

For 2nd grade 3rd Week – Planting to attract beneficial animals or deter bad insects

Insects – they make up most life on earth and only 1% of insects are considered pests. What benefits do insects provide? How important are these relationships with beneficial insects?

Lacewing larvae eat aphids. Aphids are a problem on kale. Borage flowers provide a place for lacewings to lay their eggs, which hatch quickly into larvae.

Have students plant Borage as closely as possible to their Kale.

Lacewing Facts from Planet Natural

Green Lacewing



arbico organics



photo

The common green lacewing (*Chrysoperla rufilabris*) is a widely used beneficial insect which naturally controls many different pests. Actually, most species of the adult lacewing do not kill other insects but subsist on pollen, sweet nectar, etc. It is their offspring or lacewing larvae that do the job. The adult lacewing lays her eggs on the foliage, each on top of hair-like filaments. After a few days the eggs hatch and a tiny larva emerges which is also known as the “aphid lion” because of its voracious appetite.

Lacewing larvae are similar in appearance to an alligator with pincers like tiny ice tongs, and vigorously attacks its prey, injecting a paralyzing venom then drawing out the body fluids of its victim. Besides aphids, they feed on just about any soft-bodied pest they can “grab,” including citrus mealybugs, cottony cushion scale, spider mites, thrips, caterpillars, insect eggs, etc. It is known to be cannibalistic if no other food source is available. During the two to three weeks in this stage it will devour up to 200 victims a week. After this, it will pupate by spinning a cocoon with silken thread and approximately five days later the adult emerges to complete the life cycle. There are five or six overlapping generations each season.



Borage Information from Organic Gardening

3. Borage (*Borago officinalis*) This annual herb has bright blue clusters of edible, cucumber-flavored flowers. Studies in Switzerland have shown borage to be exceptionally attractive to good bugs, with an average of over 100 beneficials found in just 1 square yard of borage. In addition, common green lacewings have a very strong preference to lay their eggs on borage. Look for borage on garden center seed racks and mail order seed catalogs.