

District Schools in Bloom 2022 Categories!



Thank you for entering the District Schools in Bloom 2022 competition!

We hope you enjoy taking part, and once again we are looking forward to seeing all of your entries!

To help you with your entries for this year's competition, please see the guidelines overleaf for each category. These will also give you an idea of what the judges will be looking for.

For each category, we have suggested some possible wildlife gardening activities, as well as some environmental topics that you could cover with the pupils. We will be looking for evidence of one or more of these topics and / or activities in your entries.

The judges will give a total score out of 10 for each category entered. If your school has entered the competition before, then the judges will be looking for new entries, and they will be looking to see how your garden has developed since their last visit to your school.

We are hoping to visit schools for judging again this year, at the beginning of July (depending on Government regulations and your school preference). However, please continue to take photos of all your entries in the event that school visits will not be possible in July.

Lastly, if you would prefer just to submit digital entries for this year's competition, rather than a school visit from the judges, then we will still be accepting digital entries.

Full competition details can be found in the attached Information Leaflet and also on our [website](#)



Crafting Nature

Why not have a go at some natural art!

We are looking for the most creative piece of artwork made entirely from natural materials, such as twigs, branches, leaves, feathers and stones!

Pupils could:

- ✕ make a wall hanger or wall decoration from branches / twigs
- ✕ create pressed leaf drawings
- ✕ paint stones (using eco-friendly paints)
- ✕ make a hanging flower garland
- ✕ paint a leaf (using eco-friendly paints)
- ✕ create a twig vase
- ✕ make leaf confetti
- ✕ design a flower crown
- ✕ create a cone garland.

The possibilities are endless!

Get creative and be inspired by nature!

For some natural art ideas, please see the links below:

[Wildlife Watch - Activities](#)

[Pinterest - The Wildlife Trusts](#)

[BuzzFeed - Crafts](#)



Plant to Plate

Try growing some fruit and / or vegetables in your garden, and demonstrate how this can be done in an environmentally friendly way.

Pupils could:

- ✧ learn about the process of growing vegetables, and how this can be done sympathetically with nature
- ✧ plan, plant and maintain a vegetable garden
- ✧ learn about the process of pollination, and select the best plants and flowers to attract wildlife and pollinating insects in to a vegetable garden
- ✧ learn about the benefits of compost, and make compost from green waste and / or use compost to grow vegetables
- ✧ use organic pest control, rather than chemicals
- ✧ demonstrate how water can be saved in a vegetable garden, by using water saving methods and / or equipment such as water butts
- ✧ make features or equipment from reused and / or recycled rubbish, to show how this can be used to support vegetable growing

- ✧ show how vegetable produce can be used – vegetables could be sold to raise money for the school, or perhaps they could be used in school meals and / or in cookery classes
- ✧ learn the techniques used to preserve the produce.

Please see below some handy tips on growing fruit and / or vegetables in an environmentally friendly way:

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - How to grow a wildlife-friendly vegetable garden](#)

[RHS - Organic gardening](#)



Scrapyard Scarecrow!

Have a look through your rubbish and / or items that you no longer use and, rather than throwing these away, use them to make a scarecrow!

Pupils could:

- ✧ learn about reusing and recycling rubbish, whilst demonstrating how this can be done creatively
- ✧ demonstrate their knowledge of current environmental issues, by making a scarecrow which represents or highlights a current issue / topic, for example plastic pollution or climate change
- ✧ use any, or all, of the following materials to make a scarecrow:
 - ✓ plastic bottles
 - ✓ scrap wood / metal
 - ✓ plastic pots
 - ✓ milk bottles
 - ✓ tins
 - ✓ plastic bags
 - ✓ crisp / sweet packets
 - ✓ old clothing
 - ✓ old Cds.

The more creative the scarecrow, the better!



For further ideas on how to make a scrapyard scarecrow, please see the links below:

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - Recycle and reuse](#)

[Gardeningetc - How to make a scarecrow](#)

[Pinterest - Recycled Scarecrows](#)

Super Sunflowers!

READY – STEADY – GROW!

Why not grow some sunflowers at home! As well as being great for pollinators, Sunflowers are also great fun to grow!

The Winner will be the school that has grown the **TALLEST** Sunflower!

Please see below some tips on growing sunflowers, from the Gardeners' World website:

[Gardeners World.com - How to grow Sunflowers](#)

Extended deadline for Super Sunflowers!

Please note that the deadline for Super Sunflowers **ONLY** is on **Friday 16th September 2022**, to allow for the Sunflowers to grow to their tallest! Please email your photos and measurements of your **TALLEST** Sunflowers to greenspaces@stalbans.gov.uk

Sunflowers for wildlife

Once your Sunflower has finished flowering, why not leave the flowers on the stalks rather than removing them. The seeds will provide valuable food for birds and animals.

