

Earth Day Fun

Overview: Every day should be Earth Day! How can we expect the next generation to care for our environment if they have little interaction with the natural world that we are asking them to protect? These activities highlight some garden-related fun that helps kids get motivated to protect our planet.

Materials: Varies by activity

Approximate Time to Complete: Varies by activity

Location: Indoor and Outdoor

Ages: All ages

Season: All seasons

Observation

Instructions: Try some of the following activities to build kids' connection to their environment.

Take a closer look. Setting aside dedicated time to observe nature in the garden or in a local natural space may not sound like a high impact activity, but it is. We live in a world where manmade products are constantly screaming for our attention — and as cliché as it is, sometimes we do need to just stop and smell the roses. Plan time for your kids to explore the world around them in an intentional way where the focus is on simple observations.

Record observations. Take observations a step further and use a different part of your kids' brains by employing a tool to record their observations. There are many different ways to do this — write in a journal, draw in a sketch book, take photos, record video — choose the method that builds the most excitement for your kids.

Share observations and collect data. Extend your observations even further by finding a way to share your findings. This could be as simple as offering to create an informational display for a public space like a school or library. There are also a number of citizen science projects that love your help collecting specific data. Here are a few you may want to check out:

- Monarch Watch: <https://www.monarchwatch.org/>
- The Lost Ladybug Project: <http://www.lostladybug.org/>
- Journey North (monitors a variety of migratory animals): <https://journeynorth.org/>
- October Big Day (Bird count): <https://ebird.org/octoberbigday>
- The Great Backyard Bird Count (February): <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>



What's Buzzing in My Garden?								
Spend 30 minutes in your garden keeping track of the number of pollinators that visit different colored flowers. Record your observations in this chart.								
	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White
Bee								
Butterfly								
Beetle								
Fly								
Hummingbird								

What can you learn from your observations?

What pollinator did you see the most? _____
The least? _____
Did some pollinators visit only flowers of one color? _____
Which pollinators? _____
Which colors? _____
Did some pollinators visit many different colored flowers? _____
Which pollinators? _____
What colors? _____

© 2008 KidsGardening.org

Find a full-size printable page at the end of this article.

Or visit our Pollinator Journal activity: <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-pollinator-journal/>

For more ideas and tips about engaging your kids in connecting to their environment through observation, check out these additional activity resources from KidsGardening:

[A Year in the Garden](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-year-in-garden-journal/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-year-in-garden-journal/>

[Pollinator Journal](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-pollinator-journal/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-pollinator-journal/>

[Photo Fun](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-photo-fun/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-photo-fun/>

[Make a Garden Art Box](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-garden-art-box/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-garden-art-box/>

[Wildlife Inventory](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-wildlife-inventory/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-wildlife-inventory/>

[Bug Hunt](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-bug-hunt/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-bug-hunt/>

[Scavenger Hunt in the Garden](https://kidsgardening.org/scavenger-hunt-garden/): <https://kidsgardening.org/scavenger-hunt-garden/>



Action

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle in the Garden. Gardening is naturally an activity that lends itself to reducing, re-using, and recycling. Your kitchen scraps can become compost. Your plastic food containers can become seed starting vessels. Old signs can become supports for climbing plants. Using the garden as a way to showcase practical applications to reduce the amount of materials going to the landfill can inspire them to see additional opportunities other places too and a starting point for having a conversation about the need to reduce the overall waste we are producing. Here are some ideas to get you started:



[Reducing, Reusing and Recycling in the Garden](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-reducing-re-using-and-recycling-in-the-garden/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-reducing-re-using-and-recycling-in-the-garden/>

[Composting](https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-composting/): <https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-composting/>

[Make a Worm Compost Bin](https://kidsgardening.org/worm-compost/): <https://kidsgardening.org/worm-compost/>

Make a positive contribution to your environment. Humans have made very significant changes to the environment. Most (and probably very close to all) of these changes have led to disruptions in the natural landscape resulting in negative impacts on other life in the ecosystem. Finding ways to replace some of what was lost, such as replanting native plants and trees, spreading wildflower seeds, planting spaces for animals such as pollinators, and finding other creative ways to introduce a bit of nature into even the most urban spaces (such as using container and vertical gardens) can make a difference. Check out these articles for inspiration for possible contributions:



[Plant a Butterfly Garden](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-plant-a-butterfly-garden/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-plant-a-butterfly-garden/>

[Seed Balls](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-seed-balls/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-seed-balls/>

[Plant a Family Tree](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-plant-a-family-tree/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-plant-a-family-tree/>

[Container Garden for Kids](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-container-gardening-for-kids/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-container-gardening-for-kids/>

[Planting for Pollinators](https://kidsgardening.org/planting-for-pollinators/): <https://kidsgardening.org/planting-for-pollinators/>

Solve a problem. There is nothing more empowering for kids than being involved in a project that helps improve their community. Just picking up trash around their neighborhood, schoolyard, or another community natural space is an easy way to start. Perhaps there is a spot where water puddles in your schoolyard where you could install a rain garden. Maybe your neighborhood has areas of bare soil that experience erosion from wind and water that you could plant and then care for. Have you experienced a wildfire or natural disaster recently? Kids can explore growing native plants from seed to repopulate damaged plant life. Identifying concerns specific to your local environment and then finding ways for kids to make a difference is a lesson they will never forget. They will be able to see how their actions directly impact the environment. Here are a few gardening techniques that might help mitigate local environmental problems:



[Rain Gardens](https://kidsgardening.org/lesson-plans-rain-gardens/): <https://kidsgardening.org/lesson-plans-rain-gardens/>

[Wise Watering](https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-wise-watering/): <https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-wise-watering/>

[Encourage Pollinators and Beneficial Insects](https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-encourage-pollinators-and-beneficial-insects/): <https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-encourage-pollinators-and-beneficial-insects/>

[Composting](https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-composting/): <https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-composting/>

[Food Forests](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-how-to-food-forest/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-how-to-food-forest/>

[Make a Lasagna Garden](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-make-a-lasagna-garden/): <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-make-a-lasagna-garden/>

Spread the Message

Just spreading the word about the importance of caring for our earth is a great activity for kids. Whether it be a [garden-themed birthday party](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-throw-a-garden-birthday-party/) (<https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-throw-a-garden-birthday-party/>) that shows others how much fun gardening can be to [giving gifts from the garden](https://kidsgardening.org/blog-holiday-gifts-from-garden/) (<https://kidsgardening.org/blog-holiday-gifts-from-garden/>) to share the beauty of nature.

[Earth Day Seed Paper](https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-earth-day-seed-paper/) (<https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-earth-day-seed-paper/>) is a great way to plant the seeds of love for our environment.



What's Buzzing in My Garden?

Spend 30 minutes in your garden keeping track of the number of pollinators that visit different colored flowers. Record your observations in this chart.

	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	White
Bee								
Butterfly								
Beetle								
Fly								
Hummingbird								

What can you learn from your observations?

What pollinator did you see the most? _____

The least? _____

Did some pollinators visit only flowers of one color? _____

Which pollinators? _____

Which colors? _____

Did some pollinators visit many different colored flowers? _____

Which pollinators? _____

What colors? _____