



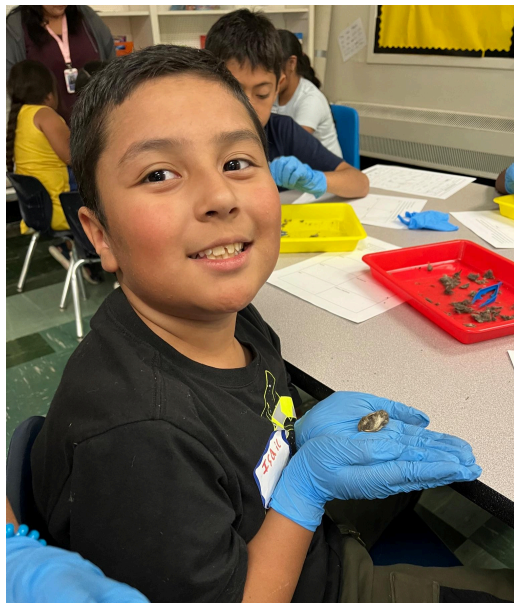
# THINK WILD

Think Wild

Central Oregon Native Bird Education

Oregon Fund for Ornithology Grant Report  
January 31, 2025

Think Wild provided Native Bird Education programming to youth and the community in Central Oregon throughout 2024 with the support of the Oregon Fund for Ornithology. These programs connected people of all ages with their local open spaces as well as the birds who inhabit them, furthering our mission of inspiring the high desert community to care for and protect native wildlife through education, conservation, rescue, and rehabilitation.



Throughout the year, the Think Wild team taught classroom lessons, summer camp sessions, field trips, community bird walks, nest box building workshops, campground presentations, and other community outreach programs to connect the community in Central Oregon with our avian neighbors. Some highlights from 2024 included:

**Owl Pellet Dissection:** One of the most popular lessons that we offer to elementary and middle school students is owl pellet dissection. Students learn about food webs and birds of prey, then investigate what makes up the diets of these birds by dissecting owl pellets. The hands-on, exploratory nature of this activity gives students a sense of discovery as they piece together the skeletons of small rodents and other prey species.

**Barnes Butte Elementary School Nest Box Building and Installation:** As part of an ongoing monthly education program with 5th grade students from Barnes Butte Elementary School in Prineville, Think Wild education staff led a nest box building workshop for northern flickers. Students took part in assembling and decorating the boxes, digging holes and sinking posts, and installing the completed nest boxes - two on site at their school and two at Tetherow Crossing Park. On their field trip day to Tetherow Crossing, students also learned about the birds, plants, and wildlife that live in local riparian habitats, and planted native plants to support those inhabitants.



**Green Ridge Raptor Site community field**

**trip:** In an event put on in partnership with East Cascades Bird Alliance, Think Wild staff, volunteers, and community members learned about raptor biology, habits, migration, and history in the local area. This event was so popular our first year (2023), that we are now offering it annually!



**Youth-Led Community Bird Walks:** We are always looking for ways to engage our community in local wildlife observation and stewardship. In this case, an already-engaged community member came

to us in the form of an 11 year old birder! Mason, an avid bird enthusiast, reached out to Think Wild wanting to get more involved in helping local wildlife. After talking with Mason and his family, we decided to have him lead bird walks in the community, sharing his interest, passion, and knowledge of our local birds with others. He's now led two community bird walks with us!



**Hawk Perch Building and Installation:** We began offering hawk perch installation to help landowners with rodent issues. This service has become increasingly popular, and has attracted the attention of local golf courses, one of which pledged to cease their use of rodenticides and instead utilize natural predator behaviors to manage rodents ([read the news story here](#)). These projects engage community volunteers in the construction and installation of the hawk perches.

**City Nature Challenge Bioblitz:** In 2024, Think Wild kicked off Central Oregon's first City Nature Challenge bioblitz, an annual global, collaborative citizen science effort to find and document wildlife observations in and around urban areas. We hosted several events around Central Oregon to connect community members with the natural world and empower them to contribute valuable data to local biodiversity research.

**Osprey Nest Installation and Citizen Science Monitoring:** Think Wild began an osprey nest platform installation and citizen science monitoring program in 2024. This includes partnering with local electric companies, who help us dig the hole and erect the post, and benefit from osprey using designated nesting platforms instead of power poles and lines. We have also begun installing citizen science photopoint monitoring posts to engage the community in making nest platform observations ([read the news story here](#)).