Dear Brent Bears,

As your specials teachers we have a unique opportunity to share our subjects with you year after year and watch you grow. This year has been unlike any other school year that we have had before. While the changes have meant that we have missed out on many of the routines, events and celebrations that have traditionally marked our years together, you have shown that, no matter what, you are still musicians and actors, artists and scientists, athletes and students. As your teachers, we want you to know that you’re valued for the person you are, you are loved and supported, and each you have so many unique ways to interact with your environment.

We hope that through our passion for our individual subjects, and for teaching in general, we have shown you ways that you can be engaged with your environment no matter what that environment looks like. You have demonstrated how you can make amazing artwork out of materials you found outside and at home. As scientists you have documented and studied the wildlife and natural phenomena in your own backyards. You have made music with your voices and homemade instruments and stayed fit and active in a time when getting out and moving around isn’t easy. Through all of these actions you have learned the most important lesson of all: that you can control the one thing that really matters - your own selves. No matter what form summer takes, whether it contains those things you have come to expect or not, we, your teachers, love you and we’ll be here for you.
Be a connected naturalist with [iNaturalist](https://www.inaturalist.org)

The iNaturalist app is an amazingly easy way to engage with nature and connect with other naturalists all over the world. Every time you see anything outside, from the coolest animal to the humblest weed, you take a picture of what you find, the app helps you identify what you saw, and then you submit your findings.

It's fun, and it is real science, since all of your observations get shared with international databases that you can search too.

**Step 1:** Download iNaturalist on your devices

**Step 2:** Within the app, join these two projects:
- Brent Elementary Naturalists
- Biodiversity of the Anacostia River

**Step 3:** Start making observations

During the 2020-21 school year, we'll use our data for learning in science class!

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Want to relive Brent Bears Naturalist Week? Here are the videos:
- [Mr. Mangiaracina and Milo visit Slygo Creek](#)
- [Mr. Mangiaracina describes the Naturalist Notebook Challenge](#)
- Witness urban wildlife on the Anacostia River
- Explore the Great Lakes on this Virtual Field Trip
- Work on the activities in this [Wetlands Activity Packet](#)
- Watch this episode of The Magic Schoolbus Gets Swamped

The complete Naturalist Week Guide is still posted at: [www.tinyurl.com/Brentnaturalist](http://www.tinyurl.com/Brentnaturalist)

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How do I use iNaturalist?

Check out [this video](#) for a demonstration of iNaturalist.

This is a cool [field guide](#) made by the Anacostia Watershed Society.