

Learning at the library

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HANCOCK - A mix of ages came out for a lesson in drawing nature Wednesday at the Hancock Public Schools Library.

Wendy Halperin, a Michigan children's author and illustrator, led a crowd of about 50 in pencil and crayon techniques and drawing wildflowers, fish, birds, and even invasive spotted knapweed. **The event was co-sponsored by the Copper Country Reading Council and Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative.**

"What I'm trying to do is have children become more observant outdoors. ... when they walk outside, they can sit down and observe something, and then record it," Halperin said.

In doing that, she said, the children can learn from nature, and also find beauty in it.

"Nature is just so darn interesting," she said.

Halperin said she would also like to draw Michigan ferns, moss and fungi.

Attendees got pencils and a box of 64 crayons. But there are lots more colors than that--- Halperin demonstrated, pressing harder and then lighter against the paper to create a spectrum of orange. She showed other ways to create shading; a pencil of dandelion yellow was burnished with a darker line of goldenrod yellow at the bottom to create the illusion of three-dimensionality.

She walked the crowd through the shading of flower petals, created by a light touch with pink.

Karen Scholie, an art teacher, attended with her daughters Sydnie, 3, and Emilie, 6.

"I think it's awesome," she said as Sydnie drew while sitting in her lap. "She's got a great way of teaching to all ages, especially children."

