P107. WORKING COOPERATIVELY WITH SCHOOL SYSTEMS TO INTEGRATE CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION WITH A LOCAL CONTEXT INTO SCHOOL SYSTEM CURRICULUM

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In the Chesapeake Bay watershed, Audubon has worked with local school systems to integrate climate science units into upper elementary and middle school curriculum. Pickering Creek Audubon Center worked closely with public schools to implement grade-wide climate programming with students in fifth and sixth grade. Through participation in the Maryland and Delaware Climate Change Education, Assessment, and Research project and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association’s Climate Stewards Education Project we are sharing these successes with statewide partners and working towards implementing climate change curriculum more broadly across the state. Through academic and teacher professional development programs, Pickering Creek Audubon Center educators train teachers on integrating climate science into their current lessons and review and collaborate on parts of the program teachers will lead in the classroom. Students are connected to climate change through a series of engaging in class and field activities over the course of several weeks. With the term “global climate change” making climate change seem more like a global problem and less like a local problem, Pickering Creek educators use wetlands and birds as examples of local habitats and wildlife impacted by climate change. Through these lessons led by Pickering Creek Audubon Center educators and augmented by material covered by classroom teachers, students get a thorough introduction into the mechanism of climate change, local impacts of climate change on habitats and wildlife, and actions they can take as a community to mitigate the effects of climate change.