

Greenway Day Celebration Display May 4, 2016

By Rebecca Dellinger-Johnston, Education Committee Member

Emily Tyler, Education Committee Chair, asked Rebecca Dellinger-Johnston, new Piedmont Bird Club (PBC) member, if she would write a report on her first experience in providing education to the public through PBC. Rebecca wrote:

On Wednesday May 4th, PBC hosted a booth at the 2016 Greenway Day celebration. The event was held at Welborne Academy of Science and Technology in High Point from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 pm. Jim Eldrett, Emily Tyler, and Rebecca Dellinger-Johnston were there representing the group.

An estimated 600 children from the 6th through 8th grade, attended the event, with approximately 103 visiting the PBC booth. The children came from both the Middle School and the nearby T.W. Andrews High School. Kids were shown bird nests and bird eggs and were given general facts about local species. The kids also played two educational games matching birds to bird nests and identifying birds based on their silhouettes. The middle schoolers seemed the most interested in the booth; however, both groups did very well with the nest-matching activity and seemed to enjoy it very much. The kids were particularly interested to know why the eggs on display were not going to hatch and how we kept the eggs looking intact.

The kids in this particular school generally come from an urban environment and have little interaction with nature so they were very surprised at many bird facts. They were familiar with some birds like the Northern Cardinal, American Robin, and Eastern Bluebird, but they did not know some common birds like the Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadee, and even the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Our presence gave kids great exposure to the different types of birds and some of their amazing adaptations. The kids really enjoyed touching the bird nest brought in by Rebecca.

Since it is difficult to listen to bird songs and watch birds in a busy and noisy environment, the focus at big events like this is on the games and interactive components. With this in mind, the Education Committee will plan some additional activities, like creating new games, giving out some simple prizes, and showing kids additional props like bird feathers and nests.

Overall the day was a great success. Many students were given PBC pamphlets for them to consider attending future events. A conversation was also started with Steven Ollison, the local middle school science teacher, as to future partnerships in the classroom, science club,

and school events. The local science club is very popular at Welborn and would be a good opportunity for a more focused educational event.