

This 2012 Ribbon of Hope grant supported activities engaging children of Western NC in hands-on, outdoor scientific pursuits. "Project EXPLORE," engages students at their own schoolyards in guided, arboretum educator-led science programs based on current science curriculum standards. Students are engaged in ongoing data collection, and programs focus on providing information on the local flora and fauna, understanding of the scientific method, collection of natural science data, and submission of data to professional scientists for review and interpretation.

**North Carolina Arboretum Society**