

# KIDS CORNER

# Bugs and Butterflies

Our gardens are home not just to flowers, fruit and veges, they provide a habitat for wildlife – bugs and birds as well. There are many different bugs to be found even in the smallest garden.

You can learn to tell the difference between the 'good guys' and the 'bad guys' – it just takes a little practice. You can plant flowers like daisies, marigolds, herbs and lavender in your garden to attract more good insects. And if you want to attract bugs and butterflies, then remember that there are lots more to be found in gardens where sprays and pesticides are sparsely or never used. Pesticides don't choose between the good guys and the bad guys – they kill them all!

## BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies we all love.

White (cabbage) butterflies are pretty but they lay their green eggs on cabbages and the bright green caterpillars then eat their way through the leaves - and your dinner.

Magpie moths are black butterflies with white dots on the wings. Their caterpillars are black with a little bit of orange and lots of black fuzz, some people call them 'woolly bears'. They love to eat 'ragwort', a terrible weed found through out New Zealand.

It can be fun to raise these woolly caterpillars but it is far more fun to raise Monarchs or Red Admirals.

If you want gorgeous Monarch butterflies in your garden then planting a swan plant is a great way to start.

## GROWING SWAN PLANTS

Swan plants are easy to grow in full sun in any soil that doesn't get all wet and soggy. You can buy seeds or plants from most plant nurseries and garden centres. Swan plants can be kept from year to year in your garden but plant them where you won't mind that they get a bit ratty looking after the

caterpillars have eaten all the leaves!

Be careful: If you break off a stem be very careful not to get the sap, the gooey white stuff inside, on your hands or skin – it is poisonous and can cause skin rashes. As the monarch caterpillars eat this poisonous food they in turn become poisonous to birds, and that is a great defence.



## TRY YOURSELF:

A Bug Count is one way of finding out just how many bugs live in your garden. It will also tell you how many different bugs are there, and you can begin to see how they live together in this special habitat. You will need:

- a tape measure
- 4 to 5 metres of string
- 4 short bamboo canes
- 4 corks
- a magnifying glass
- notebook or paper
- a pencil

Go out into the garden or go with you parents to the local park, find an area with a mixture of plants, flowers and grass that your parents will let you sit on (not your Dad's special flower border or Mum's rose garden!).

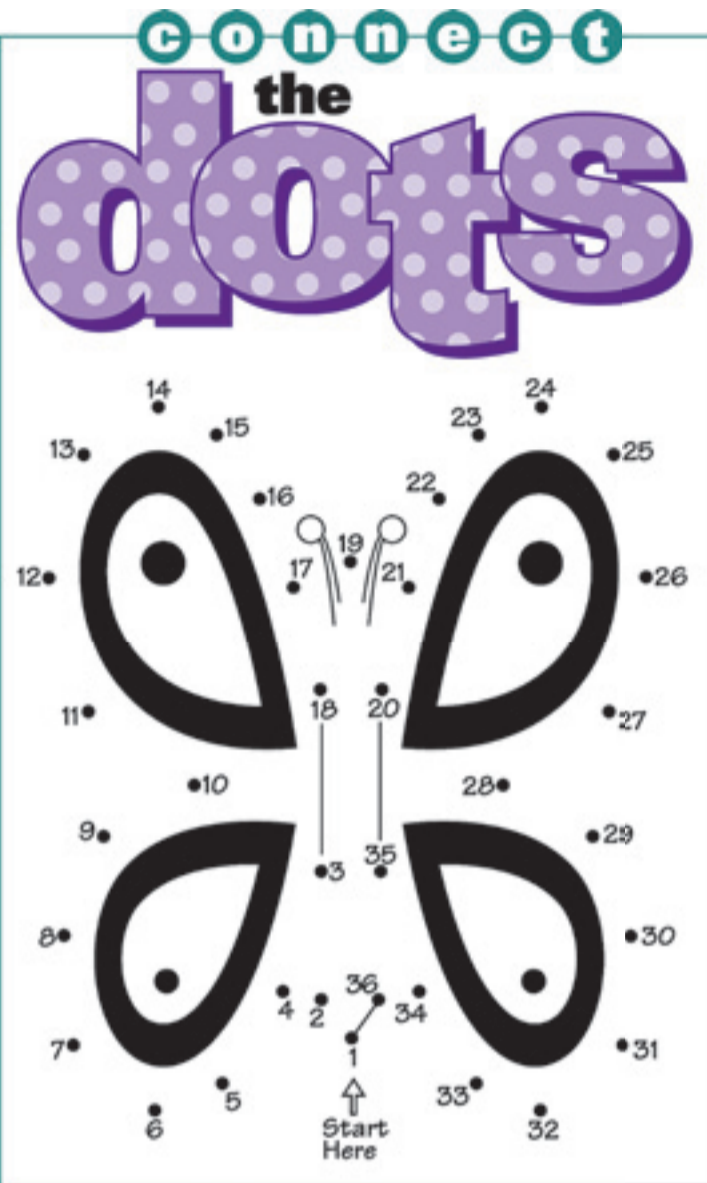
Measure an area one-metre square with the bamboo canes, that is each side should measure one metre and there should be four sides, and they should make a square.

