

INSECT HOTEL

Whether you want to focus on protecting and conserving pollinating insects, monitor biodiversity, observe specific types of insects and their development stages or support children's observation skills, an insect hotel can be a great tool. Working with a group of children to build your own not only enhances the school grounds for insects, but also provides the opportunity for children to make use of basic tools.

Definition

An insect hotel is a simple construction of any size, divided into several sections filled with different types of natural materials (for example small branches, hollow stems, pine needles, dry leaves, straw and moss). The purpose of an insect hotel is to create a sheltered habitat for various insects to hibernate over the winter or to use as next sites to lay eggs.

Procedure

Survey your grounds to identify the best place to build your insect hotel – preferably somewhere quiet and in sunlight or light shade on a flat surface.

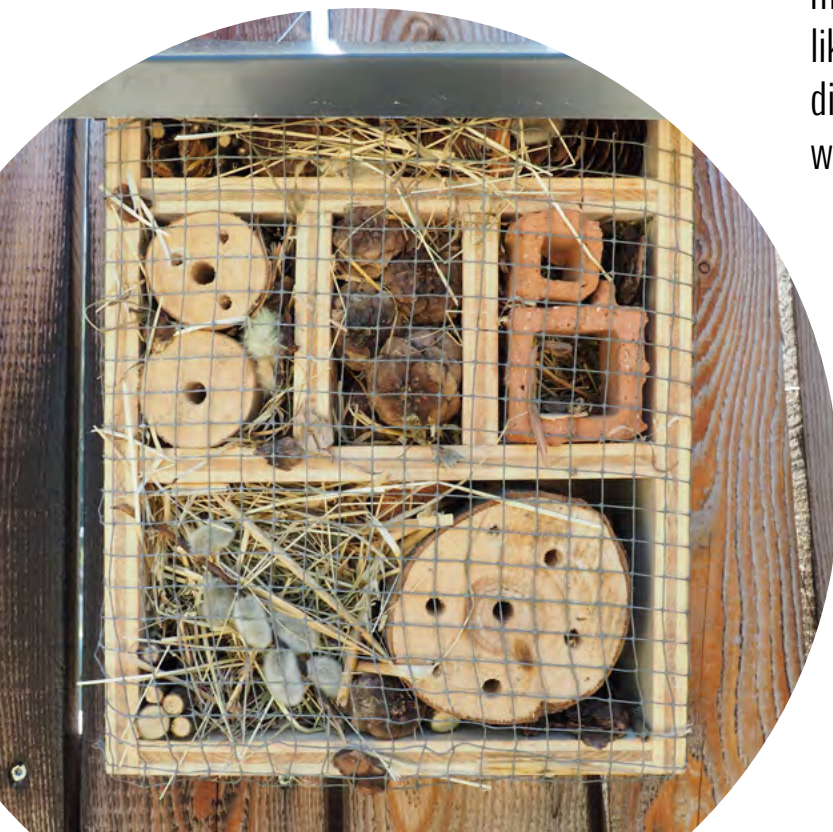
You may decide to create smaller hotels that can be hung from fences or trees.

If you are creating a larger structure with pallets, consider some form of roof to help reduce the impact of rain.

Fill all gaps and holes with a wide variety of materials to support different insects. The more variety of materials you use, the more likely you will be able to observe and admire different types of insects. Drilling holes in wood will help attract Solitary Bees.

Every Autumn ensure any hole or gaps are filled with fresh materials to help support insects over the winter.

Leave wider gaps at the base of the structure to support larger animals such as hedgehogs.

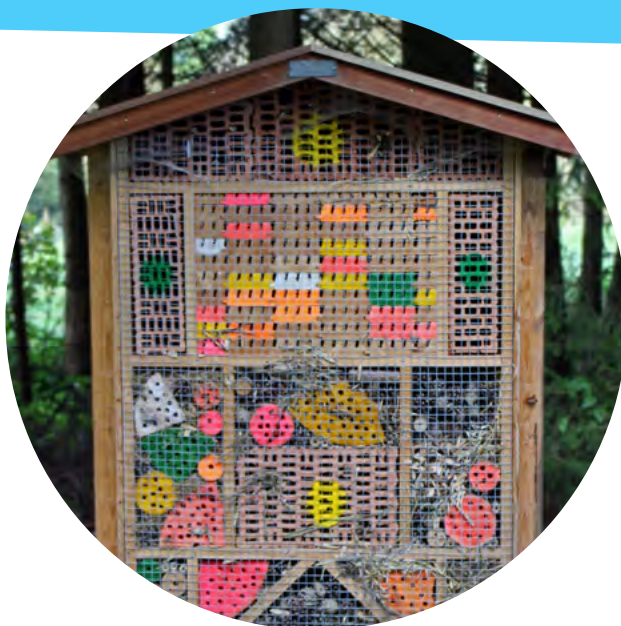


Tips

- Building an insect hotel increases the chance of beneficial insects, such as bees and butterflies, visiting your school garden and pollinating your vegetable and fruit plants.
- As well as flying insects, such as ladybirds and solitary bees making use of the habitat, beetles, spiders, centipedes and woodlice will bury into the decaying wood. This provides a great opportunity for children to learn about the needs of different insects and to monitor change over time.

Example from the RSPB

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>



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