

Designing a Pollinator Garden



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Omaha Zoo’s Lee G. Simmons Wildlife Safari Park

Part I: Overview of Workplace

Omaha Zoo’s Wildlife Safari Park opened in June 1998 in Ashland, Nebraska. It is a 440-acre, drive-through park that includes natural prairies and wetlands. There one can find elk, bison, white-tailed deer, bald eagles, wolves, and a variety of wetland birds.

Part II: Workplace Focus

Many individuals have not had the opportunity to see wildlife in their natural habitat. The goal of the Safari Park is to educate the public about the animals and improve conservation awareness. By supporting local pollinator species, educators can accomplish these goals.

Part III: Introduce the Problem

Students are designing and constructing a pollinator garden, sometimes referred to as a butterfly garden, to attract native pollinators and to provide a feeding area for migrating pollinators.

Part IV: Background

What content knowledge does the student need to solve the problem?

- Pollinators and plants interact with each other
- Certain plants grow naturally in certain areas (native plants)

Part V: Workplace Solution

- Compiled a list of plants native to western Iowa and easter Nebraska
- Created an informational pamphlet about designing a pollinator garden
- Designed 5E lesson plans to help educators

Part VI: Educational Pathways

- To become an educator at the zoo, the most common pathway is by becoming a K-12 teacher
- Others in the education department start as interns, volunteers, and docents and work up to current positions
- Skills needed: independent thinking, observation, record keeping, physical labor, communication