Young Reporters
for the Environment

Extended Project:
2-6 weeks

This project supports the theme:

"Small Worlds, Big Futures: Reporting from a Pollinator-Powered 2030"

EXTENDED PROJECT: 2–6 WEEKS

This guide supports educators who want to take Small Worlds, Big Futures further through a longer, student-led YRE investigation lasting 2–6 weeks.

The project follows the YRE 4-Step Methodology:

Students can begin with a story lead developed through the Find Your Story launch activity, build on an investigation started through the 4-Lesson YRE Sequence, or develop a new investigation using one of the project models below.

The examples below are project model ideas, not prescribed projects. Adapt them to your students' interests, age, local environment, and the opportunities available in your community.

Looking for a different starting point? Explore *Possible Investigation Routes* and *Big Questions & Research Prompts* in the **YRE Pollinators Guide for Educators.**

CHOOSE A PROJECT STARTING POINT

A OUR POLLINATOR-POWERED SCHOOL

How well does our learning environment support pollinators?

Students investigate their school or learning setting through the eyes of pollinators. They observe where pollinators and flowering plants are found, compare different areas, and explore how decisions about planting, mowing, lighting, pesticides, water, or maintenance shape the space.

Students could:

- Map flowering plants and potential pollinator habitats.
- Observe and compare pollinator activity in different areas.
- Investigate how the grounds are planted and managed.
- Speak with grounds staff, gardeners, educators, or school leadership.
- Research pollinator-friendly management practices.
- Develop evidence-based recommendations for what could change.

B WHAT CHANGED HERE?

What can the past tell us about the living world around us today?

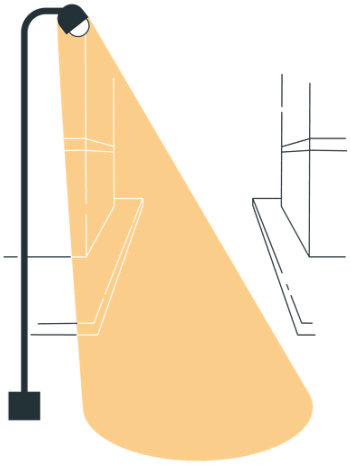
Students reconstruct the ecological story of a familiar place, such as a park, school ground, riverbank, farm, beach, forest edge, or neighbourhood, and investigate how its species, habitats, and relationships have changed.

Students could:

- Document what is present today.
- Compare current observations with old photographs, maps, or records.
- Look at historical biodiversity or land-use information.
- Interview older residents, community members, or local knowledge holders.
- Investigate what may have driven the changes they discover.
- Explore what could be restored, protected, or managed differently.

Use the theme sequence:

BEFORE → WHAT CHANGED? → NOW → WHAT COULD COME NEXT?



C POLLINATORS AFTER DARK

What happens when we stop looking only during the day?

Students investigate the often-overlooked world of nocturnal pollinators and explore how artificial light and other human activities may affect the relationships between night-flying animals, plants, and places.

Students could:

- Compare differently lit areas.
- Observe nocturnal insect activity safely and responsibly.
- Map sources of artificial light.
- Investigate night-flowering plants and nocturnal pollinators.
- Speak with a scientist, land manager, local authority, or person responsible for outdoor lighting.
- Research examples of wildlife-friendly lighting.
- Explore whether local lighting could be managed differently.

D FROM FLOWER TO FOOD

What living relationships are behind the food we eat?

Students choose a locally or culturally important food and follow its pollination story. This can open an investigation into biodiversity, farming, food systems, culture, climate, and livelihoods.

Students could:

- Identify how the crop is pollinated.
- Investigate the pollinators and habitats connected to its production.
- Trace where the food comes from and who grows or produces it.
- Speak with growers, market sellers, cooks, family, or community members.
- Explore environmental changes affecting the crop or its pollinators.
- Investigate practices that support pollinators and food production.
- Explore what a resilient pollinator-powered food system could look like by 2030.

EXAMPLE 2–6-WEEK TIMEFRAME

The timeframe can be shortened or extended depending on the learning setting. Some investigations may need additional time for seasonal observations, interviews, or dissemination.

Week	Focus	Key output
1	Launch + Investigate	Investigation question + baseline evidence
2	Research + Perspectives	Credible sources + relevant voices/interviews
3	Explore Solutions	Evidence about existing and possible responses
4	Report	Draft, storyboard, or first version
5	Finalise Report + Plan Dissemination	Final YRE communication + audience/sharing plan
6	Disseminate + Reflect	Communication shared + response/impact evidence + reflection

KEEP THE INVESTIGATION RESPONSIBLE

A longer project can involve fieldwork, interviews, photographs, recordings, external sources, and contact with people outside the learning setting.

As students plan these parts of their investigation, use *Responsible Investigation*, *Safeguarding*, *Permissions*, and *Responsible Fieldwork* in **the YRE Pollinators Guide for Educators** for guidance on:

SAFEGUARDING & ACCESS **EVIDENCE** **TRUSTWORTHY SOURCES**
INTERVIEWS **PERMISSIONS** **DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES**
LOCAL & INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE **RESPONSIBLE FIELDWORK**

KEEP IT STUDENT-LED

Whichever project model you use, students should make meaningful decisions throughout the process:

- **What do we want to investigate? Why?**
- **What evidence do we need?**
- **Who can help us understand it?**
- **What does our investigation show?**
- **What solutions or possibilities can we explore?**
- **Who needs to hear this story? Why?**
- **How can we communicate it effectively?**

TURN THE INVESTIGATION INTO COMMUNICATION

As students move towards reporting, return to the purpose of their investigation:

- **What have we discovered?**
- **Why does it matter?**
- **Who needs to hear it?**
- **What do we want them to understand?**
- **How can we reach them effectively?**

Students can create a YRE competition entry while also adapting their findings for other audiences and communication opportunities.

Ready to report and share the investigation? Use *Reporting & Purposeful Dissemination* in the **YRE Pollinators Guide for Educators** for guidance on:

PURPOSE **AUDIENCE** **MESSAGE**

FORMAT **DISSEMINATION** **IMPACT**