Learning to appreciate nature

With more than 7 billion people living on the planet, each consuming more resources than ever before, it’s vitally important for humans to appreciate the environment that sustains them.

Here in Pottstown, the Natural Lands Trust is partnering with NorthBay, an outdoor education group, to immerse Pottstown elementary and middle school students in the natural world around them.

This school year, fourth graders from all of Pottstown’s elementary schools are exploring nature in their school yards and at parks, starting last fall with a visit to Memorial Park and the Manatawny Creek.

This spring, they will travel to the Crow’s Nest Preserve in Chester County to explore water quality in the French Creek.

At the end of the year, the students will design an action project that will address an important environmental issue in Pottstown.

Next year, the program will be extended to fifth graders, and the following year, sixth graders, culminating in a week in residence with their teachers in a NorthBay facility in Elk Neck State Park on the Chesapeake Bay.

The program is funded through grants obtained by the Natural Lands Trust.

With climate change underway, it is more important than ever for our young people to appreciate our dependence on nature and how diligently we must strive to protect it.

Because of their compact form and small building lots, towns like Pottstown are the best way for people to live in harmony with nature. They should be green and vibrant with ample trees, shrubs, birds and small animals.

Thanks to the NorthBay program, our young people will see their hometown with enlightened eyes.