Grow On!

Newsletter for MG SPROUTS Families

Session Two: Jack's Garden

Dear _____:

Today I learned all about Jack's Garden! Jack had a beautiful garden where he planted lots of things. He had a cat and lots of good critters lived in the soil, like earthworms. When the rain came and watered in the seeds, all of the little sprouts came up! The sprouts grew into plants that flowered. Lots of living things visit the garden, including the insects that get nectar from the flowers and birds that like the insects. There is a lot that goes on in the garden!

We made plant labels today. It's important to know what we planted and where we planted it. Since we will soon be planting seeds and working with plants, we made plant labels so that we would be ready.

Our Master Gardener leaders told us that the garden is a very exciting place to be, and I believe them! There are so many critters to see and watch and learn about.

Thanks for taking me to SPROUTS!

Love,

_____ (name)

I had a lot of fun today at MG SPROUTS! I am looking forward to coming to the next session

_____

I have some journal sheets to work on before then. I can look in our garden for ideas. I can draw and write about what I see and share it at the next SPROUTS session.

Living Things in the Garden

The garden is an ecosystem in itself. When healthy, each organism, whether plant or animal, has a specific role to play. Gardeners can easily spot some pollinators in the garden, those critters that contribute to the productivity of crops as well as to the survival and reproduction of native plants. In order for pollinators to survive and flourish, they require the following things:

- Food, shelter, water;
- Living space;
- A place to reproduce undisturbed; and
- Nesting materials.

These things can usually be found when the natural environment is undisturbed.

Home gardeners and landscapers can create pollinator-friendly gardens to preserve native pollinator populations and enjoy the beauty and interest they provide. If you are interested in creating a butterfly garden, expand that idea to include other native pollinators as well. It is important to think beyond butterflies to provide favorable environments for our many other native pollinators. Some tips for creating pollinator-friendly habitat include:

- Plant a wide variety of nectar- and pollen-rich flowers.
- Use local native plants when possible.
- Include a variety of flowers that bloom throughout the season.
- Provide food sources and over-wintering places for eggs and larva.
- Provide water.
- Avoid using pesticides, herbicides, insecticides and fungicides.
- Provide sites and materials for nesting and over-wintering.

For additional information, read the full publication, Beyond Butterflies: Gardening for Native Pollinators (B 1349), found online at http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.cfm?number=B1349

MG SPROUTS
Horticulture Activities for Kids

MG SPROUTS Horticulture Activities for Kids. © UGA Extension

Plants for Pollinators

- Milkweeds (Asclepias sp.)
- Purple Coneflower (Echinacea purpurea)
- Goldenrod (Solidago sp.)
- Carolina Jessamine (Gelsemium sempervirens)
- Salvia (Salvia sp.)
- Black eyed Susan (Rudbeckia sp.)
- Joe Pye Weed (Eupatorium sp.)
- Aster (Aster sp.)
- Mountain Mint (Pycnanthemum sp.)
- Dill
- Fennel
- Mint
- Oregano
- Abelia (Abelia x grandiflora)
- Sweet Pepperbush (Clethra alnifolia)
- Red Buckeye (Aesculus pavia)
- Cosmos (Cosmos sulphureus)

Parents: Here are some additional ideas for discussion and journaling activities to use at home to help your child begin the process of inquiry. Scientific inquiry involves making observations, asking questions, sorting, comparing, counting, describing, making predictions and using all of these activities in building awareness of the world. Please return the *Where I Live and Play: Insects and Other Living Things* sheet with your child at the next SPROUTS Session. We often use these for group activity sharing and they will be placed in the My SPROUTS Journal binder at the final session, along with new sheets for future use after SPROUTS is complete.

My SPROUTS Journal ideas...

What do you see in your garden soil?

Draw pictures or make a list of all the living things you see in your garden.

Imagine a garden without birds and insects. What might happen?

How do you become a Master Gardener?

The Master Gardener program in Georgia is a volunteer training program designed to help University of Georgia Cooperative Extension staff transfer research-based information about gardening and related subjects to the public by training home gardeners. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers are active in many Georgia counties.

Georgia residents may have the opportunity to become a Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer in their home county. Classes usually form either in the spring or fall.

Applications are generally available 1-4 months before the start of the training class.

Upon acceptance into the program, volunteers will be required to complete a 40-hour (usually once or twice a week) classroom training. Participants take a mid-term exam and will be required to pass a final exam on the material covered.

Master Gardener Extension Volunteer trainees will be required to complete a background check, attend all training classes and programs, and volunteer 50 hours within twelve months after graduation.

For more information contact your local county Extension agent. To connect to the Cooperative Extension office in your county call 1-800-ask-uga1.

If your child enjoyed Jack's Garden, may we suggest:

Where Butterflies Grow by Joanne Ryder
ISBN-13: 978-0140558586

The University of Georgia, Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. UGA Extension offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender or disability.

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