



## Schoolyard Habitats®

*Wildlife and Food Gardens | Exercise | Planning | Community | Models | Creativity | Hydroponics | Vertical and Container Gardening | Green Roofs | Engineering*

As today's schools are challenged to increase both student test scores and campus safety and efficiency, redesigning the school grounds and reclaiming the landscape as an outdoor classroom and laboratory can assist schools in achieving both objectives.

*Schoolyard Habitats* are quite literally nature's playground for ideas. Students have fantastic imaginations! The school grounds are the perfect environment in which to let those minds run wild and free.

What sort of space could be created? Might there be Monarch recovery gardens? Farm to School beds for each grade level? Can we install a wind turbine? The learning opportunities are endless; think about the knowledge to be gained studying properties of matter, change over time, living and non-living systems, structure and function. Practical skills can be nurtured: measuring, building, communicating and problem solving.

Schoolyard Habitats at their best are great spaces to learn; they are litter-free, support biodiversity and will hopefully have a flagpole flying the Eco-Schools Green Flag! As a bonus, a school that addresses this pathway can easily certify their school for free as an [NWF Schoolyard Habitat](#), and can display a Schoolyard Habitat badge on their dashboard.

### Driving Questions

- ✓ How can we, as entomologists, inform the community about the benefits of our local pollinators and open people's hearts to declining bee populations?
- ✓ How can we, as master gardeners, raise awareness about the human health benefits of gardening?
- ✓ How can we, as soil scientists, provide the community with the knowledge, tools and resources to improve the quality of soil where they live?
- ✓ How can we, as landscape architects, design an outdoor learning laboratory that is open to the public, can be used for learning at each grade level and is accessible to students and community members with disabilities?



### TOOLS AND RESOURCES

[Top 10 Tips](#) | [Fast Facts](#) | [Standards Alignment](#) | [Sample Action Plan](#) | [Schoolyard Habits Audit](#) | [Lesson Links](#)