

# Nature Journaling for All Ages:

## A Guidebook for Group Leaders

This guidebook is a starting place for educators to begin class or group workshops in journaling. Whether you are an environmental educator, outdoor enthusiast, scout leader, artist, writer, or parent, you bring with you a unique set of knowledge and skills that can be shared through journaling. There is no prerequisite experience.

You don't have to be a naturalist or an artist to journal because this practice is all about your own personal experience and connection with nature. The details you notice, the questions you want to ask, or the shapes you find in a plant, animal, or cloud are all collected within your journal in order to build your understanding of the outside world.

## Why Nature Journals?

Nature journals are an accessible, hands-on way to engage people of all ages in learning. Nature journaling teaches the skills of observation, perception, inquiry (asking questions), and making connections. Journaling can be adapted for any grade level, for a range of topics and themes, and used in many kinds of settings, both indoor and outdoor.

### Nature journals allow people to:

#### DISCOVER...

- a new way of seeing the world - different ways of expression

#### LEARN...

- more about themselves - more about their environment

#### SELF-DIRECT...

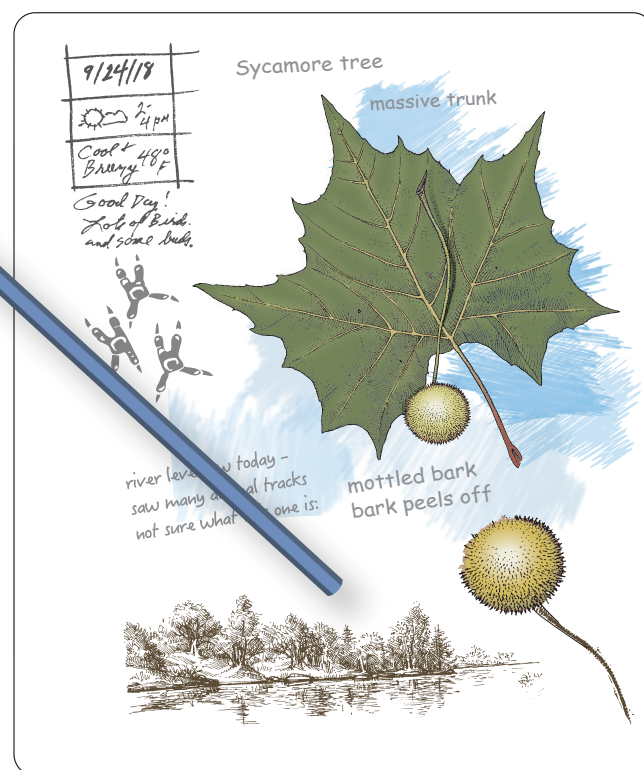
- as active participants in their learning experience by observing and asking questions and fostering curiosity

#### DEEPEN...

- connections to their surroundings - reflection and understanding - retention of classroom learning



*Nature journaling can be done at all ages and can be a great way to build vocabulary, hone observation skills, practice drawing and strengthen understanding of science and design in the natural world.*



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# Getting Started

**Nature is everywhere and you can journal anywhere.** You don't need a national park or an exotic location to journal, you can journal from your garden, neighborhood park, along waterways or even out your bedroom window. For beginners, it's best not to choose a large area or an area with lots of distractions.

A great way to start is to pick a "sit spot" that allows you to focus and build your powers of observation. A sit spot is a comfortable spot to sit and focus on a small area that you return to again and again, allowing for some familiarity and to see changes over time. If you think about your view from a window, a sit spot is similar except that you are immersing yourself in sights, smells, sounds and feelings as well.

## Materials

Journals are a place to make notes, sketch what you see, jot down questions and add thoughts and ideas. The goal of journaling is to record your observations; drawings need not be works of art. Journals do not need to be high quality paper. The best journals are well-worn, inexpensive or a handmade book full of notes. It is important that the journaler feel that it is okay to make mistakes, to erase and correct or to cross out. The knowledge and the experience gleaned through journaling is an ongoing process and a good journal should reflect that.



