LEARNING FROM INSECTS IN THE GARDEN & INSECT HOUSE

Title	Learning from insects in the garden & Insect House
Skills	- creativity and craftsmanship; - scientific knowledge;
Topics	- Active participation and citizenship - Leisure Activities - Social cohesion - Sustainable consumption - Education for Sustainable Development - Intercultural Dialogue - Intergenerational dialogue
Target Groups	- boys and girls (3-11 years); - people with special needs; - young people (12-25 years);
Brief description	By carrying out this activity, participants will understand the importance of the presence of insects in the garden, the fundamental role these organisms play in the garden and how we can turn them into our great allies in the care and protection of our gardens and plants. Likewise, with this activity, participants will understand the fragility of the web of life and the importance of maintaining a balance to avoid the presence of diseases and pests, turning these small but important living beings into our allies. In addition, through this activity, participants will learn to identify pest management and control alternatives and the functions each pest performs in the ecosystem.
Objectives	- Knowing the main insect species that interact in the orchard. - Identify the ways in which insects contribute to our garden and the role they play according to their feeding habits: predators, parasites and/or pollinators. - Understand that all living things in an ecosystem are important and that they all play a vital role in sustaining the habitat they occupy. - Associate the needs of each animal with the area in which it lives and relate them to the insect hotel.

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Materials	- Presentation of the different insects that normally inhabit and are observed in an orchard. - Animal cards (separate pictures and names) - Registration of the four diet types: carnivores, herbivores, pollinators and decomposers.
Implementation	First of all, a presentation of the inhabitants of the garden is made, asking what insects (bugs) they know or have seen living in the garden, in order to gauge the participants' prior knowledge of the insect world. Secondly, images of insects are shown and it is explained how they are the main allies in maintaining the biological balance of the garden, explaining their role and the preferred location and/or habitat of each group: - Decomposers, including earthworms, mealybugs, beetles, etc., living underground and preferably in damp places. - Herbivores and suckers such as aphids with their bodyguard the ant, the snail, the slug, some bugs and grasshoppers. - Carnivores such as wasps, earwigs, fireflies, mantids and ladybirds. - Pollinators such as bees, butterflies and some flies. Then it is explained that although insects have been classified into four (4) major groups according to their diet, many of them depend on their stage of development (egg, larva, pupa, adult), as their diet varies according to their stage of development. The great diversity of insect species and their characteristics is explained, even though all insects have 6 legs, 2 antennae and 2 or 4 wings. Thirdly, a dynamic is developed to achieve better understanding and make it more playful. Next, the playful activity is explained: participants are given a card with a picture or name of an insect (bug) from the garden. Half of the participants will have a picture and the other half will have matching names, so each person with a picture will have to find their name to form pairs. Next, the pairs will have to position themselves in the habitat

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	or place of their choice. To do this, four cards will be placed, one on each wall of the classroom with the four groups indicated: carnivores with the image of an insect hotel, herbivores with the image of a vegetable, pollinators with the image of a flower and decomposers with the image of a composter. A debriefing took place at the end of the exercise. As a complement to this activity and as an option, it is proposed to build a structure that serves as a habitat and attracts new and larger insects to our garden by reusing different elements (see: https://gardeniser.eu/es/e-learning/insect-house), and thus creating spaces that meet the requirements and characteristics that simulate the habitat of various insects. For this purpose, pallets or wooden crates for transporting fruit can be used, in which elements such as logs, straw, small pieces of guadua, small clay pots or pieces of clay, among others, can be placed, as shown in the following photographs (see video: https://www.lahuertinadetoni.es/hotel-de-insectos/ to better understand the construction of the structure).
Evaluation	Participants should point out the insect or bug that caught their attention and explain its function in the garden.
Tips	- Highlight the main characteristics of the different insects in the garden and emphasise that, however repulsive they may be, all living things play a fundamental role in the ecosystem. - If you decide to build the structure with the different habitats, try to place it near the vegetable garden to attract more insects: that is where they live, offering great benefits for avoiding plant pests and diseases.

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