

Activity: Creative Expression Goal: Physical Populations: All

TH Activity Plan – Scary Spider Plant Pot

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Photos by Ranger Rick & Alsip Home & Garden

Adapted from National Wildlife Federation Ranger Rick. Original publication:

[https://rangerrick.org/crafts_activities/scary-spider-plant-](https://rangerrick.org/crafts_activities/scary-spider-plant-pot/?srsId=AfmBOopMWANsUPfT10lnRxz_D_96ltn5Us3QHgFSXeEPoLE-mWoQSGY)

[pot/?srsId=AfmBOopMWANsUPfT10lnRxz_D_96ltn5Us3QHgFSXeEPoLE-mWoQSGY](https://rangerrick.org/crafts_activities/scary-spider-plant-pot/?srsId=AfmBOopMWANsUPfT10lnRxz_D_96ltn5Us3QHgFSXeEPoLE-mWoQSGY)



Materials

Plant container

Craft glue, googly eyes, pipe cleaners with bumps

Paintbrush, black acrylic paint

Optional: spider plant to be potted or already potted ready for decorations



ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Participants will make a fun scary spider plant pot.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS:

Cognitive/Intellectual: Relate plant characteristics to human characteristics; follow sequential steps; expand understanding of spiders & the natural world

Physical: Practice adaptive strategies for plant & other tasks; strengthen physical skills of carrying, balancing & hand movements

Psychological/Emotional: Discuss resiliency concepts; use humor during session; discuss fear & strategies for coping with it

Sensory: Develop understanding of sensory inputs, defensiveness & tolerance of these

Social: Distribute materials in a socially appropriate manner; practice positive social interactions

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

1. **Pre-Session Preparation:** Gather materials. Make a sample.
2. Facilitator begins session by asking participants to name plants associated with fall, Halloween or insects. Spider plant may be one of the suggestions. If not, facilitator can suggest this & show the decorated scary spider plant pot sample.
3. Facilitator passes around the sample, discussing spider plant attributes (see below). Sensory engagement touching, smelling and viewing spider plant can expand activity.
4. Facilitator asks for assistance in distributing materials. Step by step instructions guide participants in completing activity: tie up leaves if appropriate so not painted by mistake; paint black rings around top & bottom & down sides of container; let dry if time allows; glue googly eyes onto container; stick pipe cleaners into plant. Alternative design shown.
5. If the session involves actually planting a spider plant into the container, it is suggested that the decorating be done prior to the planting. Fill container with soil. Insert plant into decorated container. Water.
6. Discussion of spiders & the beneficial role they play in nature can extend this session. Refer to applications for seniors comments.

APPLICATIONS FOR POPULATIONS: The original activity from National Wildlife Federation Ranger Rick content was written for school-aged children. Adaptations to other populations can include broadening therapeutic goals integrated into the session.

Physical Disability: People with physical disabilities may find this activity interesting by using a variety of adaptive tools or fingers to paint, glue, decorate and water. Smaller sized and lighter containers, soil scoops and water cans can support independent activity where hand/finger challenges exist, or conversely, wider diameter glue stick, and larger googly eyes can support participants where this may be the appropriate accommodation.

Seniors: Including information on actual spiders alongside the spider plant pot activity, the session can share the benefits of spiders – controlling pests, reducing disease, protecting gardens, and maintaining biodiversity. Understanding the importance of spiders’ role in the natural world, and addressing fear or anxiety of insects, can be integrated into the session where expanding compassion, breathing in the natural bacteria from soil, and strengthening fine motor skills potting the spider plant can provide joy, laughter and creative expression in the TH session.

Rehabilitation: For participants rehabilitating from injury or health challenges, using humor about a scary spider plant pot can elevate mood, provide discussion points for strategies to shift from negative to positive thoughts, and provide practice handling small or medium-sized activity items, different from formal physical therapy. Depending on the nature of the rehabilitation, additional tasks of watering, carrying plant to another location - strengthening hand and upper body movements, and using adaptive solutions for fine motor skill tasks may fall within a formal or informal treatment plan.

Trauma Survivors: Using a plant known for its adaptability and regrowth (spider plantlets) can provide participants with a way of reshaping ideas in a metaphorical manner. The “scary” plant container can lighten the mood, and provide platforms to discuss difficult topics like managing fear and being resilient (Gauffin et al., 2021).

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS: Facilitators are responsible for knowing poisonous and toxic plants and plant parts. Using small materials may not be safe or appropriate for some populations.

Spider Plant Attributes

- adaptable to many situations except direct sunlight
- prefers water & moist soil (not tap water due to chlorine & fluorides)
- propagates easily from plantlets or division
- few significant pest/insect problems
- considered to provide air purification (Li et al., 2021)

NOTES OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Spider plant “[Chlorophytum comosum](#) is native to South Africa. It has linear leaves that are green or striped white. Flowering stems bear loose panicles of small, white, starry flowers. Plantlets are formed at the flowering nodes. When plants are full, they have an interesting, graceful, cascading habit” (Missouri Botanical Garden, n.d.). The leaves are not flat, appearing to be folded down the middle.

REFERENCES/ RESOURCES:

- Gauffin, K., Jackisch, J., & Almquist, YB. (2021). [Rocks, dandelions or steel springs: Understanding resilience from a public health perspective](#). *Int J Environ Res Public Health*, 18(15).
- Li, J., Zhong, J., Liu, Q. et al. (2021). Indoor formaldehyde removal by three species of *Chlorophytum comosum* under dynamic fumigation system: Part 2-plant recovery. *Environ Sci Pollut Res Int.*, 28(7),8453-8465.
- Miller, M., & Jemison, M. (2014). [Eight strange but true spider facts](#). *Smithsonian.edu*.
- Missouri Botanical Garden. (n.d.). [Chlorophytum comosum \[spider plant\]](#).
- NC State Extension. (n.d.). [Chlorophytum comosum \[spider plant\]](#). North Carolina Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox.

Edits were made for THAD purposes in 2025.

TH Activity Plan form developed by Lesley Fleming, Susan Morgan and Kathy Brechner (2012), revised in 2025.