### Use what you have to make your own journal!

Using a variety of "rescued" papers makes journaling much more fun. Cut, fold and gather what you have. You can journal on top of an old phone book if you have one. When stitched into a book, old envelopes make great places to hold leaves. Journals can be stitched, punch and laced or simply held together with binder clips.

Ask your favorite print shop or business office to save any unused paper

**For kids:** cereal boxes make great covers or have your kids decorate their own. Brightly colored shoelaces are an easy way for kids to stitch their journals together. Use hole punch on a bundle of papers and then loop-stitch it all together. The plastic coated tips of the laces are easy to stitch with.

**For adults:** everyone has their own preferences, don't hesitate to ask participants to bring a blank notebook of their choosing.

Other journaling tools can be as simple as a pencil for note taking or drawing, an eraser, crayons or colored pencils for coloring and an envelope for collecting. Magnifying glasses and rulers can add an extra element to your observations.

## Indoors or Beforehand

It's important to set the stage for what is expected of the student in the course of journaling. Warming up indoors can help begin a practice of quiet, focused behavior. Younger journalers are more likely to view the outdoors as a place to play rather than an extension of the classroom. But as you practice consistently, they will learn to find their focus quickly.

Here are a few exercises to get started that can be done as a group indoors or outdoors.

### 1. Drawing a hidden object

It is important to use all your senses to observe nature. This exercise can be used to emphasize observations made through touch.

Each journaler is given a brown paper lunch bag with a mystery object inside. These objects can be collected beforehand and can include things like a rough rock, a seed pod, a twig or piece of bark, a seashell — anything natural that is safe to touch. Without looking, the journaler is asked to put their hand into the bag and feel their object. On a piece of scrap paper, they take 5 minutes to write down as many words they can think of to describe the object they are feeling. For young students, this exercise can be done in a group, going around a circle with each student describing their object.

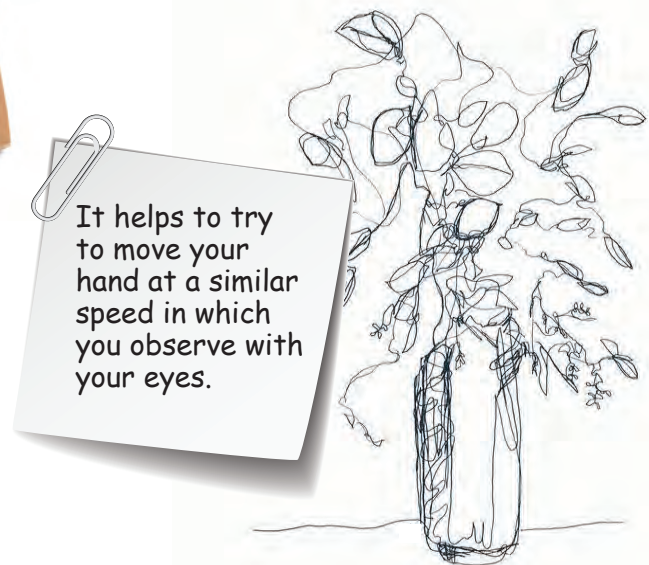
After 5 minutes, ask the journalers to draw what they feel. They should try to capture texture, size, hardness or softness - anything they can observe without looking. It is only after they have exhausted their written and drawn observations with the object hidden that they are asked to take the object out of the bag. After seeing the hidden object, journalers are given another 3 minutes to add to their descriptive words list with observations through sight.

Adults have a lot of fun with this challenge too and many times it is helpful to reflect on the objects and lists as a group afterwards.



### 2. Continuous line drawing

A continuous line drawing is when a single, unbroken line is used to draw an image. As an exercise, continuous line drawing forces the drawer to closely observe the shape and patterns in an object. This method of drawing is perfect for developing hand-eye coordination, and the simplicity of the line drawings means that they only take a few minutes of time. For adults and students alike, this exercise works great for dispelling anxiety about being able to draw, for it levels the playing field. None of these singular line drawings are perfect and that's their charm.



