



The Great Sunflower Project

Program Summary

The Great Sunflower Project is one of the largest citizen science project with over 100,000 members. The main focus of this project is to observe and record the number and types of pollinators that visit plants. This study initiated in 2008 and has the leading amount of bee pollinator service information by a single organization in North America.

Our students will participate in the flagship Great Sunflower Project. The Pollinator Friendly Plants & Places and the Great Pollinator Habitat Challenge are two other studies available to join.

The preferred sunflower species of the Great Sunflower Project is the variety of Lemon Queen. Although multiple grades will visit and study various aspects of the sunflower gardens, fifth graders will focus on The Great Sunflower Project. The same group of students will continue this study as sixth graders the following school year.

By taking part in this program, our students will learn more about being stewards to the environment, attain gardening skills, learn about the vital necessity of bees, collect and record scientific data, plus contribute to an important ecosystem study.

Students will start seeds in our school greenhouse or environmental education classroom and plant seedlings into the school's courtyard as fifth graders in April through June. As sixth graders, the following school year, they will learn how to identify bees, familiarize themselves with the data sheets and practice observing nature for five minute increments. Once the sunflowers bloom, students will start identifying bees, conduct stationary/single plant observations, record the data and add their data to The Great Sunflower Project website.

At the end of the season, students will compost the sunflowers and save the seed heads to make bird feeders for the courtyard area.

Grade Level: 5th and 6th Grade

Implementation Timeline: Annually, April through June (seed starting and planting) August through October (observations and maintenance of sunflowers).

Budget Approximately \$ 400 for start-up (8 packets of seeds, soil pods, 8 garden trays, 15 watering cans, twelve 4-6 foot garden stakes, small hammer and foam garden wire). Approximately \$50 annually for seeds and soil pods.

Learn More: www.greatsunflower.org

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