Advice from a 4-H’er

From: Chase, Age 13 (2015)

I have learned a lot through the Entomology project. I started when I was six years old so I could collect more bugs than the other kids who didn’t start collecting until the year that they were eligible to exhibit their bugs at the fair. I had lots of fun collecting bugs. The pinning took practice to perfect. The Entomology project has taught me to be more organized because of the organization needed to organize my bug collection.

My advice to any beginner Entomology project participants would be to not get down on yourself after pinning a bug incorrectly or breaking a bug. It happens to everybody, including me. You can collect another specimen of that species. Also, keep trying. If at your first or second year of fair you don’t do very well, keep at it. You will get there eventually. It took me a couple years to start doing well at fair. If your first few years don’t go very well in general, keep at it. Overall, the Entomology project will teach you many life skills that will prove valuable in your future.

Example of an entomology display

Project levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age 7-9</th>
<th>Age 10-13</th>
<th>Age 14 +</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Learn what insects do for us.</td>
<td>• Learn how insects adapt to their environments.</td>
<td>• Start an insect collecting club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn the basic parts of an insect.</td>
<td>• Learn about insect life cycles.</td>
<td>• Learn about insect control methods in forestry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collect and identify different insects.</td>
<td>• Participate in developing a butterfly garden</td>
<td>• Do an insect survey for a local farmer or city garden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn about plants and other insects that insects may eat.</td>
<td>• Learn to build insect traps.</td>
<td>• Experiment with insect populations in organic production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn about insect predators.</td>
<td>• Participate in the Butterfly WINGS, Lost Lady Bug or Pollinator: Live online learning activities.</td>
<td>• Participate in beekeeping or start a honey business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn how insects pollinate plants.</td>
<td>• Discover the different ways insects survive winter.</td>
<td>• Mentor other youth in online survey activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn how to pin insects for display.</td>
<td>• Learn how color influences insect life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources:

Visit
http://www.johnson.k-state.edu/4-h/project-club-resources/projects.html
to also find the following links.

Kansas 4-H Entomology Website:
- http://www.kansas4-h.org/projects/agriculture-and-natural-resources/entomology.html

Other helpful Entomology websites around the country:
- http://urbanext.illinois.edu/insects/01.html
- http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/natural_resources/Projects/entomology/Box%20Plans.pdf
- http://www.earthlife.net/insects/six.html
- http://www2.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef006.asp

Exploring Opportunities

- Give a presentation on your favorite insect.
- Make a video on how to collect and pin insects.
- Monitor the city park for mosquito populations.
- Adopt and maintain a butterfly flower garden at a park.
- Offer to monitor and control insects in an organic garden.
- Help an adult teach a class about insects.

Exhibit Ideas

- Exhibit an insect collection at the county fair.
- Make an educational poster or notebook about an entomology topic.
- Create a logbook and picture record of one year of insect surveys in your area.
- Complete an exhibit of the equipment needed for beekeeping.
- Keep an insect journal.