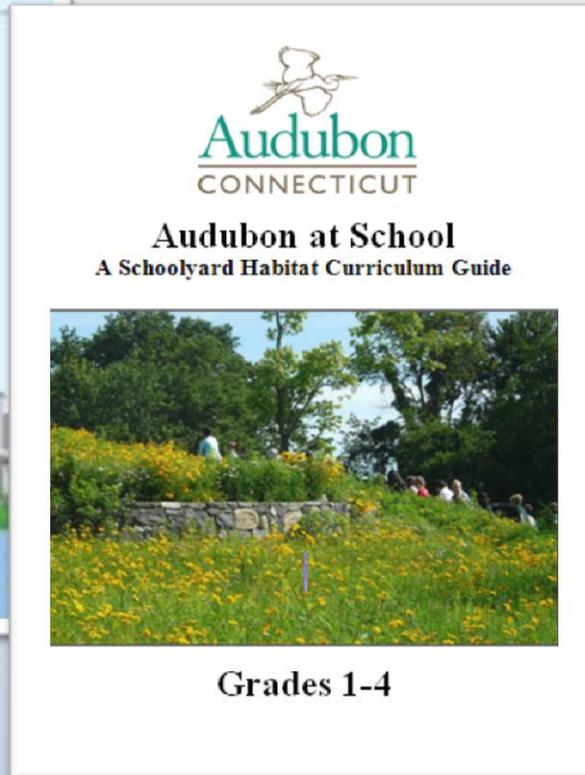
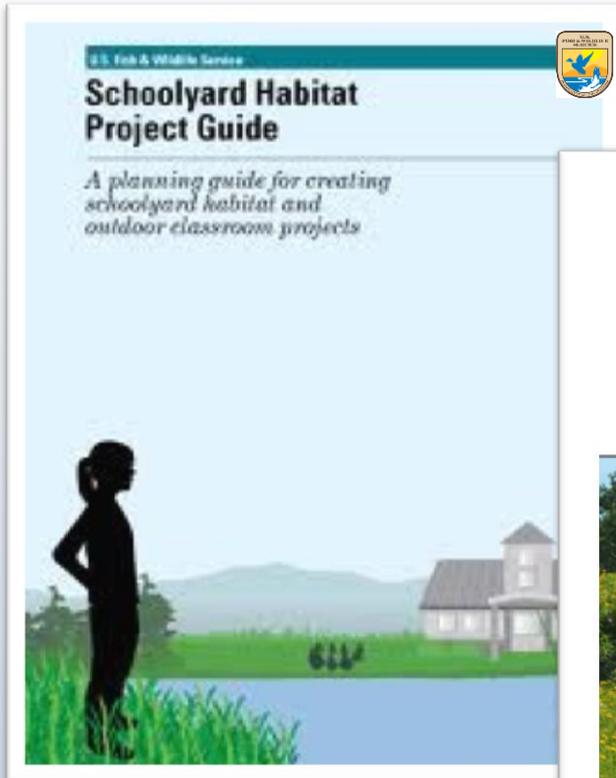


Long Island
Sound
Study



Long Island
Sound
Study

To complement the USFWS SYH Project Guide, Audubon CT developed a compendium curriculum guide to help teachers use the Schoolyard Habitats. The Curriculum Guide provides lessons that align with CT State standards





U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Connecting People with Nature

Northeast Region

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Connecting students with the outdoors.

Photo Credit: Solar Youth

[How It Works](#)

[Urban Initiative](#)

[Schoolyard Habitat Guides](#)

[Resources](#)



Find out how to create an outdoor classroom and wildlife habitat on your school grounds.

[Learn more](#)



Our Urban Initiative connects urban youth with the natural environment.

[Learn more](#)



Download tools to implement the Schoolyard Habitat Program in your school.

[Learn more](#)



For more information view some of our favorite schoolyard habitat resources.

[Learn more](#)

Schoolyard Habitat in Urban Areas

- High potential to address critical ecological and social issues including
 - Habitat loss, disconnected public, water quality issues
- Urban green spaces restored through the Schoolyard Habitat program
 - **Connect** students with the outdoors, **restore** wildlife habitat and **inspire** the next generation of environmental leaders

