

Nature Education at the Shepherdstown Library with the Town Run Watershed Group

This summer, the Town Run Watershed Group brought the magic of nature to life at the Shepherdstown Library with a series of hands-on education sessions for children. These programs, based on **Project WET activities**, combined learning and play, creating a fun way for kids to discover the importance of pollinators, healthy ecosystems, and the wildlife that calls our region home. The activities were customized and led by **Trinity Lee, an AmeriCorps VISTA member**, whose creativity and energy made the sessions both educational and fun.

Turtle Hurdles

The sessions kicked off with **Turtle Hurdles**, a fast-paced game that showed children the dangers turtles face as they grow and move through their habitats. From dodging traffic on busy roads to avoiding plastic pollution, kids “played” as turtles, racing to overcome life’s obstacles. The activity helped them see just how difficult it can be for turtles to survive to adulthood—and why protecting their environment makes such a big difference.

Migration Headache: Monarch Edition

Another highlight was **Migration Headache: Monarch Edition**, where kids learned all about monarch butterflies before “becoming” a monarch butterfly on their long journey south. Starting in Canada, they “migrated” across the library lawn with stops along the way, including the Eastern Panhandle, before reaching Mexico. Along the journey, players picked up **Random Event Cards**—some helpful, like finding a nectar-rich flower patch, and some tricky, like facing a storm or a predator. The game had kids moving, laughing, and thinking about the very real challenges monarchs face on their 2,000-mile trek. The group wrapped up with a visit to the **Monarch Waystation at the Shepherdstown Library**, where kids could see real pollinator plants and imagine how these gardens serve as safe stops for migrating monarchs. They learned how planting milkweed, nectar flowers, and other native species can make a huge impact for pollinators right in our own backyards.

Fun and Lasting Lessons

The excitement and laughter showed just how much the children enjoyed the sessions. They left with not only knowledge but also curiosity and motivation to help wildlife. These games sparked meaningful conversations about how small actions—like planting flowers, keeping yards turtle-safe, or reducing pollution—add up to big change.

The Town Run Watershed Group is thrilled to see local families engaging in fun, nature-based learning. Events like these prove that education doesn’t have to be passive—it can be interactive, imaginative, and joyful.

Stay tuned for more opportunities to learn and play with us as we continue to explore the natural world right here in Shepherdstown!