

Invitation to Meadows – Insects - Week 4

We are going back for our last visit to the meadows at the McLean Game Refuge entrance on Barndoor Hills Road with our Ecologist Sam Lewis. Member Families will be able to sign up for times. If you do not live close to Granby, you can follow the instructions and prompts to guide your children’s adventures with insects in meadows and fields near where you live.

Our goal is to catch, observe, discuss *and release* as many insects as we can, and to learn about insects and their place in our world. Parents may want to take up close photos of the insects for further investigation at home, and for identification and/or sketching.

CT Standards of Learning Introduction to Meadows, and Meadows and Insects

C.48.1 Explore and investigate a variety of experiences and topics using different materials.	C.60.8 Compare relative attributes of objects, people, events, sounds (e.g., louder, more, less)
C.48.7 Identify similarities and differences in objects, people, events, sounds based on one attribute (e.g., same or different colors, loud or soft sound)	C.60.9 Use familiar patterns to solve problems and reason (e.g., if we go to the library every other day and we went yesterday, today we will...)
C.48.8 Recognize patterns in routines, objects and/or sounds and replicate sequence using objects or language	M.60.9 Compare the measurable attributes of two or more objects (e.g., length, weight and capacity) and describe the comparison using appropriate vocabulary (e.g., longer, shorter, same length, heavier, lighter, same weight, holds more, holds less, holds the same amount)

M.48.8 Recognize measurable attribute of an object such as length, weight or capacity	M.60.10 Begin to use strategies to determine measurable attributes (e.g., length or capacity of objects). May use comparison, standard or non-standard measurement tools
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SE.48.1 Engage in interactions with less familiar adults.	SE.60.1 Seek help and approval from a wider array of adults in trusted roles.
S.48.3 Cite examples to support their ideas (eg., "I think the plant will die because when I forgot to water my plant it died.")	S.60.4 Give evidence from observations and investigations.
S.48.5 Compare and contrast basic features of living things (eg., body parts and their uses) between and across groups.	S.60.7 Group and classify living things based upon features, providing evidence to support groupings.
CA.48.2 Imitate or spontaneously sing an entire verse of song	
CA.48.5 Use different materials and techniques to make art creations that reflect thoughts, feelings, experiences, knowledge.	CA.60.5 Use a variety of tools and materials to represent ideas through the visual arts.
CA.48.7 Demonstrate increasingly complex dance concepts while learning to move their body in place and through space (eg., jumping from one place to another, combining several movements like	CA.60.8 Use multiple dance concepts as a way to communicate meaning, ideas and feelings (eg., use movement to represent leaves falling off trees – sway arms,

hopping, turning, stamping feet).

wiggle fingers, stretch, fall to ground.

Basic Facts for beginners:

There are more insects living on earth than any other animal.

Insects live on land, in water and in the air

All insects' bodies have

3 parts – head, thorax moving, abdomen

2 antennae - on their head to feel and smell

6 legs – attached to thorax

4 wings – (for most insects) attached to thorax

Insects help us in many ways

Food – honey bees make honey.

Did you know some people eat fried grasshoppers!!?

Food for other animals – Birds, frogs and other animals eat insects

Cloth – the silk worm (larvae form of the silk moth spins delicate but strong silken thread that we can weave into cloth for clothes

Color – some insects produce dyes that we use to color the clothes that we wear.

More Facts the Children who Want More!

Insects

-aerate the soil

-pollinate

-bees create wax for candles and for polishing

-give us beauty. Our lives are enhanced by the beauty of butterflies, ladybugs, dragonflies, and many more!

-help plants decompose

-clean up waste (dung)

Insects also

-sting

-carry diseases

-eat crops

A **grasshopper** has short antennae and makes its buzzing sound (song) by rubbing its long hind legs together.

A **cricket** has long antennae and makes its buzzing sound (song) by rubbing its wings together.

Insects have 3 body parts, 2 antennae, 6 legs, and most insects have 4

wings.

Spiders have 2 body parts, no antennae, 8 legs and no wings.

Preparation

You will want to wear long pants and long sleeves, and even to pull your socks over your pant legs.

You will need your mask, a hat, sun screen, insect repellent (that seems weird, doesn't it?).

Bring some kind of see-through jar or box for observing your insects.

Your container needs to have holes in the top so the insects can breathe.

If you have a net, bring it. Otherwise you can catch the insects with your hands.

Don't forget your phone. If possible parents should download a magnifying app before you go for closer looking at the insects.

You will also need a clip board, pencil and paper (or a phone) to jot names of insects and observations children make.

Snack and water.

In the car: You may want to play the songs from our meadows section on YouTube. channel.

Meadow rules:

Parents/caregivers are responsible for supervising their children at all times. *You* are the teachers, *not* the Ecologist.

Children are never too young to learn to respect their environment.

Be sure to read and follow rules, if any are posted.

Please remember that your children are learning about their place as community members so we are asking you to follow safe Covid-19 guidelines to respect the farmers and other community members you encounter. Wear masks, and maintain distance.

Especially if we are in a nature or game preserve, we do not want to pick anything.

Do not leave any trash.

Check for ticks.

Activity – Introduction to Meadows – Insects - Week 4

There are 2 ways to do this. If you have signed up for a session and the ecologist will be working with you, you can follow the ecologist's

presentation and/or you can do this excursion with your child/ren on your own.

