

July 2021

# WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS



**Make a  
Butterfly  
Puddler!**

**Bug  
Scavenger  
Hunt**

**July  
Phenology  
Calendar**

**Seasonal poems,  
activities, nature  
journal pages and more!**

# From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

*Hello July!*

Wow, this year is flying by fast!

How are you spending time outside these days? This time of year, we spend lots of time gardening, hiking, foraging and playing at a nearby lake.

This year has been challenging for our garden because our state is having a rare drought. That means there's not enough rain to keep the plants happy, and our city is limiting how much we can water our lawns and gardens to conserve water. Luckily, we mostly plant drought-tolerant flowers and veggies. This means they don't need as much water as other plants and they can stay healthy even in hot, dry weather. It also makes it easier on us lazy gardeners!

Our black raspberries are starting to ripen, and we spend lots of time in the back yard eating them right off the canes. We usually freeze many gallons of them too, to use in baking all year. We transplanted the black raspberry bushes as three tiny "runners" (roots that travel underground and then pop up as a new plant) about ten years ago from a county park that was mowing them all down. Now they take up a huge part of our back yard!

Roses and lilies are blooming in our gardens, along with other flowers like mallow (weeds that we let grow in one corner for their pretty pink flowers). Our cherry tree is also full of cherries. Pretty soon it will be time to pick them and bake a lot of pies!

In this month's issue, we have information about how to make a butterfly puddler, plus a bug hunt and some reasons bugs aren't as bad as lots of people think. We'll learn about oxeye daisies that you can find in lots of wild places, and hollyhocks that you might be able to grow in your garden. We've also got the usual nature poems, nature study pages, and all that fun stuff.

I hope you have a wild, healthy, happy July!

*Alicia*

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Why is Wild Kids free?

Kids (and their grown ups) need nature, and nature needs us! Our family believes in the importance of sharing & helping each other, and of passing on skills to help our world and each other. As long as we are able, we plan to produce Wild Kids to help do this for families who find it useful.



# 10 FUN WAYS TO LEARN & PLAY IN NATURE IN JULY



Stay up late to look for meteor showers (after midnight is the best viewing)

Try to make rainbows with the sprinkler

Make a butterfly puddler (we teach you how in this issue)

Crush berries for ink and use it to write or draw with a feather quill or paintbrush

Look for wild berries like raspberries, black raspberries, blueberries, gooseberries & mulberries

Try to get outside for a few minutes at the start of each morning and see how it effects the whole rest of your day!

Have wild berries and cream as breakfast or dessert

Draw or take a picture of a different bug every day this month

Put a dark piece of construction paper in the sun and make a pattern on it with rocks, flowers & leaves -- the sun will bleach your pattern onto the paper














Go wading in a creek and look to see what kind of water creatures you can find in it

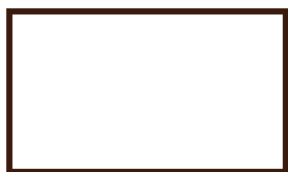
# Summer Bug Challenge \*




How many can you find? If some aren't in your area, look for something to substitute.

*\*Note: Not all of these are bugs or insects at all! We often call things bugs even though they're not technically bugs. Next month we'll learn about the differences!*

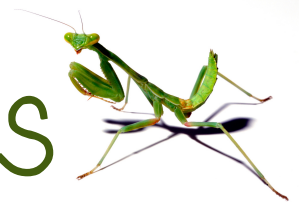
- ☐ Ladybug 
- ☐ Moth 
- ☐ Shiny 
- ☐ Cricket 
- ☐ Orange 
- ☐ Grasshopper
- ☐ Blue 
- ☐ Caterpillar
- ☐ Striped 
- ☐ Roly poly (sow bug) 
- ☐ Ant 
- ☐ Camouflaged 
- ☐ Dragonfly
- ☐ Multicolored 
- ☐ Wasp 
- ☐ Spotted 
- ☐ Mosquito
- ☐ Swimming in/on water
- ☐ A really pretty or cool bug  
(Draw it below)



