

# budburst

*a project of the Chicago Botanic Garden*

## BUDBURST FOR FAMILIES

Spending Time with Family and Plant Friends!

**Title:** Crocus Counting

**Age Group:** PreK/K

### **Purpose:**

- **Why?** Exercise your body and your observations skills—both are essential for STEM learning. Writing down what you see as a record is a practice that all scientists do to study nature.
- **How?** Dress for the weather and grab a pencil and paper.
- **What?** Fun family activity for pre-readers to spot purple flowers and practice counting skills, color recognition and tallying.

### **Steps:**

1. Let's find out what we're looking for today.



Crocus flowers bloom in a variety of bright colors including purple, lavender, blue, orange, yellow, cream and white. They have narrow, grass-like foliage.

Zones: 3-8 (The Chicago area is Zone 5)      Height: 3-6 inches

Bloom time: Late winter and early spring

Ask your kids: Have you seen any plants pop up in grassy yards or parks that stand out against the green grass blades? Are there tiny purple flowers that are popping up outside of flower gardens?

Those tiny purple flowers are crocus. They are tiny but mighty and their bright color and lovely smell can lure hungry bees out of their hives to greet the spring season. Counting them is a good way to find out if the pollinators on your block or in your neighborhood will have food to eat when they emerge.

2. Let's take it outdoors and count. Dress for the weather and use your pencil to draw

Count the crocus on your block - each flower counts as one. Record your count on scratch paper or use the counting chart below. Be sure to stop and smell the crocus on your walk!

**Tally your crocus here:**

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Crocus Count Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Crocus Count: \_\_\_\_\_

Bonus question: Did you see any other early bloomers on your walk? (Examples may include dandelions, daffodils or tulips). List them here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**If you want to learn more** about native plants you could add to your home garden check out the Nativars Research Project at: <https://budburst.org/projects/nativars>