

My Busy Green Garden

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Illustrations by Carol Schwartz

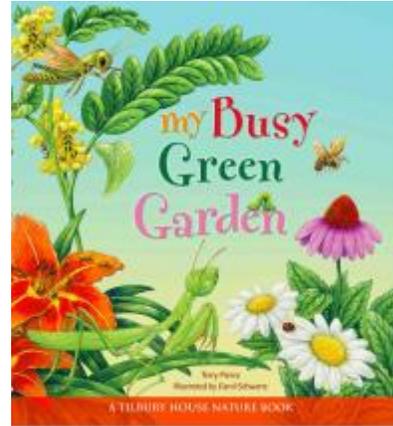
A Tilbury House Nature Book

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9 x 10, 36 pages, full color illustrations

Children's Non Fiction PK-2



Summary

Bugs, birds, and other creatures make this garden a busy place. From the shimmering dew of early morning to the lengthening shadows of late there is one small miracle after another for anyone who stops to see, and the “surprise”—a chrysalis—changes unnoticed until, on the last page, a butterfly emerges and flies away across the garden’s well-tended borders.

- Back-of-book notes about the natural histories of the garden’s denizens complete this lovely and lively portrait of backyard nature, which is also a gentle meditation on the rewards of paying attention.
- A chipmunk hides on every page to divert and engage young readers.

Before You Read:

Access Prior Knowledge

1. What kinds of gardens do people have?
2. What kind of garden is this story about?
3. How many animals do you see on the cover? Can you name them?

4. Who benefits from a garden?

After You Read:

Discussion Questions and Activities

POST-READING QUESTION:

How many animals do you see on the cover? *[Note: the point of repeating this question is to see if children will now be aware of the chrysalis as an animal, particularly as a butterfly in its pupa stage.]*

Community and cooperation:

1. Take a nature walk around your community to discover local gardens. What type of gardens do you see? What kinds of animals are in the garden?
2. Make your own garden! Gardens come in all shapes and sizes.
 - For a classroom garden, use plastic containers (e.g., cleaned milk cartons cut to size) to plant seeds.
 - For a school garden, create a garden outdoors with planter boxes to grow flowers, fruits and vegetables (note: radishes, carrots and lima beans are fast-growing vegetables). Coordinate with other teachers' classes to create a sense of cooperation and community in caring for the garden.
 - At home, find a small plot of ground in which to grow your own garden. Invite your family and neighbors to help harvest the bounty of your garden.

Science:

1. Insect classification: What is an insect? Insects are animals with one pair of antennae, three pair of legs (six in all!) and three body parts (a head, thorax and abdomen). *[Note: I'd suggest including a simple illustration showing all of these features since young readers won't be familiar with "thorax" and "abdomen."]*
2. Can you name the eight insects mentioned in the story text?
3. What kinds of birds are mentioned in the story?
4. What other animals do you see in the illustrations that are *not* mentioned in the text?

5. Butterfly life cycle: Write the names of the different stages of a butterfly's life cycle on cards (egg, larva, pupa, adult). Create a similar set of cards using photographs of each stage. Ask children to either: arrange the cards in the correct order of occurrence and/or match the word to the corresponding photograph.
6. Grow a butterfly garden in your classroom for students to see the butterfly life cycle firsthand. (see resources below)
7. Butterflies and moths: What's the difference? Look and compare photographs of butterflies and moths.
 - Can you see ways they are different? Compare their antennae, body shapes, and colors.
 - What about their behaviors? How do they hold their wings when at rest? When are they most active?

Language arts:

1. Vocabulary list: Create a vocabulary list using the following words:

<u>Nouns</u>	<u>Verbs</u>
ladybug	dawdling
honeybee	buzzing
hummingbird	fluttering
inchworm	creeping
mantis	awaiting
dragonfly	dashing
ants	tracking
grasshopper	leaping
chickadee	chasing
butterfly	flying

2. Word game mix-up: Identify the two sets of cards as "nouns" and "verbs." (Note: Nouns could be on green cards; verbs on yellow cards).

Lay out the nouns in one column. Mix up the verb cards. Lay out a card to follow the noun card. Ask students about the results. (E.g., Could a ladybug leap? Could an inchworm buzz?) to highlight the difference between various verbs and how they might apply to animal movement.

Mathematics:

1. Counting: Open the book to the beginning of the story ("This is my busy green garden."). Count how many animals appear in the busy green garden.
2. Compare and contrast: Look at each of the animals that appear in the text:

ladybug
honeybee
hummingbird
inchworm
mantis
dragonfly
ants
grasshopper
chickadee
butterfly

- Can you order the animals from smallest to largest?
- Can you classify them by how they move?
- Can you classify them by what they eat?

Internet Resources

Kids Gardening: Helping Young Minds Grow
<http://www.kidsgardening.org/>

Bug Guide (photo resource)
www.bugguide.net

North American Butterfly Association
<http://www.naba.org/>

Insect Lore (Live Butterfly Gardens)
<http://www.insectlore.com/>

Cloudless Sulphur Butterfly Life Cycle Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bkkYsMjYQk>

How to Tell the Difference Between a Butterfly and a Moth
<http://insects.about.com/od/learningaboutinsects/a/butterflyormoth.htm>

Further Reading

Other Children's Books:

Roots, Shoots, Buckets and Boots by Sharon Lovejoy

Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert

Waiting for Wings by Lois Ehlert

The Gardener by Sarah Stewart

Flower Garden by Eve Bunting