Or, you could try harvesting the entire flower head after all the petals have fallen off. Leave a length of stem attached and hang the flower head on a pole or tree to create a natural bird feeder!



	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	june	july	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec
sow												
plant												
flowers												
cut back												

The Wilder Award ***NEW!***

Part of the Wilder St Albans Project

Explore ways in which you can encourage wildlife to visit and thrive in your garden, by helping to provide food, homes and habitats for a diversity of species.

Pupils could:

- ✂ Plan, plant and maintain a wildlife garden
- ✂ show how a wildlife garden can support a diversity of species, by creating a range of habitats – these could include wild areas, water, dead wood and well established plants to support insects, small mammals and amphibians
- ✂ add additional features in to a garden to attract more wildlife. These could include bird houses, bat boxes, bird feeders, hedgehog houses, etc. Pupils could even learn to make some of these wildlife features themselves!
- ✂ dedicate a small patch or area of the garden, or otherwise a pot or container, that is just for wildlife! Leave it to go wild and see what grows naturally!



wilder
ST ALBANS

Go wilder to help marvellous minibeasts!

Pupils could:



learn about the importance and interdependence of invertebrates in an ecosystem



create a range of habitats specifically for invertebrates – these could be artificial habitats, such as ‘Bug Hotels’, or natural habitats such as piles of logs / dead wood



monitor invertebrates found in each of these habitats, by carrying out regular ‘Minibeast Hunting’ activities or invertebrate surveys. Use invertebrate identification sheets / books to help identify species.



Take part in some wildlife surveys to identify and record the species that you find in your wilder garden! You'll be amazed at what you might find!

For other ideas and inspiration on how to encourage wildlife in to a garden, please see the links below:

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - Wilder St Albans](#)

[The Wildlife Trusts - Actions](#)

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - How to grow a wild patch or mini meadow](#)

[The Wildlife Trusts - Citizen science projects](#)

[Butterfly Conservation's - Big Butterfly Count](#)

Water for Wildlife ***NEW!***

Provide more habitats for a diversity of species by creating features in a garden that provide water for wildlife. No matter how big or small your water feature is, this will provide valuable habitat for many species.

Pupils could:

- ✂ learn about the effects of climate change, such as increased drought, and the importance of providing water for wildlife
- ✂ create and maintain a container pond by using a specially made bird bath, a bowl on the floor or even an old sink! Pupils should regularly clean and refill the water in these container ponds
- ✂ identify a suitable sheltered location, for example near a shrub or a tree, where water can be provided for birds and other wildlife
- ✂ introduce a small, shallow or running water feature in to the garden
- ✂ help to dig a pond in the garden! No matter how big or small, ponds attract more wildlife in to a garden. The pond should have shallow edges to provide easy access for wildlife to get in and out of the pond
- ✂ demonstrate how to save water in a garden, by using water saving methods and / or equipment such as water butts.



For further ideas, please visit
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust website:

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - How to conserve water](#)

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - How to build a pond](#)

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - How to create a mini pond](#)

New Award for 2022

Sustainable School Award!

This year, we will also be awarding a new Sustainable School Award, to the school that can demonstrate use of the most sustainable practices overall, which could include:

- ✕ wildlife gardening*
- ✕ promotion of public transport and sustainable travel to school, rather than driving*
- ✕ anti-idling measures in place for cars at the school gates*
- ✕ demonstrating how food waste can be reused, perhaps in the school garden, or reduced*
- ✕ energy saving techniques*
- ✕ water saving techniques (for example in the school garden).*

Please indicate on the entry form whether you wish to be considered for this Award.

[Sustainable St Albans - Sustainable Schools](#)

[The Wildlife Trusts - How to help wildlife at school](#)



Other activities that can be done from home or at school!

(these are not part of this year's competition)

There are a wealth of wildlife gardening activities and Actions for Wildlife on **Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust website**. Please see the links below:

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - Actions](#)

[Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust - Wildlife gardening](#)

[The Wildlife Trusts - Wildlife Watch](#)

Why not also take part in the **Wild at Home** project which is currently being run by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

**wild
AT HOME**



Outdoor Learning

Use nature as a tool to learn. Why not take part in some outdoor classroom and / or Forest School sessions.

CultureWood Forest School also has a number of outdoor / nature-related activities that you can take part in. See their [Facebook](#) page.

Citizen Surveys

Take part in a Citizen Survey to help record wildlife in your local area.

There are lots of surveys to choose from. Please see the link below for some ideas!

[The Wildlife Trusts - Citizen science projects](#)

[Butterfly Conservation's - Big Butterfly Count](#)



