

Cities in Bloom



Researchers find that small wildflower patches in cities can have a big impact on pollinators.

LEXILE: 1090L

SCIENCE (NGSS) STANDARD: Earth and Human Activity

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, SL.1, SL.4

ENGAGE THE READER

Before the lesson, find two images to show students: one of a large wildflower meadow and another of a small wildflower garden in an urban area. Ask students to talk to a partner about which they think is better for wildlife, and why. Have volunteers share some of the points they discussed. Explain that today's article is about the benefits of even small patches of wildflowers. Ask students what kinds of wildlife they think might benefit from these.

QUESTIONS FOR CLOSE READING AND DISCUSSION

- What are some benefits of wildflowers? How do they support pollinators?
- Why were the results of the study in *Ecological Entomology* “good news for city dwellers”?
- Were you surprised by the results of the study? Why or why not?

EXTEND LEARNING

Ask students if they can name any pollinators other than bees. Note that birds, bats, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, wasps, and small mammals are all pollinators because they visit flowers to drink nectar or feed on pollen, and transport pollen grains as they move. Over the next couple of days, have students take note of where they see a lot of pollinators, and which kinds. Ask them to note some spaces that could host and benefit from a wildflower patch.

Have students read through the guide from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center about how to create a container garden ([ti.me/ContainerGarden](https://www.ti.me/ContainerGarden)). As they read, have them take notes about additional research they can do to ensure a successful garden. Instruct students to come up with a full list of supplies they'd need, from a container to potting layers. If possible, get all the materials needed and create a few container gardens as a class. Or encourage students to make one at home.

COVER STORY QUIZ + ANSWER KEY

The cover quiz can be found on page 2 of this guide.
To create a digital quiz, you can use our template [here](#).

- 1. C** (RI.4) **2. C** (RI.1) **3. D** (RI.3) **4. B** (RI.5) **5. B** (RI.6)
6. A (RI.2) **7. Answers will vary.** (W.1)

Name _____ Date _____

Use this week's cover story, "Cities in Bloom," to answer the questions below. For questions 1–6, circle the letter next to the best answer. If you need more space to write your response to question 7, you may use the back of this page.

<p>1. Based on context, what does <i>expanse</i> mean in the first sentence?</p> <p>A. a patch</p> <p>B. a habitat</p> <p>C. a large area</p> <p>D. a small area</p>	<p>4. Where in the text can you find details about wildflower season?</p> <p>A. in the intro text</p> <p>B. in the section "Wildflower Week"</p> <p>C. in the section "Pollinator Support"</p> <p>D. in the captions of the images included with the text</p>
<p>2. Which is true about the study that was published in the journal <i>Ecological Entomology</i>?</p> <p>A. The size of the wildflower patch has an impact on the diversity of its pollinators.</p> <p>B. It was conducted by the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.</p> <p>C. Small wildflower patches ensure pollinators can get food.</p> <p>D. A few flowers will distract bees from finding their nests.</p>	<p>5. What is Demekia Biscoe's viewpoint about even very small wildflower patches such as window boxes or pots?</p> <p>A. They're nice to look at.</p> <p>B. They make bees very happy.</p> <p>C. They are like a snack shop for pollinators.</p> <p>D. They create "life corridors" for insects.</p>
<p>3. How can wildflowers prevent flooding?</p> <p>A. They attract a diversity of pollinators.</p> <p>B. Their roots increase the soil's ability to absorb rainwater.</p> <p>C. Their roots stabilize the soil.</p> <p>D. both B and C</p>	<p>6. Which would be the best alternative headline for this article?</p> <p>A. "The Impact of Urban Flowers"</p> <p>B. "Patio Gardens"</p> <p>C. "Make Your Own Meadow"</p> <p>D. "Wild for Wildflowers"</p>

7. Write a letter to your city council encouraging them to plant a wildflower patch.
