



Create a buzz

Make and plant wildflower seed balls that look like the Earth to help pollinating insects

There are 27,000 species of insect in the UK and each one has an important role to play in our eco-system. However, insect numbers are declining because their habitats are threatened. Help your section find out why we need insects and how we can help them to thrive.

You will need

- scrap paper, torn up (4 sheets per person)
- green and blue food dye
- wipe-clean tablecloths
- washing-up gloves
- aprons
- rubber band (1 per person)
- cups or mugs (1 per person)
- bowls (2 per group)
- old cotton fabric
- wildflower seeds
- trowels
- watering cans

A bug's life

We need insects because they help to pollinate plants, including crops that we use to make food. Bees in particular are prolific pollinators.

Shockingly, 35 of the UK's bee species are facing extinction because of pesticides and shrinking habitats. Some farms are starting to reinstate the tradition of letting strips of land in their fields grow wild, to help nature return.

Wogglebox



Lottie says:
'I like the idea of doing this because I want to get up close to the bugs and look at them in more detail.'



Suitable for Beavers, Cubs and Scouts

Instructions

- 1** Discuss with your young people what a habitat is. What sort of habitat do wild insects need?
- 2** Divide everyone into groups and give each group the bowls, scrap paper, seeds, rubber bands, a piece of cotton fabric and a cup. Ask the young people to tear the scrap paper into small pieces.
- 3** Fill the bowls with water – just enough to cover the paper. Add green food colouring to one bowl and blue to the other, then ask the groups to divide the scraps of paper between the bowls and submerge them in the coloured water. Leave the paper to soak in the water for 15 minutes.
- 4** Ask each young person to lay a square of fabric over their cup and secure it with an elastic band. Then ask them to take it in turns to take small handfuls of blue and green pulp and put them on the fabric.

- 5** Next, they need to sprinkle seeds into the pulp and mix it up with their hands. Show them how to remove the elastic band and squeeze the fabric over the cups to remove excess moisture.

- 6** Finally, they can roll the pulp into a ball, remove it from the piece of fabric and leave the flower balls to dry until your next meeting.

- 7** At your next meeting, find somewhere nearby to dig holes and plant your wildflower balls (make sure you have permission to dig and plant first). Once they are in the ground give them some water.

- 8** Return in a month's time to see the wildflowers' progress. For at least three months, help the young people to keep a record of what insects they see being attracted to the flowers, by using pictures, sketches, photographs or audio recordings.

Time needed 90 minutes

Badges



Pets at Home partners the Beaver Animal Friend and Cub Animal Carer Activity Badges

Partner



Take it further

Find out about the dangers that threaten wildlife in its natural habitat. For example, pesticides used in farming can stop wildflowers from growing. The result is fewer insects.

More information

For more badge resources and activity sheets visit: scouts.org.uk/petsathome