- ☐ Bigger than a dime
- ☐ Black 
- ☐ Snail
- ☐ Carrying something 
- ☐ Cicada
- ☐ Red 
- ☐ Fly
- ☐ Butterfly 
- ☐ Metallic 
- ☐ Firefly
- ☐ Praying mantis 
- ☐ Slug 
- ☐ Centipede 
- ☐ Green 
- ☐ Spider
- ☐ Eating a plant leaf
- ☐ Worm 
- ☐ Bumblebee 
- ☐ Invent a bug!  
(Draw it below)



# Sticking up for bugs



There are a lot of bugs that we really don't like having around, like mosquitoes that bite us and flies that won't stop buzzing around our picnics.

That doesn't mean that we should just try to get rid of all the bugs though! We need insects for lots of things, like pollinating our flowers and food crops, eating up the bugs that eat our garden plants, feeding birds and frogs, and lots more.



Some people use products to try to kill all of the bugs in their homes and yards. These products can be chemicals that make us (and our pets) sick, or products that also kill lots of innocent insect bystanders.



Backyard bug zappers kill millions of moths, for instance.

When people spray their lawns to kill mosquitoes, they also kill any fireflies who live there. Who wants a world with no more fireflies?



Nobody should have to put up with a bunch of mosquito bites. They hurt, they itch, and they can even spread diseases. But there are lots of ways to live with bugs that are better for us and better for nature.



One way we keep mosquitoes away from our back yard is by making our yard really friendly for birds, bats, and insects that eat mosquitoes like dragonflies. We plant shrubs and trees that they like, provide water sources (with pump fountains because mosquitoes like to lay eggs in still water), put out bird food, plant native flowers that produce seeds the birds like, make sure wildlife has shelters, and more. They repay us by eating up all the bugs they can find in our yard and gardens!

What are your favorite bugs? Let's work together to help the good ones and get rid of the annoying ones in better ways!

For lots of tips on outsmarting pesty bugs like ticks and mosquitoes, see our July 2019 issue!



# Make a Butterfly Puddler!

Butterflies always need good sources of water and nutrients but they can't drink from deep water. Here's how to give them a drink (and nutrients they need!) in your back yard or patio.

You might not like the idea of sucking on wet dirt or sand, but it's a necessary treat for butterflies!

Butterflies do what's called "puddling" where they gather on wet dirt or sand. They get water from these areas and also get minerals and other healthy things when they drink.



You can make butterfly puddling areas in your yard by keeping a few areas of dirt or sand open for them. You would have to wet them often though, so what some people do instead is to make "puddlers" -- shallow dishes of rocks, sand and soil for butterflies to come and visit.

You can set up a bird bath and put rocks in it so the butterflies have a place to perch.

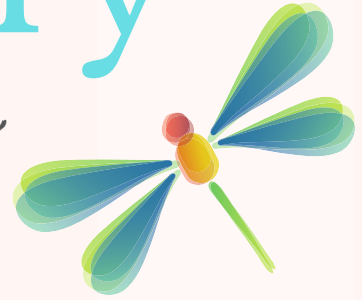
Remember not to make it very deep. You can make it healthier for them by adding a tiny bit of table salt for minerals or a bit of rotting fruit to the water (change it often so it doesn't get too stinky!). Remember to keep it in the same place and keep up with watering it, so they learn they can always count on your yard for their puddling!



# July Poetry

"Hot July brings cooling showers,  
Apricots and gillyflowers."

– Sara Coleridge, *Pretty Lessons in Verse*



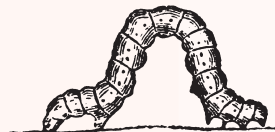
## Insects

by John Clare

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,  
And happy units of a numerous herd  
Of playfellows, the laughing Summer brings,  
Mocking the sunshine in their glittering wings,  
How merrily they creep, and run, and fly!  
No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,  
Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose;  
And where they fly for dinner no one knows--  
The dew-drops feed them not--they love the shine  
Of noon, whose sun may bring them golden wine.  
All day they're playing in their Sunday dress--  
Till night goes sleep, and they can do no less;  
Then, to the heath bell's silken hood they fly,  
And like to princes in their slumbers lie,  
Secure from night, and dropping dews, and all,  
In silken beds and roomy painted hall.  
So merrily they spend their summer day,  
Now in the cornfields, now the new-mown hay."

