



INSECT PLANTING

Materials you need:

This is an easy way to help children understand that there are many beneficial insects that are really helpful in the garden. They assist with pollination and pest control. Two most common workers are ladybirds and stingless bees.

Modify and select the plants used in this activity to suit your own local environment & insects.

- A garden bed, large pots or small space for children to plant a few flowers – sunny most of the day if possible.
- Garden tools the children can use.
- Potting mix – if using pots.
- Watering cans and water.
- A selection of beneficial insect attracting seedlings or seeds. You might like to try: Marguerite Daisy's, Lavender, Borage, Catnip, Bergamot, Rosemary, Daffodils, Calendula, Coriander and Geraniums.

Setup for play:

- Work together with the children to prepare your pot or garden bed with the children then dig a shallow trough to plant seeds if you are using them or individual holes if planting seedlings. Check the planting instructions on the trays or packets for spacing information.
- Explain to the children as you choose the flowers and plant together why you are creating a garden for insects!
- Look after the plants each day with water and sunshine.

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What are they learning with this activity?

As the children create the insect friendly garden they are learning to:

- Explore, infer, predict and problem solve.
- Broaden their understanding of the world.
- Make predictions and generalisations about aspects of the natural world around them.
- Use their senses to explore the natural environment
- Explore simple scientific concepts through play and experimentation
- Respect and care for natural living things
- Understand the interdependence between land, plants and people.
- Use observational skills to look closely and notice details.
- Observe and describe characteristics of living things.
- Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

Extending the play:

- Incorporate further investigation and learning opportunities around beneficial insects like bees and ladybirds in the garden. Talk about how the Native Bee is stingless and is also responsible for pollinating and cross pollinating our flowers and vegetables – without bees most of our veggies wouldn't grow without the help of hand pollination. Different types of ladybirds can eat aphids and powdery mildew.
- Use books, puzzles and online videos to research and investigate. See if you can identify more beneficial insects in the local area.
- Build a bug hotel near your flower bed.

