

# NATURE'S EDUCATORS

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Founder and Executive Director

Nature's Educators is a registered 501c3 non profit organization licensed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and CO Parks and Wildlife to keep and care for non-releasable and captive-bred wildlife for educational programming. We travel the entire state of Colorado as well as surrounding states to give presentations on habitats, adaptations, conservation, identification, respect of wildlife, and more! In 2023 alone we gave over 1320 individual presentations in Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania! We have also presented for DFO.

A major portion of our programming is for schools especially in the Denver Metro area. We drive up from Florence (sometimes daily) to give presentations at various schools in the metro area. Needless to say, travel, insurance, salaries, and animal care to put these programs on is very expensive! As DFO supports conducting educational programming, we feel this grant request aligns perfectly with the grant fund's mission.

We would like to offer a free 90-minute program to 3 different schools in Jefferson County. We have a few schools in mind as we have done programs with them in the past. Arvada K-8 and Swanson Elementary we have worked with. We would like to secure a grant before reaching out to the schools. This way, we could confirm we would be able to offer it.

The program would be a 10 minute presentation from Hawk Watch on bird-watching in the wild, then a 50 minute presentation from Nature's Educators with live raptor ambassadors to discuss habitats, adaptations, conservation, diets, identification, and the ambassadors' personal stories. Having live ambassadors at any program helps to make a much stronger connection with children and adults alike. Meeting a real bird up close and personal who has had a reason to come into human care, hits home more than a person just seeing a picture or video.

We would like to offer these programs Spring or Fall of 2024 - whatever scheduling is best for the teachers! We would work with Hawk Watch in advance to make sure a representative from both organizations is available on the dates the teachers choose.

Our educational methods for this project are simple in that we will be presenting formal education in classrooms. We would like to push this to be for 3rd through 6th grade if that works for the teachers. So one presentation per school and the teachers can select what grades go to the program. Educational science presentations are so important. If we don't get students excited to learn about

wildlife, habitats, and conservation now, the flora and fauna we see today will disappear quickly. Our goal is to not only get students excited about wildlife, but also to give them ideas that they *personally* can do to help such as keeping cats indoors, not spitting gum out on the sidewalk, not using rat poisons, dropping window blinds for birds, not throwing food out of vehicles, and similar. Many times, conservation is presented in such a way that either students can't understand, or they feel helpless to make changes. Giving them simple, but important, tasks to do and share with their families is incredibly important! Handouts from Hawk Watch will also be provided for those interested in visiting the Hawk Watch site with their families.

**Proposed Budget:**

- 131 miles to and from Arvada area (262 miles total) at .66 per mile x3 trips = \$518.76
- 1 staff member per program at \$18 per hour for 8 hour day (.5 hour load, 2.5 hours there, 1.5 hours at school for load in/program/out, 2.5 hours back, 1 hour unload/feed) \$136 x 3 days = \$432
- Bird Food for day - \$3/day/bird x 4 birds per day = \$12 x 3 days = \$36

**TOTAL: \$986.76**

We would be absolutely grateful for any amount of grant money issued toward this educational project! Thank you for your time, consideration, and all of your hard work to better the world for birds!!



Our Founder (yours truly) giving a presentation on the Eastern Screech Owl at Bea Underwood Elementary in Parachute, CO Nov of 2023