

A SCIENTIST just like me



Gerry Tissier
Community Ecologist

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Hi there! I am Gerry Tissier – A community ecologist



Where do I work?

I work on social housing estates and parks on the Hackney Buzzline in London, with school ecoteams, community hubs, residents and local council.

What did I like doing when I was at school?

My favourite subjects were biology and English. I've always been interested in people and nature, and I used to keep animals at home.

What do I like doing in my spare time?

I love going on long walks, watching films, chatting and eating out with my friends and family. I like dancing and sing in a community choir.

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What do I do as a Community Ecologist?

I work for a charity called ecoACTIVE. We help people in the community sow wildflower meadows and make flower beds and nest sites for bees and butterflies. We are creating stepping-stone habitats every 100-200m along a 4km pollinator corridor.



How does what I do make the world a better place?

Pollinator numbers are falling across the world. In the UK, we've lost nearly all our wildflower meadows. Children can't enjoy bee and butterfly rich summers like their parents and grandparents did. We are helping cities to provide refuges for pollinators and everyone benefits from having flowers and nature around them.

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What I like about my job

I love talking to people of all ages in the community and making their neighbourhoods better places to live. I love being outdoors in parks and gardens looking at bees and butterflies. I love helping children discover all the different kinds of pollinators and find out what they're called.



Challenges I have faced

A lot of people want their gardens, streets, and estates to be neat and tidy. They pave over gardens and cut things down. Sometimes they even poison the plants and insects. But for nature it's better to be a bit wild and scruffy. It's about finding the right balance.

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If you want to be a community ecologist, you need:

- ✱ **to love being outdoors.** Do you like looking at nature?
- ✱ **to be curious.** Do you want to know what plants and animals are called and find out where they live and what they need?
- ✱ **to be caring.** Do you enjoy making things grow and helping wildlife in trouble?
- ✱ **to be friendly.** Do you like talking to people about animals and how to help them?



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Discussion time

- ✦ Would you like to be a community ecologist like Gerry Tissier?

Why? Why not?



- ✦ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become a community ecologist?
- ✦ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?

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Free supporting resources for ecology

[Did you know?](#) 2-page articles (suitable for ages 8-12) explain cutting-edge science research. Teacher Guides can be used as classroom presentations and show what scientists have done and suggest practical activities for children. See:

- Some mammals have unusual backbones
- Bees and caterpillars can change the evolution of plants
- Evolution of life in cities

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