

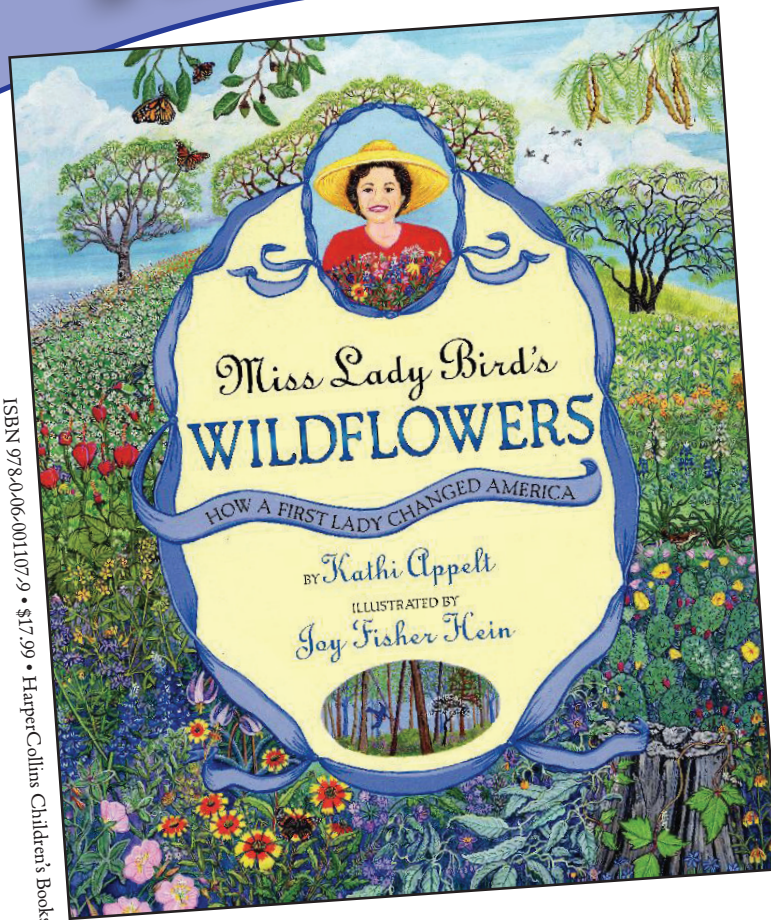
Activity Kit

Miss Lady Bird's WILDFLOWERS

HOW A FIRST LADY
CHANGED AMERICA

BY Kathi Appelt

ILLUSTRATED BY
Joy Fisher Hein



December 22, 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of one of America's most beloved First Ladies, Claudia Alta Taylor Johnson, better known as Lady Bird.

LADY BIRD GREW UP in a large brick house in east Texas, but she lost her mother at a very early age and was a lonely child. She found solace in the wildflowers and piney woods near her home and cherished their wild beauty. As the wife of a congressman, she moved to Washington, D.C., and often served as tour guide to visiting friends and dignitaries. She noticed the dismal parks, dirty streets, and filthy rivers and worried about children growing up with only cement and asphalt beneath their feet. Later, as First Lady, she sought to bring the beauty of wildflowers to America's cities and highways.

Award-winning author Kathi Appelt and Texas Master Naturalist and illustrator Joy Fisher Hein bring Lady Bird's inspiring life and environmental vision to young readers in this charming picture book. A note at the back includes information on Lady Bird's legacy, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, a 284-acre living laboratory dedicated to educating the world about the environmental necessity, economic value, and natural beauty of native plants.

"This warmly attractive volume tells a graceful braid of stories: the life of Lady Bird Johnson, the wife of a president; the tale of a lonely child who found solace in the landscape and flora of east Texas; and the work of a First Lady who sought to bring beauty of the wilder sort into the highways of America." —KIRKUS REVIEWS

Activities

Native beauty

Lady Bird grew up surrounded by the trees and wildflowers near her east Texas home: magnolias, bluebonnets, Indian paintbrush, pink evening primrose, black-eyed Susan's, purple horsemint, and more. What flowering plants are native to your area? Make a list and find or make illustrations or photographs of your native plants. Can you spot them in the wild?

Wild diary

In her diary, Lady Bird described exploring the forest near her home:

"I loved to paddle in those dark bayous, where time itself seemed ringed around by silence and ancient cypress trees, rich in festoons of Spanish moss. Now and then an alligator would surface like a gnarled log. It was a place of dreams."

With your class or parent, visit a wild place near your home or school. It can be a park, a beach, a field, or meadow—any place where you can observe nature. Sit quietly for five to ten minutes and pay attention to each of your senses. What sounds do you hear? What scents are in the air? What plants and animals do you see? How does the grass or sand or rock feel? As you sit quietly, write your experiences and impressions in a notebook. Sketch one aspect of your landscape.

Planting the seed

"It is important for a child to plant a seed," Lady Bird told a friend, "to water it, nourish it, tend to it, watch it grow, and when he does, and when she does, they themselves will grow into great citizens." Plant quick-growing radish seeds. Fill a well-draining pot with soil; place seeds no deeper than half an inch into the soil. Place the pot in a sunny window or outside in a sunny location. Tend to your seeds daily, gently watering them when dry and watching for sprouts and seedlings. When you see the tops of hearty radishes mound beneath the green shoots of your plants, harvest your crop, wash and eat them. How did the experience of growing your radishes make you feel? How would such an experience make you a better citizen?