## A Caterpillar's Apology for Eating a Favorite Gladiolus by Charles Dalmon

Confuse me not with impious things;  
But wait for the appointed hour  
When you shall see your vanished flower  
Reborn resplendent in my wings!



## Summer Evening

by Walter De La Mare

The sandy cat by the Farmer's chair  
Mews at his knee for dainty fare;  
Old Rover in his moss-greened house  
Mumbles a bone, and barks at a mouse.

In the dewy fields the cattle lie  
Chewing the cud 'neath a fading sky;  
Dobbin at manger pulls his hay:  
Gone is another summer's day.

## The Butterfly and the Bee

by William Lisle Bowles

Methought I heard a butterfly  
Say to a labouring bee:  
"Thou hast no colours of the sky  
On painted wings like me."

"Poor child of vanity! those dyes,  
And colours bright and rare,"  
With mild reproof, the bee replies,  
"Are all beneath my care."

"Content I toil from morn to eve,  
And scorning idleness,  
To tribes of gaudy sloth I leave  
The vanity of dress."

# Oxeye Daisies



Ox-eye daisies can be found all over the world in fields, pastures, vacant lots, ditches and even in back yards. They grow as weeds but look so pretty and they're edible too!

Oxeye daisies like sunny spots and they aren't picky about their care. They are native to Europe and parts of Asia and were introduced to North America, Australia and New Zealand where they now grow wild.

Oxeye daisy leaves can be eaten raw or cooked, though a lot of people like them better cooked. The flowers can be used in salads or even pickled. Some people even batter and fry the flowers! Like most plants, they taste milder when they're small and young. You don't have to eat them, you can just enjoy their beauty too.



Oxeye daisies were used for medicine in Europe in the olden days for coughs, wounds and respiratory issues and more. They grow like weeds though and were considered a nuisance in many places. In Scotland, wheat farmers used to have to pay an extra tax if they had too many oxeye daisies in their fields!



Caution for people with allergies: Ox-eye daisies can cause allergies and rashes on bare skin in a few people. If you have hay fever or sensitive skin you may want to wear gloves when handling them. Cooked plants tend to cause fewer issues than raw.

Remember to always try a little of a new food (wild or store bought) when eating it for the first time. Never eat a wild food without checking with trusted grown ups to make sure they're safe!

# OXEYE DAISY (LEUCANTHEMUM VULGARE)



From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,*  
Written, illustrated and engraved by Elizabeth Blackwell, 1737



# 10 Reasons to love Hollyhocks

Have you ever heard of hollyhocks? They are old fashioned flowers that are so pretty and fun! There are so many reasons they're fantastic garden flowers.

1. They come in all different colors.
2. They are easy to grow and will replant themselves to come back year after year.
3. They are a preferred host for Painted Lady Butterflies.
4. You can make the flowers into fairy dolls (we'll try to put directions in an upcoming issue but you can just do a web search for lots of pictures!).
5. They are super tall and can make fun garden hideaways.
6. They can hide ugly parts of your yard (in the old days they were planted to hide outhouses!).
7. They are usually hardy in USDA growing zones 3-8, meaning they can grow in lots of kinds of climates.
8. They keep flowering for lots of weeks.
9. The old flower stalks make fun make-believe swords!
10. They're edible! Hollyhocks are in the mallow family and all their parts are edible. Some people cook their leaves like spinach and some people make cold-infused teas from their flowers. Other people use the flowers in salads or even stuff them with things like cream cheese.

Lots of times, gardeners have extra "volunteers" of garden flowers that pop up in the springtime that they're happy to share. If you'd like to try growing your own hollyhocks, ask your friends and neighbors to keep an ear out for people who will share some of theirs with you.

