

CULTURAL NEWSLETTER

May/June 2019

Dear Parents,

Our vertebrate studies have progressed from the water (fish), to a brief visit to land (amphibians). Now we are on the land *for good!* **REPTILES** have dry scaly skin and reproduce by laying eggs. Also, they are cold blooded. That is, their bodies are incapable of generating and sustaining their own body heat so they must absorb heat directly from the sun and from objects that have been heated by the sun. As with all of our phyla, we are learning how these diverse animals eat, excrete, breathe, grow, move, sense and reproduce. Your child is currently working on one or two models that emphasize the reptile's dry scaly skin and the wide variety of patterns on their skins. You can look forward to a snake and/or a turtle coming home soon.

Now we are ready to take to the skies! As we are finishing up our reptile project, we will soon move on to birds. **Did you ever notice how the bird's feathers resemble the reptiles scales?** Well, that's not an accident! It's another evolutionary step for living things on our earth. We will examine the bird's unique characteristics that support **FLIGHT** as they also do the seven things that keep all living things alive.

Before we end the year with a very special mammal project, we are going to dissect eggs and see how this unit is able to nurture and protect a new life. I hope you'll be able to include your child in the preparation of your next omelet. You can teach a new recipe, and your child can instruct you about the miracle of the egg.

As much as possible, we like to get up close and personal with all the living things we study. We will do so in a big way with our **field trip to the Oakland Zoo in June**. This trip is a wonderful culmination to our year-long zoology studies. **It never disappoints!** More details to come...

We've had a terrific year together. I hope your child continues to grow in his/her enthusiasm and caring for our land, water and all living things on earth. I send you best regards for a happy and relaxing summer.

Sincerely,

Toni Tomacci

“A great social mission that will ensure the child justice, harmony and love remains to be accomplished. This great task must be the work of education, for this is the only way to build a new world and to bring peace”

~ Maria Montessori