Set several natural objects out on a table. Ask journalers to spend 5 minutes drawing the object(s) in a continuous line drawing. After 5 minutes, repeat from a different angle.

Remind journalers that the goal is to describe the subject with one, singular line. Once they place pen or pencil on the paper, they are not to remove it until the drawing is finished. The line can become thicker and thinner in areas, but it should never break. Do not erase.

*NOTE: A continuous line drawing is different from a blind contour line drawing. A blind contour line drawing is a continuous line drawing, but the artist does not look at the drawing surface, only at the subject. You can try this with experienced journalists as an added challenge.*

### 3. Recording every detail

Through deep observation and careful recording, nature can come alive, stories revealed and connections unlocked. With practice, nature journaling can make you a keen observer of the complex relationships in the natural world. This exercise is aimed at sharpening the journaler's attention to detail.

Gather leaves from the same branch of a tree. Each participant in a group receives one leaf. Explain that they'll be making life-size drawings of their leaf, recording accurate observations with drawing and writing.

Journalers are given 15 minutes and one sheet of paper to draw, label and describe their leaf. They can use any means they wish, including tracing the shape, making a rubbing of the texture, or taking measurements. Explain that the goal is not to make pretty pictures, but to use both drawing and writing to show their observations.

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***Your goal is to make lots of observations and to represent them accurately.***

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After 10 minutes, the journalers are told that they will have to identify their leaf from the pile of leaves. They are given another 10 minutes to add as much detail to their journal page as possible, describing what makes their leaf unique.

The leaves are collected and the group tries to match up each leaf with a journal page, using the drawing and observations as clues.



***What might be other clues that would be helpful in telling one leaf from another?***

- broken off pieces or holes
- differences in coloration
- numerical count of things like pointed edges or lobes
- details on both sides of the leaf, weird curves or bumps
- did something take a bite out of this leaf?

**For kids:**

You can build vocabulary with the youngest of journalers by having them compare two natural objects - they can talk through it instead of writing.

**For adults:**

Extend the final 10 minutes of drawing to include time to look at the leaves through a magnifier.

**For all:**

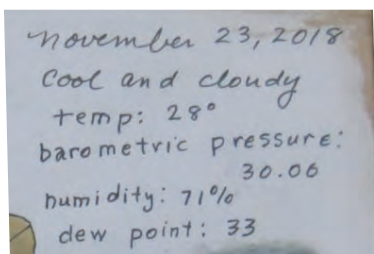
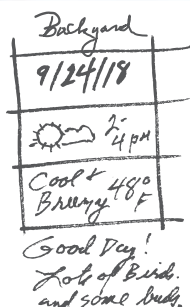
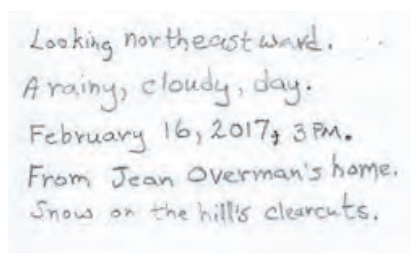
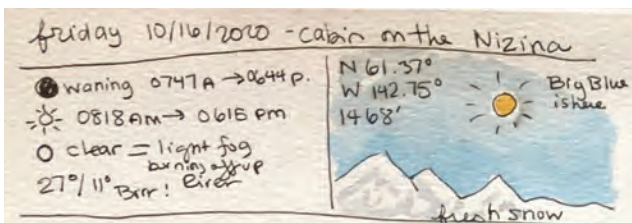
Create a story or write a poem that includes your observations. Sharing stories, shares knowledge!

Showing examples of nature journals can be helpful to beginners and starting indoors provides an easy opportunity to offer a good sampling with time to look through them. Try to choose examples that demonstrate a variety of skill levels, techniques, and knowledge.



