

# Ithaca Children's Garden

## Plant Science Afterschool Program

The Ithaca Children's Garden plant science enrichment program offers elementary school age youth an opportunity to discover a passion for plants through hands-on experiments, activities, and games.

**Plants in Our Lives**  
**Butterfly Ecology**  
**Amazing Seed Experiments**  
**Art in the Garden**  
**Plant Propagation**  
**Garden Starters**

For more information about ICG programs contact:

Leigh MacDonald, Education Coordinator  
(607) 272-2292 ext. 122  
ithacachildrengarden@cornell.edu

Ithaca Children's Garden  
615 Willow Ave.  
Ithaca, NY 14850

## THE PROGRAM

The Ithaca Children's Garden has been offering their plant science enrichment program to elementary afterschool programs since 2000.

- The program is designed for the spring and can take place any time between late February and mid May. Most often the program takes place between the February and April school breaks.
- Traditionally youth in grades 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> participate in the program. However, if you are interested in the program for a different age group, we can often adjust activities to meet your needs.
- Minimum of 5 participants, maximum of 10 participants
- The program includes 6 sessions, which are outlined below. Each session lasts approximately 1 hour. Most commonly the program is facilitated once per week for six weeks. However, the program can also be facilitated twice per week for three weeks or five times a week for one week. If you are interested in just one or two particular sessions, arrangements can be made to bring just those activities to your afterschool program as well.

**Plants in Our Lives:** is a getting to know you and getting to know plants activity. In the Plants in Our Lives game, youth work in teams to decide if common and not-so-common items are derived from plants or not and which part of the plant they come from. Many are surprised that chocolate comes from a plant and cinnamon is actually the bark of a tree. Everything from the food we eat, the clothing we wear, and the items we use everyday at home and school are explored.

Plants in Our Lives is also an introduction to basic requirements plants need to thrive. Each participant will re-pot a houseplant to take home. We'll explore light, water, nutrients, and temperature.

**Butterfly Ecology:** is a chance to explore what a habitat is and how important plants are to butterfly habitats as well as human habitats. In the Web of Life game, participants each assume the role of a habitat component such as a caterpillar, a tree, the sun, or a pond and explore the many ways they are connected to each other. Once we've brainstormed a list of components butterflies need in their habitats, participants we'll get a chance to create their own 3-D pop-up butterfly habitats.

Participants will also take a home their own butterfly hostplant kit including seeds, a pot, soil, and instructions for starting butterfly hostplants indoors in May to be planted outside in June.

**Amazing Seed Experiments:** is when we make hypotheses, design experiments, and see what happens. Seeds are extraordinary. They can be tiny but contain all the information needed to grow into a new plant. They can survive years, sometimes decades, underground and they come in a million shapes and sizes, all with different tricks and traps to ensure they only start to grow when conditions are just right. In addition to germination and power seeds experiments, participants will have a chance to design their own seed experiment.

**Art in the Garden:** is a great chance to be creative using plants as inspiration for art and the medium to create art. Participants will design a terra cotta pot to be used later in the program as well as create their own sprouting head.

**Plant Propagation:** provides a chance to explore the many ways in which we get new plants. Plant Propagation is by far the most popular session in the program. Participants will propagate plants using a variety of methods including seeds, stem cuttings, leaf cuttings, division, specialized structures like bulbs and corms. In addition to learning how to propagate plants, participants take home several newly started houseplants, annuals, and perennials to care for throughout the spring and incorporate into their gardens in the summer.

**Garden Starters:** takes us into the future...June, to be exact. Participants have learned all about how important plants are in our lives and the lives of animals. They've conducted their own experiments and started and cared for many different kinds of plants. The next step is to plan a garden to enjoy this summer. Each participant will receive a garden starter kit to go with the plan they create including seeds, activities, and a garden journal.

## MATERIALS & SPACE

ICG will provide all supplies and materials needed for the program.

We can adapt to most spaces. However, a desirable space would:

- Be separate from other afterschool activities
- Have at least 2 tables seating at least 6 people (as opposed to desks)
- Have tile floors opposed to carpeting (we will often be using soil and water)
- Have a sink or easy access to water

## RATES & EXPENSES

ICG Educator: \$15 per session

Materials: \$27 per participant (6 week program)\*

(material costs are also figured per session and can be adjusted accordingly for shorter or longer programs)

Mileage: \$.45 per mile (from 615 Willow Ave. Ithaca)

\* Materials costs are also figured per session and can be adjusted accordingly for shorter or longer programs:

<b>PROGRAM SESSION</b>	<b>MATERIALS COST PER PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>EDUCATOR COST</b>
Plants in Our Lives	\$3.50	\$15.00
Butterfly Ecology	\$3.50	\$15.00
Amazing Seed Experiments	\$3.50	\$15.00
Art in the Garden	\$6.00	\$15.00
Plant Propagation	\$6.00	\$15.00
Garden Starters	\$4.50	\$15.00