



# 4-H Adventures in Nature

## Plant(Flora) Challenges

The earth laughs in flowers.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Let's get out and play! Focus on flora! Plants are the topic of this month's challenge!

### Backyard Adventure

Step into your own backyard or a nearby park. Search for patches of clover growing in the grassy areas.

Explore carefully... you may find honey bees busy at work pollinating and collecting nectar to make clover honey. Hunt the clover patches for the lucky four-leaf clover! Take a photo of your search, then visit [4-h.org](http://4-h.org) to learn the 4-H Pledge and the meaning of the letter "H" on the 4-H Clover. Good Luck!

### Tree Canopy

Grab some paper and crayons, and take a walk to observe the trees around you. Pick a spot under one of the trees and be a tree scientist! As you sit or lay on the ground at its base, observe the tree canopy above you. What do you see? Is there activity in the tree canopy? Why do you think trees are an important resource? Place a sheet of paper against the tree trunk and use long edge of a crayon to make a bark rubbing. Collect a few leaves, needles, nuts, or seeds from your tree, and use them to make leaf rubbings on the same paper. Try to identify the type of tree using the [Tree Identification Key](#) from [Iowa State Extension](#) or the activity [Illinois Trees Activity Book](#) from [Illinois DNR](#). Do this with 3 different trees. Learn more from the [Follow the Path](#) and [Hiking Trails](#) 4-H project manuals.

### Flower Finds

Take a hike or hop on your bike to enjoy the beauty of springtime flowers! Look for native wildflowers, ornamentals, blooming trees, and bushes. When you see a flower that you like, stop to observe it more closely. Use your favorite plant identification app or visit the [Directory of Wildflowers](#) to learn more. Be on the lookout for pollinators, and see if you can spot the Illinois State Flower. (Hint: it's a violet!) Use the [Flower Finds](#) Chart to record observations of at least 3 different flowers. Learn more about flowers in the [Floriculture-A](#) 4-H project manual.

For more information about 4-H project manuals or other Adventure in Nature activities, contact Judy Schmidt, [schmid7@illinois.edu](mailto:schmid7@illinois.edu) or Emily Schoenfelder, [eshoe@illinois.edu](mailto:eshoe@illinois.edu).



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