Push a cork onto each bamboo cane to protect your eyes – it is really easy to bash yourself on these and it hurts! Tie the string around the outside of the square.

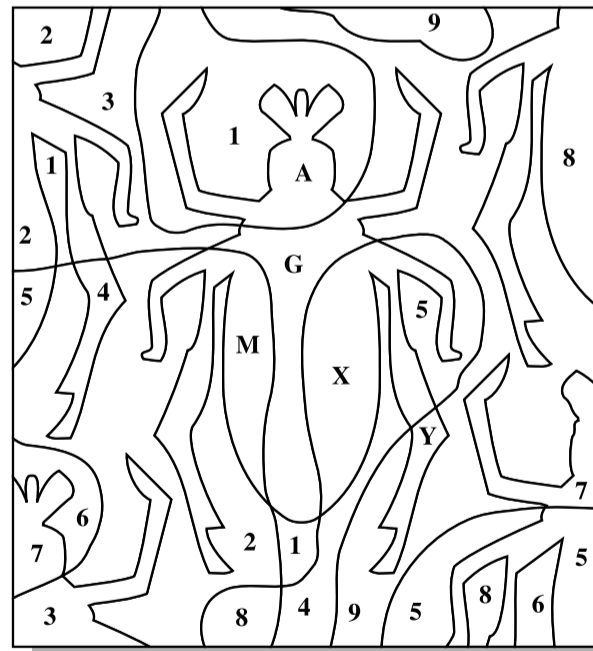
Next, take your magnifying glass and carefully search your patch to see what you can find. Write down the number of spiders, butterflies, beetles, ants, slaters or woodlice, worms and so on that are living in your patch.

If you are not sure what a bug is, try to draw it and then look it up at the local library. It is fun to search the same patch in spring, summer, autumn and winter and see the difference in the types and numbers of bugs you will find. Keep your records and compare them.

Thank you to [www.bestgarden.com](http://www.bestgarden.com) for their help.



## HIDDEN PICTURE



Color in each space that contains a letter.

## GARDEN WORD FIND

M	A	R	I	G	O	L	D	M	E	C	G	M	J	U	M
R	D	P	I	N	H	A	O	E	L	A	I	O	J	A	A
H	J	O	S	H	U	V	A	D	E	B	N	N	N	I	G
P	S	G	A	R	D	E	N	K	D	B	A	A	R	L	P
E	A	J	A	N	E	N	T	J	A	A	A	R	N	I	I
S	N	E	R	A	C	D	H	E	I	G	L	C	M	A	E
T	R	B	E	E	C	E	L	A	S	E	R	H	E	B	M
I	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y	R	U	C	E	S	O
C	P	G	R	I	N	G	S	T	E	E	N	M	E	L	T
I	N	S	E	C	T	I	S	S	A	E	T	H	E	R	H
D	I	S	D	G	E	Q	L	A	D	Y	B	I	R	D	H
E	A	P	N	N	A	H	M	O	N	T	A	N	A	T	H
E	H	I	B	U	T	T	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	E	R
R	E	D	A	D	M	I	R	A	L	F	L	Y	T	C	O
C	R	E	O	E	M	M	A	D	U	C	K	I	E	S	Y
L	B	R	F	R	E	S	W	A	N	P	L	A	N	T	T

- Marigold
- Lavender
- Butterfly
- Bugs
- Swanplant
- Magpie Moth
- Red Admiral
- Monarch
- Ladybird
- Insect
- Pesticide
- Garden
- Cabbage
- Herb
- Daisy
- Flowers
- Spider



Make sure your school is part of our Ag Day competition then keep an eye on our website and look out for the November Ag Day lift out!

[www.ruralliving.co.nz](http://www.ruralliving.co.nz)

DON'T MISS IT