Title of Session: BirdSleuth Inquiry - Scientific Questions in Your Classroom
Moderator: Jennifer Fee
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Room: BirdSleuth Inquiry Group

JenniferMF: Erik, you're in the right place.

JenniferMF: Thanks for stopping by.

JenniferMF: Are you new to Tapped In?

ErikN: yes about 2 months

PhilK joined the room.

JenniferMF: Have you gone to a discussion group like this before?

JenniferMF: Hi Phil!

PhilK: Hi Jen!

ErikN: none

ErikN: except for IM of course

JenniferMF: Well, it's No Child Left Inside Month… and National Environmental Education Week, so it seems to be the perfect time to chat about resources that will help you get your students outdoors =)

JenniferMF: They pack a lot into April!

ErikN: I'm interested in any ideas or resources anyone can suggest

JenniferMF: Erik and Phil, would you mind to introduce yourselves?

ErikN: Hi I'm from Cleveland OH

ErikN: teacher for 2 years

ErikN: math and science 8th grade

JenniferMF: I'm Jennifer, the Project Leader for BirdSleuth. I work for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca NY,

JenniferMF: BirdSleuth is a great way to combine math and science literacy!

PhilK: Hi! I teach science & biology grades 7-10 in Hillsboro, Oregon. I've been studying bird populations with my students for about 14 years now.

JenniferMF: Phil is also a great resource... his students have been doing Cornell Lab curricula for a long long time =)

ErikN: I downloaded the Birdsleuth resources and I believe I can use it in a variety of ways in the classroom

PhilK: Erik, do you have bird feeders set up at your shool?

JenniferMF: thanks for downloading it, Eric.

ErikN: No we don't

JenniferMF: Are you more urban or suburban?

PhilK: My students monitor the birds that visit our bird feeding station.

ErikN: we are urban.

ErikN: We are urban with very few resources

ErikN: especially in science

JenniferMF: I guess a good place to get started might be to talk about citizen science, and some of our programs that might be suitable for urban environments. Erik, have you heard of "citizen science" or done it before?

ErikN: No. What is it?

JenniferMF: Phil... want to take that one =)

PhilK: Sure

PhilK: Citizen Science gives students the opportunity to participate in real life science projects

PhilK: My students submit their bird data to ebird where scientists at Cornell can use it.

PhilK: My students also write up their own scientific research reports and submit them for publication to Classroom BirdScope

JenniferMF: Erik, I am going to give you some links... be sure to press CTRL when you click the link, so that the link will open in a new window =)

ErikN: ok

BJB2 . o O (or turn off pop up blockers)

JenniferMF: Phil mentioned "eBird" which is a citizen science project... www.eBird.org

PhilK: After students visit our campus bird feeders they are encouraged to start asking their own scientific questions.

PhilK: Then they come up with a hypothesis, collect data, analyze the data. They follow the scientific method....actually use the scientific method

JenniferMF: yikes, maybe we are having technical difficulties.

PhilK: Unfortunately my time is short today. Wouldn't have made it at all if I had class today. Parent Teacher conferences today and my next appointment is in 8 minutes. But I'll hang out as long as I can.

JenniferMF: OK... no worries, it might just be us... and I have 10 million things, too =(

JenniferMF: Phil, just an FYI, I could not get any eBird staff to join the eBird discussion tonight =(

PhilK: That's too bad. Maybe next time!

BJB2: http://ebird.org

ErikN: do I need to be on the site right now?

ErikN: I can just check it out after if that's ok.

JenniferMF: no, you don't need to, I just wanted to share that with you, maybe check on it later.

PhilK: No, I think we just wanted you to know about it.

JenniferMF: Yes, it is a free site, a free project.

JenniferMF: Doesn't require feeders or much of anything. Just a few birds!

ErikN: I sure will check it out. I'm always looking for free resources so it sounds great

JenniferMF: Basically, with citizen science, at least at the Lab, people from anywhere

count birds and send the data to the Lab where scientists can use it.

JenniferMF: Our scientists use the data to find out what bird populations are doing across the continent.

PhilK: If you have outside access to your classroom windows, you might be able to set up some birdfeeders.

ErikN: what grade levels do you use this for?

PhilK: I use it in grades 7 - 10.

JenniferMF: Students generally find that aspect of helping scientists and participating in real science, very motivating.

PhilK: But I think K - 6 teachers use it as well.

JenniferMF: Would you say so Phil?

PhilK: Yes!

PhilK: students get excited about this.

ErikN: I like how much of the Birdsleuth can be used for any type of experiment

JenniferMF: Erik, another project to check out is Celebrate Urban Birds. http://www.birds.cornell.edu/celebration

JenniferMF: "Celebrate" is bilingual (Spanish) in case you have ESL kids.

PhilK: I use BirdSleuth to help teach my students how to use the scientific method. Later in the spring my students then use the scientific method for themselves by producing a science fair project of their own.

ErikN: that sounds like a great idea

PhilK: We just had our science fair on April 2. Now I can relax:)

JenniferMF: It's also free to participate. When you get a chance, check out that website; they will send you a kit that includes a poster and other materials.

ErikN: the birdsleuth really does walk you through the scientific method. It's very well designed

JenniferMF: "Celebrate" focuses on only 15 species. eBird is ANY species... so it is more flexible.

PhilK: Got to go. My next conference appointment is here. Nice to chat with you Eric

PhilK: Bye

JenniferMF: though potentially not quite as easy to use.

ErikN: Thanks for your help

ErikN: bye

PhilK left the room (signed off).

JenniferMF: If you like the idea of using eBird, check out our new lesson download, which will help you get started. http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdsleuth//ebird

BJB2: a reminder that all urls will be in your transcript, Erik

ErikN: right

ErikN: are there any other resources you can recommend that relate to bio diversity?

