Nature Journaling

Creating a Nature Journal is a way to combine creativity with outdoor exploration. It is a place where you can highlight discoveries, record thoughts or feelings, and express your artistic side. Nature Journals can include:

- Detailed diagrams of plant or animal life
- Time and date of the observation
- Inspirational quotes
- Scientific description of what’s being observed
- Landscape illustration of the location
  …and MORE!

Completed journal pages are both a memory of your outdoor discoveries and a road map for future investigations. Use the prompts on the next page to guide your discoveries.

Create your Nature Journal using some of these supplies:

- Blank Journal
- Colored pencils
- Watercolor Set & Brush
- Pen & Pencils
- Eraser & Sharpener
- Hand Lens
- Ruler
- Wildlife Guides

Get Ready to Explore!
Nature Journal Prompts

**Sit and Sense:** Find a space where you can sit quietly for at least ten minutes. While sitting, explore by using your senses.

  - What can you see?  
  - What can you hear?  
  - What can you smell?

Record your discoveries with plenty of detail. If you see an animal, draw its behaviors. If you hear leaves rustling, describe the sound. If you smell a fragrant plant, carefully diagram its leaves and flowers. Title each drawing with the sense you used for your exploration. Use paint, crayons or colored pencils to add color details.

**Zoom In, Zoom Out:** In this activity, you will look at the same natural object in different ways. Prepare by selecting a natural object that will stand still. It can be a plant, a rock, or a decaying log. First, draw the complete object. This is the “Zoom Out” part of the activity. Next, “Zoom In” by getting very close. Draw just a part of the object using lots of detail. A hand lens can be helpful. Add color to your drawing. What did you notice when you looked closely?

**Pick a Plot:** Locate a space in nature with a lot of diversity. Use a hula-hoop, stretched hanger, or a belt fastened at the last notch to outline a plot for observation. Using any type of art materials, draw just what you discover inside your plotted area. Label as many objects as you can and use a ruler to add size details. Repeat the activity in a different habitat. What similarities can you observe? What are some differences?

**Map It:** Combine journaling with a little exercise. Pick a route in your neighborhood for a short walk. Make observations as you walk, adding quick sketches and notes in your journal. Record plants, animals, landmarks, and even the weather. A pocket nature guide can help you with identification of plants and animals. Back at home, draw a detailed map of where you journeyed. Use art materials to add color and additional details to your map. Ask a family member to use the map for their own exploration. Do they make the same discoveries?