

# Egg Carton Caterpillars Workshop

*By Caponi Art Park*

## **Project Overview**

*Recommended for ages 3-6*

On any given walk through Caponi Art Park, you can find caterpillars and creepy crawlers of all kinds, sitting on a leaf, or crawling along the trails. Participants will use egg cartons and miscellaneous items from their home to create caterpillars, or any creepy critter they choose, that they can take on their own walk through nature. They will recycle materials in this workshop much like Mr. Caponi recycled materials to create different features around Caponi Art Park!

## **Supply List:**

- Empty cardboard egg cartons
- Paint (We highly recommend tempera for this age group.) Variety of colors if you have it.
- Paint brushes
- Water cup for rinsing brushes
- Scissors (Adults can do the step that requires scissors)
- Markers (We recommend using washable markers) You can also substitute the paint for markers!
- Pipe cleaners of different colors (Not everyone has these, you can substitute them for twigs that you can have the participants collect outside)
- Glue (Liquid Elmer's glue would be best, but you can also use a glue stick, or a hot-glue gun with parents help)
- Any other miscellaneous items for decorating, such as feathers or pom poms

## **Instructions:**

- Take egg cartons and cut them to size. For example, a caterpillar would be 3-5 egg slots long, and an ant might be 2 or 3. A spider might be 2 and a ladybug would just be one individual egg slot. They should be single-wide, so cut the egg carton in half. You do not need the lid, so you can discard that part.
- Flip the egg carton over, so that the rounded side is facing up.
- Decorate your egg carton bug with paint or markers. Encourage participants to cover the entire surface. Have them think about what bug they want to create, and then use colors that would coincide with the bug they chose.
- They should use paint or markers to draw the face. If you have googly eyes laying around, use those for the eyes. If not, paint or draw them on.

- If you used paint, let paint dry.
- While the paint is drying, participants can go outside and collect small twigs to use for the antennas and legs.
- Once paint has dried, you can take your twigs and break them to the desired size and attach them to the bug with glue. You can also use tape. If you do have pipe cleaners, have an adult poke small holes where you want the antennas and legs, and cut pipe cleaners to desired size, then put pipe cleaners through the holes, and bend the edges over inside to keep in place.
- Use other miscellaneous materials to decorate your bug. If your bug has wings, and you don't have pipe cleaners, you can use heavy paper or cardboard to create the wings, then attach with glue. If you have pom poms, these are fun to create a head on a smaller bug.
- Let all materials dry.

Example of finished project:



**\*If you have it, or can access it online, it is a great idea to read *The Hungry, Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle. You can also watch the animated short film based on this book here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75NQQK-Sm1YY>**

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- What features does your bug have that make it look like that bug?
- How did you use the art supplies you were given to make your bug unique?
- How many legs does your bug have?

### **Short Lesson Plan for Egg Carton Caterpillars:**

- You've probably heard your parents or your teacher explaining the importance of recycling. Have you seen the green or blue recycling containers with the three arrows on the side? Those are where we put out recycling.
- Recycling is the process of taking materials ready to be thrown away and converting (changing) them into reusable materials. This is important to reducing trash in the world's landfills, which pollute Earth's soil, water, and air.
- We can also help the planet by repurposing our recycled materials. This means we turn old things into something new!
- Today you took an old egg carton, which normally would have been recycled, and turned it into a completely different object: a bug!
- Mr. Caponi often recycled OR upcycled materials that other people didn't want, and used them for different things around the park.
- For example:
  - Orange Fence: The rebar for the orange fence that lines the park came from an old bridge that was torn down in the twin cities.
  - Brick pathways: These granite bricks that make up many of the pathways in the park came from the old trolley system that was removed from downtown St. Paul long ago.
  - Rock walls: The rocks walls that run along the pathways are made up of boulders that were rescued from farm fields around the twin cities.
  - Sculptures: Many of the sculptures are made up of recycled and repurposed materials, including car bumpers and old saws. One of the sculptures is even made from old Cadillac parts!
- You can help the planet by turning your old things into completely new objects, too!