

Trout in the Classroom - White Mountain Montessori School

Final Report

4/11/12

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The Kindergarten and Elementary students at White Mtn. Montessori School in Lakeside, AZ. have been involved in the Trout in the Classroom Project since September of 2011. Over the past few months we've had some ups and downs with regards to the health of the fish and the tank. However, within a two month period we were able to balance the chemicals within the tank with much success thereafter. Within our 50 gallon tank we originally had 8 juvenile Apache Trout, at this point we now have 2 very healthy Apache Trout that have survived. The fish that we lost were due to territorial behavior by the larger trout and a stressed environment. For this reason, we have decided to keep and sustain our current number of fish (since they are the larger and more territorial) to ensure that no more fish would be lost. We have also been raising (since Jan.) several trout fry in an isolated portion of the tank that has been netted off to protect them from the larger fish. These fry have successfully tripled their size since arriving and are doing great overall.

Within the classroom, the students have been actively involved in raising these fish (feeding, checking water temp./quality, changing water, and filtering the gravel). We've have been quite impressed with the students ability to monitor the fish and to adjust their care accordingly. The students have also enjoyed naming each fish with has helped give them ownership for their overall care. In addition, we have included many different lessons with regards to this project ranging from their development, studying their natural habitat, and scientific observations involving their behavior and health. Several of our older students have also given follow-up lessons to our younger kinder students to help explain their growth, feeding habits, and how to mimic their natural habitat within our tank.

Overall, this project has been fantastic and the students seem to be learning a lot from these activities. We are absolutely thrilled that we were chosen to be involved in this grant project and we sincerely appreciate the support we have received, not only from Robin Knox at the Western Native Trout Initiative, and Jennifer Johnson at the US Fish and Wildlife Agency.

Photo 1. Live Apache Trout in the classroom aquarium



Photo 2. White Mountain Montessori School Trout project

