

## Clean Air Activities for Kids

*Try these activities which help promote clean air and beautify the environment!*

Pine Cone Bird Feeder  
Butterfly Garden  
Colorful Painted Leaf Prints  
Leaf Rubs  
Personal Treasure Box

### Pine Cone Bird Feeder

Dirty air doesn't just affect humans, it can affect birds too! Birds need clean air to breathe and tall trees to make nests in. Dirty air can affect both of these things. Do you have birds where you live? This feeder is easy to make and will attract all types of birds. For best results, hang it near a window so you can watch the birds while they eat. Younger kids may need an adult's help.

**You'll Need:** a pine cone, peanut butter, bird seed and thin string or twine. Never use fishing wire because it could harm the birds!

**Directions:** (1) tie a loop of string or twine lengthwise around your pine cone leaving enough to tie at the end; (2) using a spoon, spread peanut butter all over the pine cone; (3) roll the pine cone in bird seed- the peanut butter will make it stick; (4) tie the end of your string or twine to a tree branch and wait for the birds to come!

## Butterfly Garden

Air pollution can even affect butterflies! Butterflies like to land on certain flowers to gather nectar for food. The plants and flowers that they need cannot grow in certain places because the air is too dirty, but you can plant flowers for them at home!



Get an adult's permission and help to do this project.

**You'll Need:** flowers like Russian Sage, Butterfly Bush, Red Sage, Coreopsis, Marigolds, Cosmos, Lavender, Garlic Chives, Black-eyed Susan, Desert Bird of Paradise or other brightly colored flowers which grow well in the High Desert and are water-wise.

**Directions:** (1) pick a large, open space to plant these flowers because many of them are big; (2) make sure that the space you pick gets a lot of sunlight-most of these flowers require 6-8 hours of sunlight a day; (3) plant the tall flowers in the back and the smaller flowers in the front; (4) water them often and watch for butterflies. (Suggestion: Mass plantings of each selection works best for attracting butterflies vs. planting individually.)

This should provide a well-rounded, fragrant, and very attractive almost year round butterfly garden! These flowers are also low maintenance, and low water use is required. Plants listed above provide color and nectar almost year round. Plants vary in height from tall (butterfly bush 6-8'), to low (coreopsis 1-2'), and the colors include yellow, dark purple, red, orange, lavender, and pinks.

## Colorful Painted Leaf Prints

Did you know that plants breathe too? Plants, like trees and bushes, take in carbon dioxide, which is bad for humans to breathe and which can pollute the air.

They also give off oxygen that we need for our lungs, blood and heart in order to survive. This makes plants

very important for keeping the air clean and keeping us healthy! You can use leaves to make a colorful design that will remind you of how important it is to protect plants.



**You'll Need:** fallen leaves that are still fresh, a paint brush, poster paints and a large sheet of paper

**Directions:** (1) gather leaves from trees and bushes that have already fallen on the ground; see how many different kinds you can find; (2) using your paintbrush, brush paint on the front of a leaf until it is well coated; (3) press the leaf onto your piece of paper; when you peel it back, you'll see the imprint of the leaf! For best results, use lots of colors!

## Leaf Rubs

If you don't want to use paints for the activity above, try this activity. Place a leaf on a hard surface under a thin sheet of paper. Rub over the paper with a crayon. The result? A colorful outline of the leaf and its parts!



## Personal Treasure Box



Have you ever wondered where the garbage collector takes your trash? Some trash goes to landfills where it is piled up. The garbage then decomposes (or breaks down) so that more garbage can be added. The problem is that some garbage can take hundreds of years to break down and landfills can give off gases that pollute the air! That's why it's important to

recycle and cut down on waste. You can help do this by saving items you usually throw away and turning them into fun things. For example, you can turn an old box into a personal treasure box! Younger kids may need an adult's help.

**You'll Need:** an empty soap powder box with a lid, scissors, paste, colored paper

**Directions:** (1) use scissors to cut out shapes from the colored paper; (2) paste them onto the outside of the box; you can also use fabric, stickers and old photos to decorate the box; (3) when you finish decorating it, open it up and fill it with your favorite outdoor treasures like seashells, rocks and pinecones! You can also make a scrunchie holder using an empty paper towel roll and the same method!