

IVCF Burrowing Owl Stewardship and Educational Grant

Burrowing Owl Educational Outreach to Elementary Schools and Farming Community

We focused on two groups to provide educational outreach efforts to: elementary fourth graders and the local farming community. We created two different curriculums and went out into the community.

Our farm classes were a huge success! We held two classes, July 28, 2014 and March 17, 2015 for furthering educational credits and had a huge turnout of over 45 people combined. We had the following very informational speakers at both classes:

- Karen Riesz, CDFW Environmental Scientist;
 - CDFW rules and regulations regarding the Burrowing Owl;
- Nicolas Berg, Imperial County Agricultural Commissioner's Office;
 - Guidelines on pesticide use and migratory birds and other wildlife;
- Jessica Loveccio, IID and Kelly Bishop, IID
 - Imperial Irrigation District Burrowing Owl program;
- Marie Barrett, Wildlife Biologist, Barrett's Biological Surveys
 - Recognition of Burrowing Owls and other migratory birds in Imperial County and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to protect them;
- Al Kalin, Imperial County Farm Bureau
 - Burrowing Owl artificial burrows, opportunities for establishment in local farming communities.

This class was two days, the first day was in the Imperial County Farm Bureau conference room for the classroom portion with the above mentioned speakers, and the second day was out in the field actually installing artificial burrows. A few farmers expressed interest in installing artificial burrows on their land, but we have yet to set up the installations.

We partnered up with Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program (IVROP) to present the BUOW educational curriculum created for the grant to local fourth grade school children. Kristian Salgado with IVROP was able to give the thirty minute presentation to ten different fourth grade classrooms throughout Imperial County. It was a very interactive class presentation with a BUOW hand puppet and students picking up gummy worms with their feet!

Questionnaires were completed at both farm classes to determine the amount of information that was learned in the classes. Ms. Salgado also collected evaluation forms from the various teachers whose classes she presented to.

The BUOW educational pamphlets have been revised and distributed to many locations throughout Imperial County.

We are still investigating good locations for the BUOW camera in an artificial burrow. We have met with Tom Anderson at the Sonny Bono Wildlife Refuge to discuss possible locations. The connectivity and camera types are proving to be our biggest challenge.

Overall I feel these funds were used with a very successful outcome. I look forward to presenting more in depth analysis with pictures at the July 8th meeting.

Glenna Barrett
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