## A Place to Begin

It's good practice to start each journal page or journaling session by noting the date and time of day, where you are (schoolyard, backyard, garden, park), the weather, and what the landscape looks like (rocky, grassy, trees). This will give you important reference points as your journal begins to fill. Everyone has a different way of making these entries in their journal. Here are a few examples:



## The "Sit Spot"

A "sit spot" is a comfortable spot that narrows the observation focus to a small area that the journaler can return to again and again allowing them some familiarity and to see changes over time. Whether a schoolyard, backyard, garden or park, find a spot where you can lean against a tree, sit on a bench or rock, or even on a grassy hillside.

When journaling as a group, define a small area and ask journalers to find a sit spot that is private but within earshot of the instructor or group leader. For children, hula hoops make great "sit spot" markers that remind them to confine their focus to a small area.

Begin by asking everyone to sit quietly for a few minutes with their eyes closed to listen and feel.

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*Close your eyes and use your other senses to smell and hear what is around you. What does the weather feel like? Do you hear traffic, bird calls or the wind?*

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Journalers should then open their eyes, note those observations, and take some time to look closely around for signs of life. These can be animal tracks, holes in the ground, plant growth, birds nests, scratched trees, insects...the longer one looks, the more they will notice.

Ask journalers to begin by sketching something of interest, label the drawing and name at least three parts they can identify (stem, leaf, antennae, legs). If they don't know, advise them to make a guess and SAY it's a guess.

Learning shouldn't end on site. Try to save something to lookup when you get home. Stretch your vocabulary by describing something in a way that will help you learn about it later. The natural world is endlessly fascinating - and full of learning opportunities.

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*After careful observation and documentation, formulating questions and investigating answers are key to meaningful experiences.*

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The three nature journaling prompts from John Muir Laws (next page) are perfect for making observations in groups but they also work quite well as prompts for writing.

As a group instructor, you can utilize your knowledge and interests and develop prompts that the group can respond to. As a journalist, you can draw on your artistic, writing, diagramming or organizational skills to make your journal unique.

### Consider journaling on:

- Weather - what does it feel and look like, when does it occur and what does it affect?
- Water - where is the water around you, how does it move around and what impact does it have?
- The Sun - how does it feel, what does it affect?
- Habitats - how many can you see around you and who lives there?
- Natural Environments - how does it look and feel different from other environments? What plants and animals do you see?
- Urban Environments - how does it look and feel different from other environments? What activities do you see?

You don't have to be a scientist or artist to journal, you can use your own knowledge or interests as an entry point.

