



## High Tech at the River Park

Kari Shelton, Science

Matt Leader, Biology

Third & Eleventh Grade

High Tech Elementary North County

High Tech High North County

Representatives from the San Dieguito River Park had a need which was acquiring sensitive habitat along the San Dieguito River Valley for wildlife corridors and the preservation of open space. The third and eleventh grade classes also saw a need, to better understand the organisms, people, places and issues surrounding natural spaces at our home in North County. Together with the media arts teacher, Anna Petrick and Kari Shelton's third grade students, students shared the issues, stories, and perspectives they encounter from research and in-depth analysis in the class and on the trail. The goal of the high schoolers was to help the third grade with their understanding through lessons, collaborative writing, research and videos available to use in class. Students learned about the life history, behaviors and feeding habits of organisms through observation in the field and back in the class with formalized investigations.

### Teacher Reflection

One of my biggest take-aways is how powerful having organisms in the class can be. The eleventh and thurd grade students were so motivated to care for and learn deeply about the organisms they housed in the class throughout the project. Getting to know the organisms closely also motivated students to work together to find and explore the habitats of the organisms in their study. It was wonderful working alongside 3rd grade students and if anything, I think connecting with even more experiences together both in the field on trips and with experimentation in class.

—Matt Leader

### Student Reflection

I think choosing our own organism to study and create videos about was exciting. I've always been interested in fungi and it gave me a chance to study what I wanted. I also loved going on the trips to find fungi and see it in nature. Ia had never been to any of the places on our trips before even though I've lived here my whole life.

—Rachel S.

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