



5th Graders Collect, Plant, and Grow Native Oak Trees at School

Cacapon Institute (CI) partnered with Potomac Valley Audubon Society (PVAS) to increase the reach of Cacapon Institute's PHLOW Growing Native program.



The classroom lessons focused on trees. Students identified the internal and external structure of a trees, learned how to identify native trees species, and the role riparian forest buffers have on keeping our river systems clean.

Students collected acorns outside of class and brought them to school to plant on planting day. Planting supplies included: a plastic cup with a hole pre-drilled in the bottom for drainage, acorn seeds, soil, mulch, and a tub grow-out

station. In order to check the seed viability, students performed a float test. The seeds were placed in a bucket of water and the floating seeds were discarded leaving the sinkers to be planted. Students worked in pairs to plant their seed in the cup provided and place it in the grow-out station.

In total, PVAS engaged four West Virginia schools and three Maryland schools during fall 2015. 321 volunteers contributed 254 volunteer hours toward the success of the Growing Native program.

West Virginia Schools:

- North Jefferson Elementary
- Ranson Elementary School
- South Jefferson Elementary
- St. Joseph Parish School

Maryland Schools:

- Fountain Rock Elementary
- Pleasant Valley Elementary
- Sharpsburg Elementary



The seeds grow during the school year and are monitored by the class. At the conclusion of the school year, students will take home their seedling. Once large enough, students will plant the seedling in the community.

