

The Very Hairy Caterpillar

Potting soil, a stocking, and some grass seed are all it takes to make this homegrown critter

How Does Your Garden Grow?

If your child's class keeps a garden, it just might yield more green than expected. The Rodale Institute's Organic School Garden Contest invites young green thumbs to submit an essay on their school plot and the difference it has made in their lives. Winners will receive cash prizes of up to \$1,000. Visit www.kids.regen.org for more information.

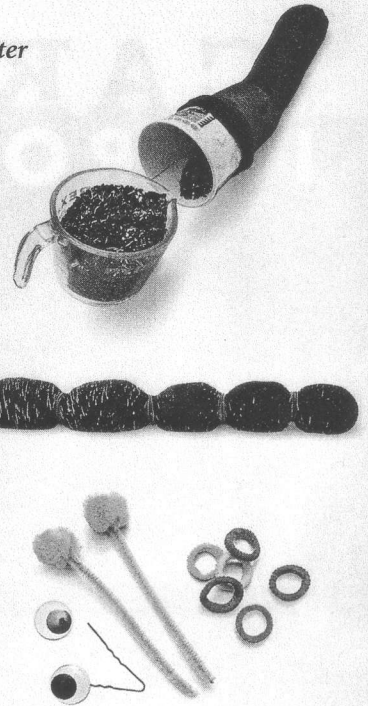
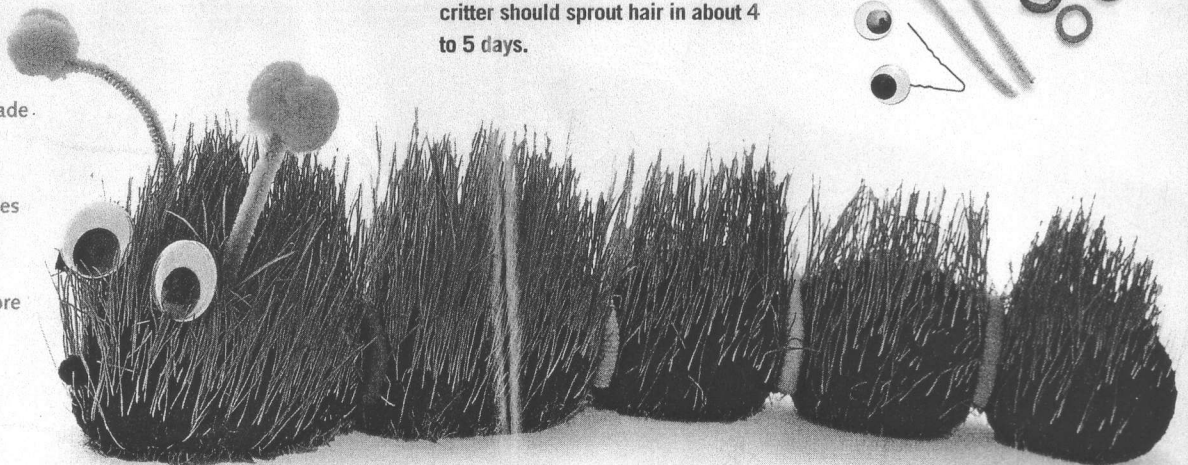
This soddy creature makes a fun first-time gardening project while bringing a little bit of spring into your home.

To make one, combine 4 cups of potting soil and 4 tablespoons of quick-sprouting grass seed (we used ryegrass seed) in a large bowl. Cut the bottom from a small yogurt container or paper cup for a funnel, then slide a knee-high nylon stocking over it, as shown at right. Pour or spoon $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup of the soil mixture into the stocking, then slide a colorful ponytail holder over the end of the stocking to section off the pocket of soil. Repeat this process to make 5 soil-filled seg-

ments. Tie a knot in the top of the stocking and trim away any excess nylon.

Submerge the caterpillar in water for 10 minutes, then place it in a plastic bag and let it sit overnight. Remove the bag and loop a semistraightened bobby pin through the front of the stocking, then glue a googly eye onto each end of the pin. For antennae, cut a pipe cleaner in half, glue a small pom-pom onto one end of each half, and stick them in place.

Set your caterpillar on a plate by a sunny window and generously water the whole thing every other day. Your critter should sprout hair in about 4 to 5 days.



A young girl with her hair in a ponytail, smiling and holding a ring thing. She is wearing a striped shirt.

Fling a Ring Thing

It's not a bird, it's not a plane, and it's definitely not Superman. It's a homemade aircraft guaranteed to bring the fun of flying toys to new heights — and lengths. Its odd design helps it sail impressive distances.

To make one, first cut two 1-inch-wide strips of card stock, one 10 inches long and the other 5 inches long. Tape together the ends of each strip to form a loop. Align the loops at either end of a nonbending drinking straw, as shown, and tape them in place.

To send the craft flying, hold the straw in the middle, hoops up and with the smaller hoop in front, and throw it forward like a paper airplane.

A ring thing, a homemade aircraft made of card stock and a drinking straw. It consists of a drinking straw with two loops of card stock attached to the ends. One loop is larger than the other. The loops are positioned so that they can catch the air and keep the straw aloft.

ED JUDICE (CRAFTING BY LYNN ZIMMERMAN)