Do you remember last week when we began with some questions? Let's go over them again and see if you have some new things to add:

Thinking Routine KWL

What do you already **know** about insects?

Give children plenty of time to think, hear what others are saying, and discuss.

What else do you **want** to learn about insects?

When we finish today we will ask you

What did you **learn** about insects?

Like an Insect Game

Before we go ahead a catch more insects, lets play Like an Insect!

Insects do many things, like fly and buzz. We are going to see if you can do some of these things. I will say the action, and you see if you can do it!

Can you fly like an insect?

buzz...

feel with your antennae...

walk...

sting...

dig...

jump...

buzz...

eat nectar...

pollinate...

Catch, Observe, Discuss, Release

Let's spend some more time today observing insects. When you catch one, put it in your container and, with you parents/caregiver, observe it. Look closely at it's head, antennae, and; its thorax, legs and wings; and its abdomen.

While observing and discussing, parents/caregivers might want to talk about pollinating, aerating, and the fact that insects provide food for many animals such as birds and frogs.

Parents/caregivers will want to be sure to take photos for documentation.

Before we leave let's look around at the meadow we have been exploring. We have seen grasses, flowers, birds, animal tracks and many, many insects. Aren't meadows wonderful? So, I have a question. What might happen if someone were to decide to plow this meadow under and build big beautiful houses here instead?

At home

Create a ladybug

You will need paper, red and black crayons or markers. With the black crayon or marker adult (or child) draws, a circle for the ladybug, and then a small half circle on the top for the head. Ask child to color the body red, and to draw the (6) legs, and (2) antennae black. Then ask the child to make the black spots.

Ladybug Dot Marker Game

You will need paper, a red and black crayon or marker and, if you have it, a Dot Marker. You will also need a dice (or a cup with 6 small pieces of paper – each one with a dot/s like the sides of a dice. As in the above activity make 10 circles with 10 smaller half circles for the heads. Ask child to color them in red. Roll dice. Using dot marker make the number of dots on your ladybug that corresponds to the number on the dice. Children may need help corresponding numbers exactly. You can assist by telling them they are going to, for example, stop at “3”! And then, count out loud as child is making 3 dots. What is important here is that very young children learn that there is a concept of numbers, even if they do not understand the concept fully.

Play Doh Insect Sculpture

You will need play doh (or mud) for the body and head, pipe cleaners (or tooth picks or small twigs) for antennae and legs, seeds or pebbles for eyes. You may want to use plastic wrap or aluminum foil for wings. Let your child be creative!

Don't forget to take a photo for documentation, and to display this creation in a prominent spot!

More Insects in the Spring

In the spring we will talk about life cycles of insects, community insects and pollinator insects

DOCUMENTATION

For all the activities, parents/caregivers will want to *Make Learning Visible* through photos and examples of child/ren's work. You may want to post the Meadows Word Bank by the breakfast table to refer to. You may want to create a digital (such as Evernote) and a hard copy folder/portfolio. This will help you and future teachers know what your child has done.

Books, Songs, Poetry, Movement and Games –

Here is a suggested list of books, songs, poetry, movement and games to enhance our lessons. GNP recommends reading daily to children, both those recommended as part of the program and those of additional interest to your child/ren. Members will find many of these on our YouTube channel [LINK](#) You may also want to check your own YouTube preferences, and, for stories, apps such as Audible

Over in the Meadow by Olive A. Wadsworth and Ezra Jack Keats (Illustrator) This is a nice counting story; it includes different animals that live in a meadow, and is a good take-off for singing and movement activities with your child – quack like a duck, buzz like a bee, dig like a turtle, etc.

Ten in the Meadow, by John Butler (Author, Illustrator)
This is a counting and rhyming book.

The Tiny Seed, by Eric Carle
This is the story of the life cycle of a flower. If you purchase the book it comes with a seed children can plant. (We will be doing planting seeds lessons later in the year.)

The Dandelion Seed, by Joseph P. Anthony and Cris Arbo
Most children can relate to this from their own experiences of seeing and blowing dandelion seeds.

The Grouchy Ladybug by Eric Carle includes the concepts of time, size, and shape, as well as the benefits of friendship and good manners.

The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle
This spider is busy and diligent while others play. Hard work pays off.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
days of week, fruits/foods, counting,

The Bug Book of Bugs by Yuval Zommer
count legs, eyes, compare

How Many Bugs in a Box? by David A. Carter

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

The Backyard Bug Book for Kids Crawl into the wonderful world of bugs—a fun photographic adventure. by Laureen Davidson

Anno's Counting Book by Mitsumasa Anno

Poems

Eency Weency Spider

Youtube #MyBackyardBirding
Meadowlark Singing And Calling

LISTEN by Holly M McGhee and Pascal LeMaitre

YouTube Uncle Skip's Storytime

Children are encouraged to use all their senses to engage with and connect to the natural world, a powerful tool for enhancing empathy in developing minds.

Riding in my Car (Eliz Mitchell)

Lady Bug Picnic (Eliz Mitchell)

Rain, Rain Go Away

Little Boy Blue

We're Going on a Bear Hunt

There Was an Old Lady that Swallowed

All I Want is You

And the Green Grass Grew All Around

Apples and Bananas

