

Seeds & Sprouts
Session 1 Syllabus
Wildlife-Friendly Vegetable Gardener

This class is held at the Las Flores Community Garden. Students will be actively involved in the upkeep, development, and harvesting of their plot at the community garden. Weekly gardening responsibilities will be integrated with the research topic of the week; scavenger hunts in the garden regarding different types of plants and critters, guest speakers; and art and craft activities related to the garden. Research topics include soil, compost, microclimates, annual vs. perennial plants, seeds, vermicompost, and water. **Please note:** Parents will need to drop off and either pick up, or transport can be arranged to OSA (with advance notice and request, and parent permission) for students attending an 11:00 class. **Instructors: Laura Erlig and Deneen Cienfuegos.** Max: 9 students.

Week 1: Introduction to the garden, tools, and the relationships with Nature

- Identify wildlife in the garden
- Good and bad bugs
- Helpful birds
- How to be a good observer
- Create a habit and journal observations

Week 2: Encouraging friends in the underground

- Who's in our soil?
- Soil layers
- Earthworms
- Build a healthy soil community
- Working the soil gently and preserve soil structure
- Organic matter (compost)
- Feeding the soil (water/mulch)

Week 3: Garden Elements that welcome wildlife

- How to pick what to grow
- How to provide for the wildlife
- Companion planting
- What plants bring beneficial insects to the garden and protect the crops
- Compost how it strengthens the plants and protects it

Week 4: Attracting Pollinators and beneficial predators

- Importance of pollinators
- Who are the garden's pollinating heroes (Bee identification)
- Create a bee home
- Flies, butterflies, and moths have a purpose
- Visit the butterfly house
- Ladybugs, praying mantis, spiders ... oh my
- Which bugs are bad
- Magical herbs the beneficial dozen

Week 5: Creating Habitats for predators

Helpful animal predators to the garden

Owls, hawks, and birds

Water sources for wildlife

Homes for wildlife

Food for wildlife

Week 6: Smart strategies for peaceful coexistence

Rotate crops to reduce pests

Companion plants as decoy to distract pest or encourage predators

Aromatic plants

Hot Pepper as a repellent

Scented soap

Animal repellent

Reflectant objects

Fake friends

Week 7: Blocking unwanted guests and designing your own garden with what you have learned

Row Covers, netting, screens, fencing, raised beds, hoop house, greenhouse

Design your own garden final