Hollyhocks are biennial, which means they live two years and flower the second year. They spread easily though, so once you plant them you tend to keep getting them.

You can also find wild hollyhocks growing in lots of places around the United States and elsewhere. Those ones are usually white and still very pretty!



# HOLLYHOCK (ALCEA)



From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,*  
Written, illustrated and engraved by Elizabeth Blackwell, 1737

# Phenology Calendar

Keep track of all of the firsts in nature that you see this month!  
Write in firsts and interesting nature observations and draw a picture if you like.

## Examples:

- First apples ripen
- First sphinx moth spotted
- First garden tomatoes harvested
- Fireflies spotted
- Temperate over 100° F
- Over 1" of rain
- Foraged wild raspberries
- Hummingbird spotted
- First hollyhock blooms
- Milkweeds in pod stage
- First turtle spotted sunning on log
- Double rainbow spotted



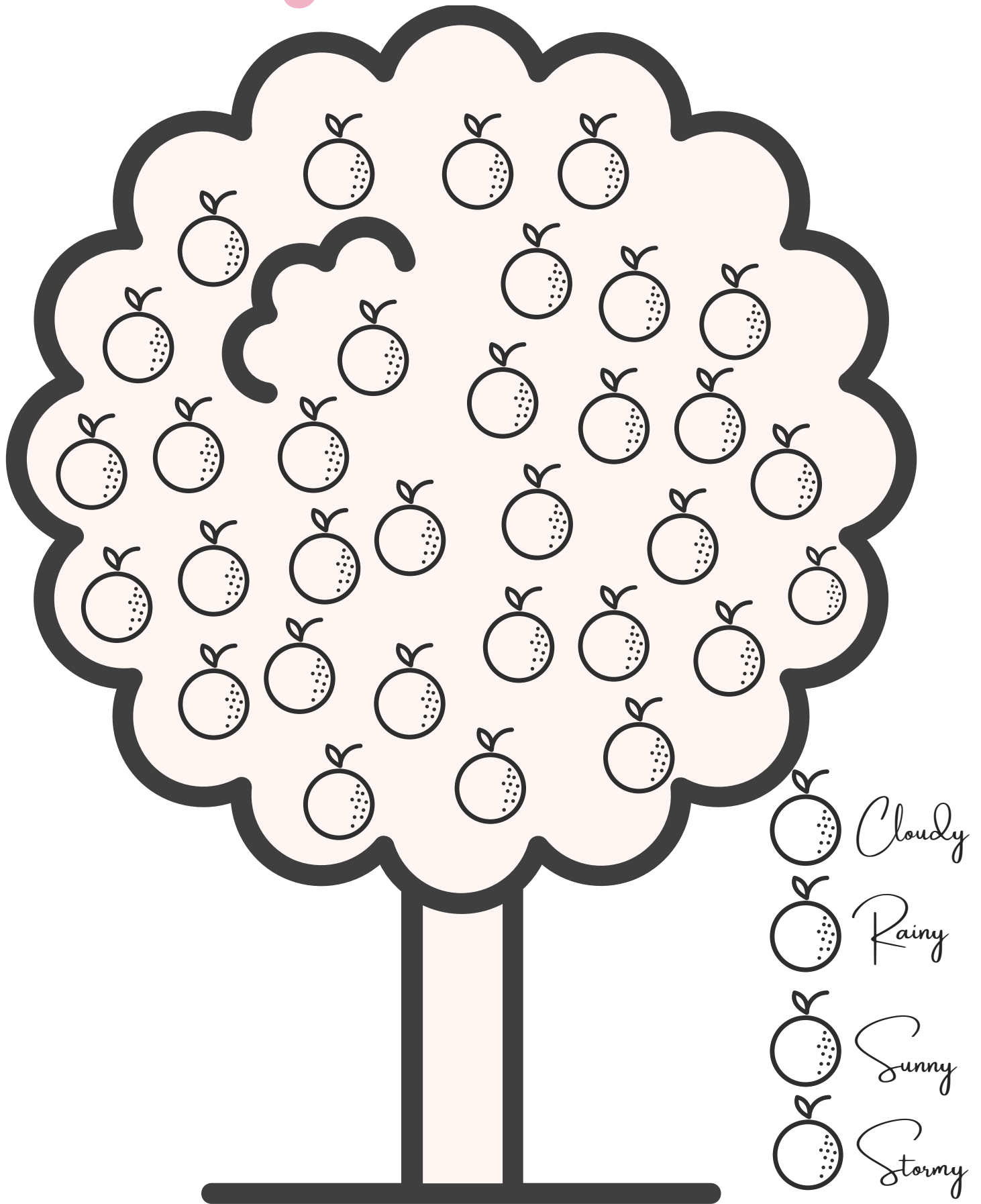
## JULY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# *My Nature Journal*