Lady Bird legislation

On October 22, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Highway Beautification Act, which attempted to limit billboards and other forms of outdoor advertising, and to clean up unsightly junkyards and roadside messes along America's interstate highways and replace them with green grass and wildflowers. The Act was part of Lady Bird's vision to soothe the nation at a time when the Vietnam War, civil rights, and other highly charged political topics fueled division. She believed that a cleaner, more beautiful country would bring people together. Pay attention to the roadsides the next time you drive on the interstate. How might they look today had the Highway Beautification Act not been passed?

Bluebonnet art

Bluebonnets are the state flower of Texas. These pretty blue flowers, named for their color and the petal's resemblance to a woman's sunbonnet, bloom in the early spring and are found throughout Texas. Bluebonnets were a very special flower to Lady Bird because they reminded her of her mother, who died when Lady Bird was very young. Try your hand at making a field of bluebonnets. Supplies needed: white construction paper, blue and green paint and a brush, or a blue ink pad and green marker. Study the illustrations in the book on pages 11, 19, 30-32, and 38. Can you find the bluebonnets? Draw or paint a green stem on your paper. Then paint, or use your thumb dipped in paint or the ink pad, to create blue petals all around the stem. Add some leaves below the petals. Post your field of bluebonnets on a wall or bulletin board.



Can You Find . . . ?



Can you find these plants and animals in the illustration above?

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Great Blue Heron | Alligators (2) | Spanish Moss |
| Southern Leopard Frog | Beavers (2) | Cypress Trees |
| Great Egret | Black-bellied Whistling Ducks (3) | Red River Birch Tree |
| Common Skimmer Dragonfly | Mallard Ducks (5) | Yellow American Lotus Flowers |

Say It with Flowers



Write your name in flowers!

A large, empty rectangular box with a double green border, intended for writing a name using floral illustrations.

Wildflower Word Search

Y V J R T V C N K N E Y P V T Y O G D G N Z M B P
 W T F Y C S X S S G G T L N C M T Q C S O X L R I
 B R H S U R B T N I A P N A I D N I S H D U I Y T
 I G O W K E X Q D L Y R D C L B V U D U E C L E N
 R M A S D R R T U K K C L T N W P M D B K H R L I
 P I N K E V E N I N G P R I M R O S E L P F G L M
 N V F E D B G W S B V D A N B H J L Y D O D H O E
 M M R W M R A T O Q L T H F P A L P J G Y B S W S
 J I W K Y X H Y Y L N U H J C S E P B R I W B A R
 M Z W H I U S J R A F M E N G A W W Z H K N N M O
 I N N N L F X N L H I E G B R X I U H M O L U E H
 E G J I A W M P F U O N N C O W I R I K G V F R E
 N L Q X Q Z N R Y G I D A O N N H T H I A I O I L
 Y G X E A O H W I V F C O I C N N S L I V F G C P
 T U M O M N Y S Q C T D X D I E N E J S H I O A R
 V Y D M U A B C D U L N S O E P L Y T W Z R B N U
 V A O M T E U W S V U S D I M N D P R N Q E Q L P
 J C D B U T T E R F L Y W E E D D E R M Z W A O J
 J A E N L M S F R H J I C N C D Z R G U Z H M T M
 N G M A L Z H Z R I G E E U D B E C O U P E Z U G
 Q W O Y H C S I A K J A I P X L I D R N C E R S I
 R N G M S Z K R M W I L C P V K T I W U C L Z C S
 T A I N E I S L J J G L T Z C T M E R C V K L P X
 Q O V P O F B U T N Q V O Q Y E V B I L C E H O A
 F F C X D V F T D N L H B L Y J J A X R E T I N O

BLUEBELL

FIREWHEEL

PURPLE CONEFLOWER

BLUEBONNET

INDIAN PAINTBRUSH

PURPLE HORSEMINT

BUTTERFLY WEED

PINK EVENING PRIMROSE

ROSEBAY RHODODENDRON

COMMON PLANTAIN

PRICKLY PEAR CACTUS

YELLOW AMERICAN LOTUS



Wildflower Matching Game

Print these two pages on cardstock using a color printer. Carefully cut the cards on the dotted lines.

Wildflower Matching Game

2-3 players



Bluebell
Bluebonnet
Butterfly Weed
Common Plantain
Firewheel
Indian Paintbrush
Pink Evening Primrose
Prickly Pear Cactus
Purple Coneflower
Purple Horsemint
Rosebay Rhododendron
Yellow American Lotus



BLUEBELL



BLUEBELL

Instructions

Shuffle the cards. Place the cards face-down on a table or the floor, arranging them in six rows, each with four cards. Players take turns turning over two cards. If the wildflowers on the cards don't match, the player replaces

the cards, face-down, where they came from, and the next player takes his/her turn. When the wildflowers match, the player keeps the pair of cards, and gets to choose two more cards. The player with the most wildflower cards at the end of the game wins!



BLUEBONNET



BLUEBONNET



BUTTERFLY WEED



BUTTERFLY WEED



COMMON PLANTAIN



COMMON PLANTAIN



FIREWHEEL



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