JenniferMF: Do you mean local biodiversity, or world-wide, or both?

ErikN: both

ErikN: maybe some projects you have done in the past

JenniferMF: Hmmm... I used to be involved with a project called "What's it Like Where You Live" Have you heard of it?

ErikN: No. go ahead

JenniferMF: Let me search for the URL.

JenniferMF: http://www.mbgnet.net/

JenniferMF: Talks about the different biomes, and I think it is age-appropriate for your grade level.

ErikN: I have really been trying to hustle up some hands on labs more so this year than before

ErikN: My students are getting easier to control or I'm getting better at management.

JenniferMF: Hmm... I'll have to think about that some more.

JenniferMF: Or both =)

ErikN: probably both. yes

ErikN: I learned early how essential management is when doing cooperative learning in the classroom

JenniferMF: If you join the BirdSleuth group, or give me your email address, I can follow up with you as I think about or find other resources!

JenniferMF: Are you willing/able to get the kids outside, or do you want more indoor/classroom based activities?

ErikN: yes I would love to get them outside. the long cold Cleveland winter is over!

JenniferMF: HOORAY!

JenniferMF: Check this out... I just learned about it today, so I haven't even looked it over: http://www.eeweek.org/

JenniferMF: There is a list of teaching resources on the left toolbar.

ErikN: great

ErikN: what has compelled you to work so closely with birds?

JenniferMF: Well, what really intrigues me is the citizen science part! I like birds, but I've also seen how birds and citizen science can engage kids in REAL inquiry investigations, and that's what I love!

JenniferMF: You may have seen it on the BirdSleuth site... we publish student work? http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdsleuth/student-research

ErikN: yes I read about it

JenniferMF: I think it is great that kids can complete a project from question to publication, just like scientists do.

JenniferMF: I also like getting kids outside, which this does very well. Plus, it is easy to integrate math, tech, science.

ErikN: yes to see a final result like that must mean a lot to them

ErikN: I tried to download some of the videos about the scientists. and could not URL invalid should I assume it is not Mac compatible?

JenniferMF: Well, I know you said you don't have a lot of resources... so I like that even with nothing (or very little), you can do eBird and get your kids published =)

JenniferMF: I noticed on Friday that the video was down. I have an order in with tech support to fix it. I think it will be up by the end of the week.

JenniferMF: Sorry about that.

BJB2 . o O (so it's not a problem with Mac, Erik)

ErikN: ok.

JenniferMF: Erik, I'll keep my eye out for hands-on resources pertaining to biodiversity, and let you know if I find any.

ErikN: Great

JenniferMF: BJ, any other groups he should check out on Tapped In?

ErikN: Now can you remind me how to join the birdsleuth group to got you my email and such?

BJB2: There is a middle school math group that meets tomorrow...Math Transformers

BJB2: Erik, if you've detached the chat, reattach

BJB2: then look for the welcome note above the chat

ErikN: I don't think I have detached the chat

BJB2: scroll down on the welcome note to the green i

BJB2 . o O (in the sentence This is the group room for BirdSleuth Inquiry)

JenniferMF: Also, Erik, next week in Tapped In BirdSleuth Group workshops, we are looking at some brand new Graphing Resources. I previewed them yesterday "Grackles Graphing"-- fun stuff =) I'm looking for some feedback about how to teach graphing skills. As a math and science teacher, your feedback would be very helpful.

BJB2: click on the green i and you should see the group ID page above this chat

BJB2: select Join this group

ErikN: ok

BJB2: that will subscribe you to the group discussion board and add this group to your drop down favorite places menu next to the Go! button

ErikN: I was looking at that middle school math group also. I think I may check it out.

BJB2: did you join BirdSleuth, Erik?

ErikN: If it was as valuable as this discussion has been I will be quite pleased

JenniferMF: Thanks =) I wish we had a few more teachers-- it's great to get a group together to share resources. BUT, I will keep my eye out for anything I can pass along.

BJB2: Jen, you can post to the group discussion board as you come up with new resources...

JenniferMF: Good idea!

BJB2: then all the members of the group will get that info

JenniferMF: Especially with it being Environmental Education week, there are a number of things I am sure will be released very soon.

BJB2: about 10 minutes left, Jen

ErikN: Is the discussion usually filled up with more teachers?

JenniferMF: Thanks, BJ. Erik, so you have any questions or anything you'd like?

BJB2: This group has recently started so it's a work in progress

JenniferMF: Well, sometimes just a few teachers, but once in awhile, we'll have 5-10 or even a dozen =)

BJB2 . o O (although BirdSleuth has been around for a while)

ErikN: Well I'm glad my first one was small. Made it easier to communicate

JenniferMF: That is true =)

BJB2: you're working on a grant, right, Jen?

JenniferMF: Yes, we got a small grant to investigate ways to offer online support for inquiry projects.

JenniferMF: So I am trying groups like Tapped In to meet teachers and see what their needs and concerns are.

ErikN: I really don't have any further question at this time.

JenniferMF: So thank you, Erik, for being part of that!

BJB2: Thanks, Jen. I'll see you at 7

JenniferMF: Well, perhaps we should say "goodnight" and be in touch soon!

ErikN: You're Welcome!

JenniferMF: See you later BJ-- thanks!!

JenniferMF: Goodnight all!

ErikN: thank you for all the information and resources Jennifer

BJB2: Nice job, Erik

ErikN: thank you bj

JenniferMF: you are very welcome.

BJB2 . o O (real time chats take some getting used to!)

ErikN: I think I'll be alright

ErikN: bye now

BJB2 waves bye