

South Jefferson Elementary



Students Pot Tree Seedlings for Community Grow-Out Station



The 4th grade students at South Jefferson Elementary School, WV, participated in Growing Native this spring. Students spent four one-hour education visits completing hands-on lessons. The key topics focused on their local watershed and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, stormwater runoff pollution, and the role trees play in our environment.

Following the classroom education sessions led by Potomac Valley Audubon Society, the students planted two-to three-year-old tree seedlings.

Students reviewed the parts of a tree and the role they play in a healthy environment and how humans use trees for resources.

The seventy students planted thirty tree whips on five-gallon pots. The students identified the most important feature on their tree—the root collar—which tells students how deep to plant their tree. This planting depth plays a critical role in the survival of the tree during the coming years. If the root collar is planted too deep the tree will die due to root rot. Students checked, and double checked, the depth throughout the potting process.

These trees were planted in pots because they would likely not receive enough water or survive animal and human hazards. By planting them in pots and transferring them to the caged grow-out station at Eagle Intermediate School, Martinsburg, WV, they will continue to grow until they reach a maturity to be planted out in the community.

Once planted in the community, they will aid in increasing the urban tree canopy, reducing stormwater runoff



pollution, increase habitat for wildlife, add aesthetics to the area, and add shade to riparian areas.



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