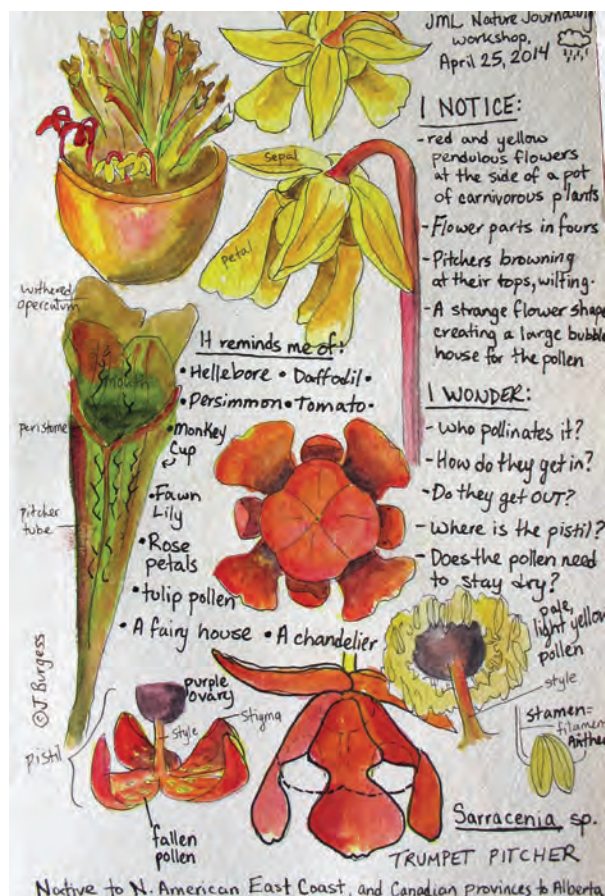
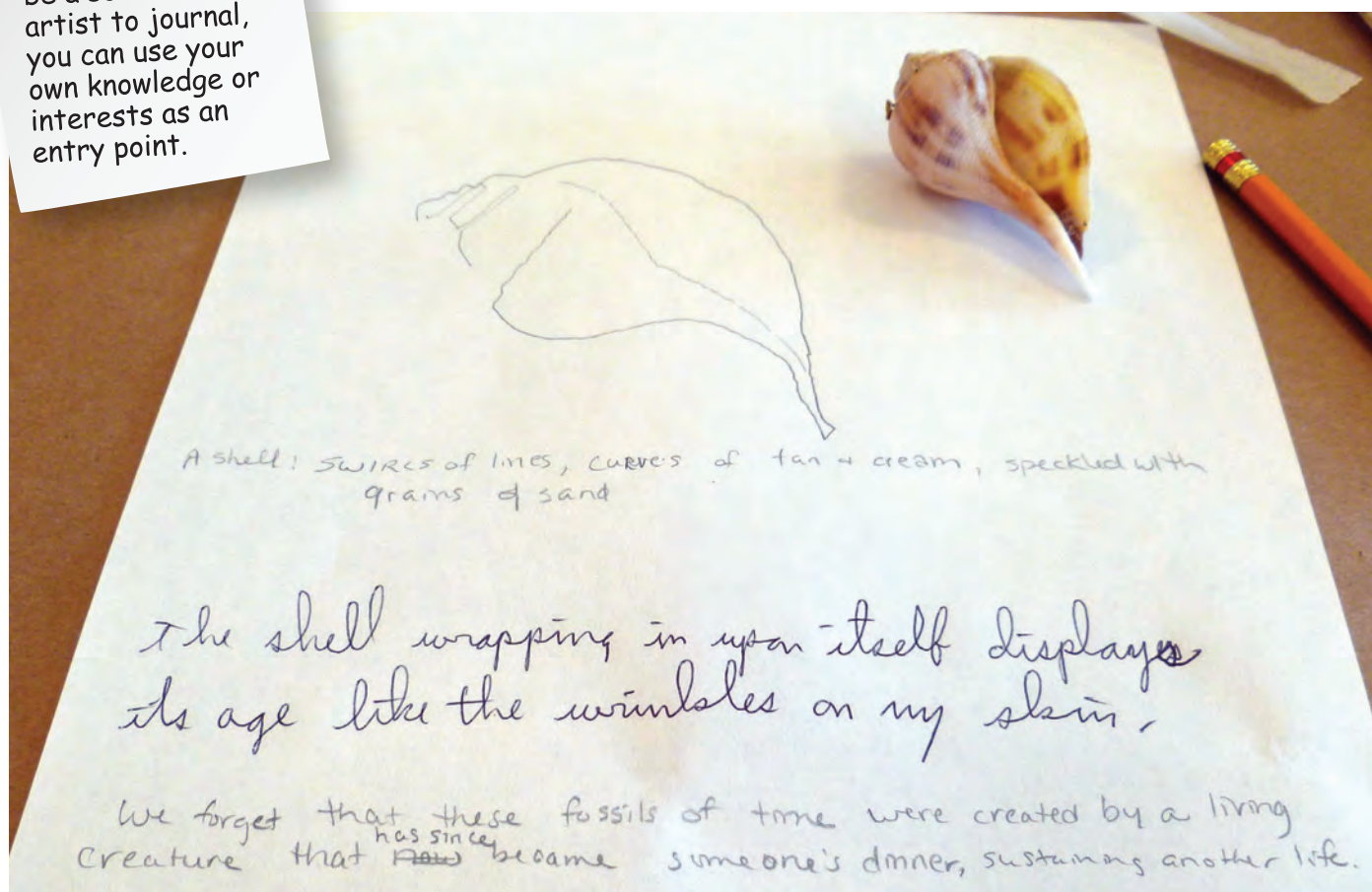


