



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media contact: dnr.pio@illinois.gov

IDNR and ICF award 26 youth habitat enhancement projects through the Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Grant Program

SPRINGFIELD – More than \$40,000 in grants for 26 Illinois schoolyard habitat action projects have been awarded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Illinois Conservation Foundation (ICF) for the 2025 application period.

The Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant program supports the development or enhancement of wildlife habitat on school grounds or other public places. Funding is provided through donations to the ICF.

“The Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant program provides students and educators with opportunities to create native habitat in their schoolyards and increase the use of native plants in Illinois landscapes while benefitting wildlife species,” said **IDNR Director Natalie Phelps Finnie**. “By participating in these projects, students learn that their efforts can make a positive difference in the world, and they gain experience in problem-based learning by planning, developing, and maintaining the habitat.”

The Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation is the major sponsor of this program. Nearly \$394,000 in Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant funding has been distributed since the program’s inception.

“We want school children to learn about nature through hands-on experiences,” Finnie said. “It is our goal to have Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant program projects developed in every county of the state and eventually at every school. So far, we have supported projects in 86 Illinois counties.”

The next Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant Program application window will open this spring through Dec. 3. Apply online at the IDNR [education grants website](#). For additional information call 217-524-4126 or email dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov.

The 2025 Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grants [recipients](#) and their projects are:

Clinton County

- Bartelso School District 57, Bartelso – \$2,000. Fourth through fifth grades, pollinator plants.

Cook County

- Avoca West Elementary School, Glenview – \$1,215.92. Second and third grades, pollinator garden.
- Belmont-Cragin Elementary, Chicago – \$1,360. Fourth through fifth grades, pollinator garden.
- Belmont-Cragin Elementary, Chicago – \$1,850. Sixth through eighth grades, butterfly and pollinator garden.
- Cub Scout Troop 3936 and St. Elizabeth Trinity School, Chicago – \$579.80. First through fourth grades, pollinator garden.

- Jovita Idár Elementary School, Chicago – \$1,437. Kindergarten through eighth grade, prairie garden.
- Reavis High School, Burbank – \$1,347. Ninth and 10th grades, prairie pollinator plot.
- Sacred Heart School, Chicago – \$1,000. Fifth through eighth grades, pollinator garden.
- William P. Gray Elementary School, Chicago – \$1,882.32. Fourth through sixth grades, pollinator garden.
- Women for Green Spaces with Orozco Community School, Chicago – \$2,000. Preschool through eighth grade, woodland garden.

DuPage County

- Hawthorne Elementary School, Wheaton – \$1,487.37. First through fifth grades, woodland garden.
- Hinsdale Central High School, Hinsdale – \$1,065. Ninth through 12th grades, pollinator garden.

Franklin County

- Christopher Unit School District 99, Christopher – \$1,994. Ninth through 12th grades, pollinator garden.

Fulton County

- Junior Master Naturalists, Canton – \$2,000. Sixth through 12th grades, prairie and woodland plants.

Jackson County

- Trinity Christian School, Carbondale – \$1,120. Second through fifth grades, pollinator garden.

Kane County

- H.C. Storm Elementary School, Batavia – \$1,677.84. First through fifth grades, pollinator garden.

Kendall County

- Oswego East High School, Oswego – \$1,972.50. Ninth through 12th grades, woodland habitat.

Lake County

- Elmwood Elementary School, Zion – \$1,199.65. Third through fifth grades, pollinator garden.
- Emmons Grade School, Antioch – \$2,000. Kindergarten through eighth grade, pollinator garden.
- Sheridan School, Lake Forest – \$2,000. Kindergarten through fourth grade, pollinator garden.

LaSalle County

- Waltham Elementary School District 185, Utica – \$921.99. Kindergarten through eighth grade, pollinator Garden.

Livingston

- Tri-Point High School, Cullom, 9th-12th grade. Pollinator garden. Grant Award \$686.21.

McHenry County

- Valley View Elementary, McHenry – \$2,000. Kindergarten through fifth grade, native plants.

McLean County

- Fox Creek Elementary, Bloomington – \$2,000. Kindergarten through fifth grade, native tree plantings.

Peoria County

- Peoria Academy, Peoria – \$2,000. Preschool through fifth grade, pollinators and trees.

Whiteside County

- Washington Elementary, Sterling – \$988. Third through fifth grades, butterfly garden.

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