

## Blair County School's Bioblitz Event Supported by PA DEP EE Grant



In late November, the Tyrone School campus hosted an educational Bioblitz event, made possible through generous funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (PA DEP) Environmental Education grant. The event, which brought together students, teachers, and environmental experts, aimed to foster an appreciation for biodiversity and environmental stewardship among the participants.

### **An Immersive Learning Experience**

The Bioblitz began with a welcome and introduction to the concept of a Bioblitz, where students learned about the importance of biodiversity and the day's objectives.

Following the initial briefing, students were divided into teams and equipped with tools for exploration, including collection buckets, thermometers and microscopes for gathering and analyzing samples. Under the guidance of team leaders, the students embarked on a field exploration activity where they observed, documented, and collected data on various species within a designated area of the school grounds.

### **Hands-On Learning and Collaboration**

Throughout the day, students utilized field guides and mobile apps to identify species, gaining hands-on experience in data collection and verification. The event featured interactive sessions with volunteers from the John Kennedy Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Penn State Extension Master Gardeners and Master Watershed Stewards, a biologist and educator, Jessie Kester and representatives from the Conservation District, who provided expert insights and enhanced the learning with activities.

The bioblitz was structured to emphasize teamwork, environmental respect, and the significance of scientific inquiry. Students were encouraged to work collaboratively, fostering a sense of community and shared learning.



### **Inspiring Future Environmental Stewards**

As the day concluded, there was an evident sense of excitement and accomplishment among the students. The Bioblitz not only broadened their understanding of local ecosystems but also instilled a sense of responsibility to protect and cherish the environment.

This event is just one example of how educational initiatives, supported by community and governmental resources, can make a lasting impact on young minds. Tyrone School looks forward to repeating the experience with another spring bioblitz.