Image courtesy of Jen Burgess





## Three Prompts for Deeper Nature Observation

From naturalist, educator and artist John Muir Laws

### **I notice...**

When making a nature observation, ask students to say all of their observations out loud. Do not filter. Anything that you observe (structure, behavior, color, interactions with other species) you should say out loud. If you are gathered in a group, you can also listen to the observations that are said by other students and embellish or modify what you hear. This makes nature observation a social activity. By describing what you see, your brain also processes each observation more deeply. You will find that the things that you say remain in your working memory much longer than what you think quietly to yourself. By the time the bird flies away you will have access to a rich and detailed set of observations. Give it a try. You will be surprised how much more you see and remember.

### **I wonder...**

As you say your observations out loud, be aware of any questions that occur to you. Ask these out loud to the group (or yourself if you are alone). Do not be afraid of asking questions. The point is not to answer them now but just to get them out there. Saying the question aloud will help you remember it later. A good scientist should be able to ask many more questions than they have answers. Some of the questions you can answer with further observation. Some questions you will be able to research, or answer with further observation. All questions should be asked. If no questions come to you, try saying "I wonder..." and see what fills the silence afterward. A question may come when prompted. If you make this a regular practice, questions will flow more easily. You can make yourself a more curious person!

### **It reminds me of...**

In addition to questions, ask yourself what this set of observations reminds you of. Try to come up with as many connections as you can. Go into your own network of memories and see how this new set of observations fits in. Is this like something you studied before, observed in another context, or saw on a nature special? Can you make an analogy or metaphor that ties to a new observation? Connecting this new observation to those already in memory will help you remember what you are seeing and also help you develop more interesting and deeper questions. Say your "it reminds me of's" out loud as well.

The more of these connections you make, the stronger and richer your memories will be. Now, when the bird flies away, you can ask your students: "What were some of the most interesting observations?"; "What were some of the most interesting questions that came up?"; and "What things did this remind you of?" Responses will come flooding back. The trick is to make a habit of exploring these three aspects of observation and to share what comes up out loud (even if you are alone).

# Capturing the Image

One needs only to search the internet to find many beautiful examples of nature journals filled with carefully detailed botanical illustrations or complex diagrams. While they are certainly inspiring, there are many ways for all ages and skillsets to “capture” what you observe on paper.

When journaling, visual representations work in tandem with the written word not only to record what you observe, but serve as a record of your inquiries or discoveries.



It is important to not get caught up in trying to capture everything in a detailed drawing. Many times a quick sketch with some written notes will be enough.

## Crayon Rubbings

An excellent way of capturing texture, patterns, and size is through crayon rubbings. Making rubbings of leaves and their veins is a common practice with children but the things you can document with a simple crayon are endless. Simply use a thin paper and a soft crayon to rub gently over surfaces like stones, bark, woody plants, etc. You’ll find that crayon rubbings capture surface details that are sometimes difficult to see.

*Leaf rubbing*



*Erik Linton*

*Rubbing of a tree stump*



*Rubbing of ash tree damage - Emerald Ash Borer*

## Tracing

Tracing around an object is perhaps the fastest and simplest way to document shape, size, and variety. There are many other ways tracing can be utilized. Wherever nature leaves traces, you can trace. You can trace a footprint or track, a bite mark, or even record a shadow. With some translucent tracing paper, you can follow the landscape or the shape of a tree.