## July

# July Weather Tree



# July Bird List

Birds spotted this month

# July Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

# July Nature Notes

Record any interesting discoveries here -- plants you identify, foods you forage, outdoor activities, cool nature projects, nature books read, or just notes about what it's like outside this week!

Week 1 Observations

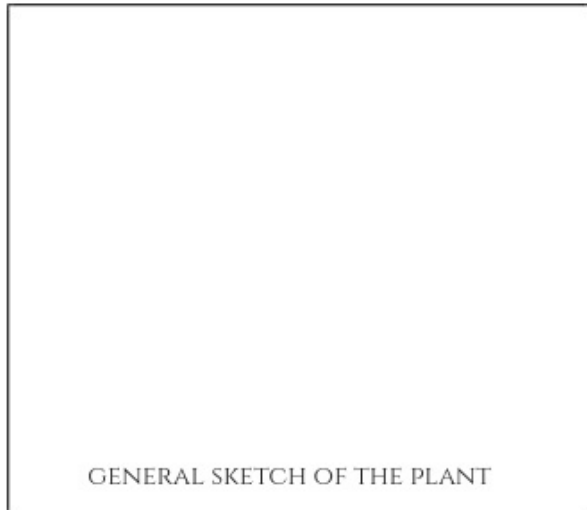
Week 2 Observations

Week 3 Observations

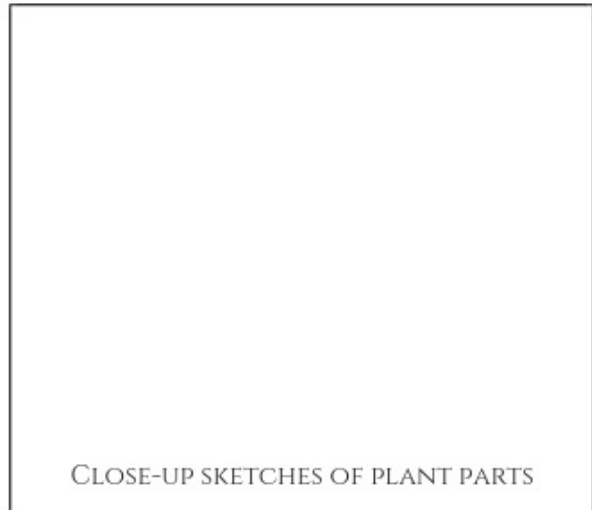
Week 4 Observations

# MY FORAGING GUIDE FOR:

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GENERAL SKETCH OF THE PLANT



CLOSE-UP SKETCHES OF PLANT PARTS

LATIN NAME \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE FOUND \_\_\_\_\_

PARTS USED \_\_\_\_\_

LOOKALIKES & HOW TO POSITIVELY ID:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WARNINGS: \_\_\_\_\_

FORAGING RECORD (DATES, WHERE FOUND, HOW IT WAS USED)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

MY RATING FOR THIS PLANT





Want to see your stuff in Wild Kids?

We welcome articles, photos, artwork and other submissions from kids and their grown ups.

Visit [magicalchildhood.com/wildkids](http://magicalchildhood.com/wildkids) to learn more.