## Printing

Nature printing is a process that utilizes many methods to give a direct impression of a natural object such as plants, animals, or rocks to produce an image. There are many creative and fun ways to do nature printing, from Japanese Gytaku or fish printing developed in the mid-1800s to the modern kits made for cyanotype sun printing, but out in the field, it’s best to use a simple process where a natural object is coated with a light wash of watercolor or acrylic paint and then the object is pressed onto an absorbent paper.



*Cyanotype sun print*



*Tracing of a tree through a glass window*



*Watercolor leaf print*

# Out and About

While “sit spots” are a great way to focus observation, journaling is also a great way to document explorations, discoveries, new places and varied environments.

Here, we will explore three different ways to move a group of journalers around: a “micro-hike”; a “ramble” and an “adventure”.

Whether you are walking along a common path or visiting someplace entirely new, by slowing down your pace, a journaler will notice more about the world around — the little and the big things.

Experienced journalers should strive to record not only what they observe, but to take notes that may lead to deeper understanding of patterns, connections, and cycles. The journal will become a record, too, of the process of observing — a recording of the connections discovered between organism, behavior, environment, and the journaler.

## The “Micro-hike”

— *about 30 minutes*

This exercise is a great way to begin outdoors with a small group. Choose a location that offers a variety of life in a defined, small space. A forest clearing, a flower garden, or a pocket park will do nicely. You’ll want the journalers to spread out in the space but still be comfortably close to one another. Each person begins where they are standing, with a five minute observation. The objective is to start to notice, to look and discover, and to follow what intrigues you. You do not need to start notetaking. After five minutes, everyone moves a few steps away and observes in a new spot for another five minutes. After three five minute sessions of looking, ask the journaler to return to the one of the three spots that they found most interesting. This is their “sit spot” for the remaining 15 minutes where they begin a journal page.

To help beginners through “blank page syndrome” on their first outdoor journal session, ask them to pick two natural objects they see and simply list ways they are similar and ways they are different. Then ask them to draw or diagram something that represents each object visually.

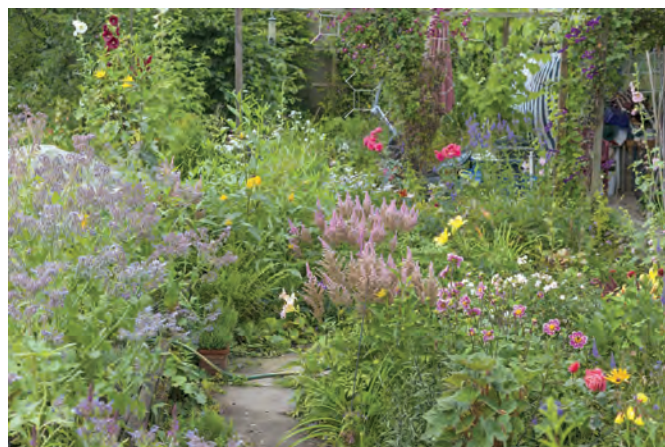
For inspiration, encourage journalers to try a different perspective. Does pretending you are tiny change the way you look at the world?



### *A few things to discuss with the group:*

- **Any regulations** and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- **Treading lightly.** Concentrate use on existing trails.
- **Do not disturb.** Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- **Observe wildlife from a distance.** Do not follow or approach them.
- **Have some respect.** Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.
- **Keep the peace.** Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

Adapted from the *Leave No Trace Seven Principles* © 1999 by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics: [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org).



## The “Ramble” — 30 minutes to one hour

Rambles are a good practice for journaling when you have limited time on any given day. Rambles can also be practiced by a group or class that meets regularly.

Spend 10-15 minutes strolling through your yard, park, neighborhood - anywhere that is easy to walk once a day or once a week. There's no need to follow the same path but stick to the general area. Follow what you are curious about that day. Pay attention and try to take it all in. Try to observe places you haven't stopped at in a while. Is there a new bloom, animal tracks or an unusual sound? After your stroll, find a sit spot and get out your journal. Make a list of what you noticed, what you saw, felt, and heard. What plants and animals do you already know? Add as you learn.

If you are on the move along a path that you routinely travel, it's a good idea to draw a map. Make copies of that map and mark what you notice on any given day or week. If you are taking journalers out for a practice “ramble” you can provide them a simple map to make notes on.

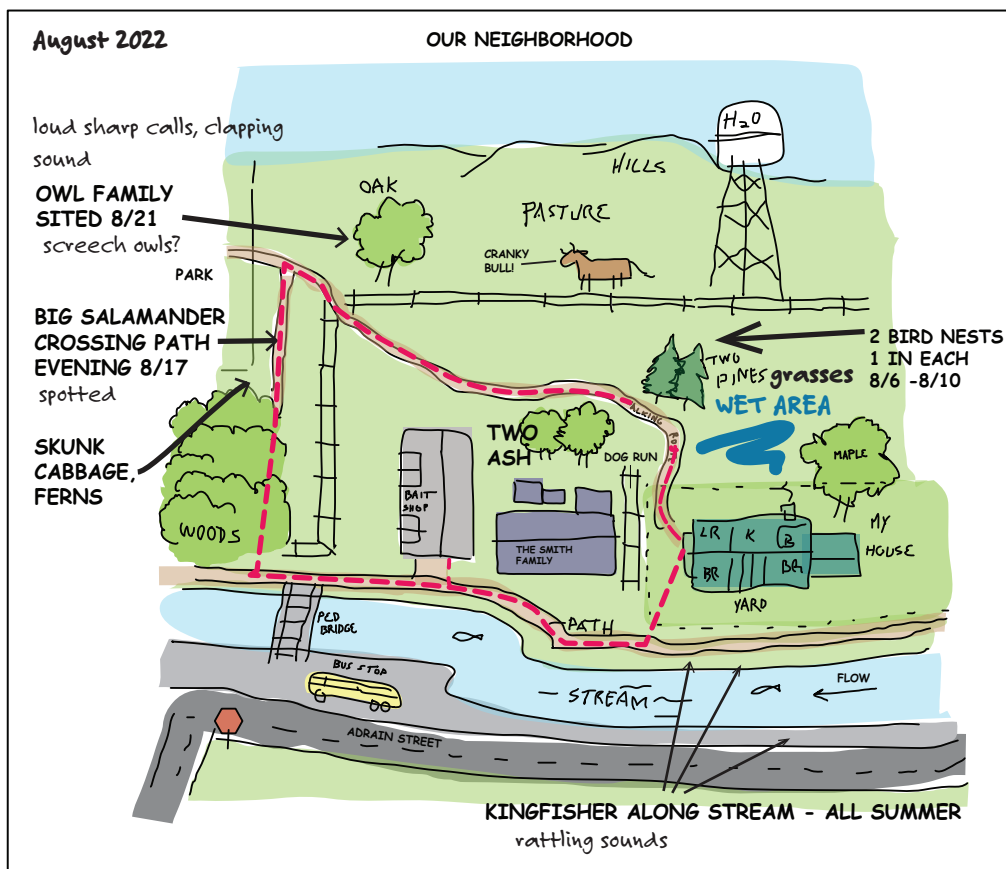
Mapmaking is a valuable assignment for journalers of all ages. It's a way to easily place observations in a larger area and to understand connections.

How does the water flow through the landscape? Why doesn't anything grow here? Where do those tracks go and come from?

### A worthwhile additional assignment:

1. In your classroom, give journalers the task of mapping a location they are familiar with from memory. This can be a neighborhood, a walk home or to a friend's house, a yard, or a park. Ask that they include natural landmarks like trees, rocks, waterways. 2. The homework for this assignment is to physically walk the area and to make a new map — a map only with those things not noted on the map from memory. 3. Journalers return to the class with both maps in hand to discuss what was important in their memories and what new discoveries they were able to make with intentional observation.

Journaling both from a sit spot or a “ramble” offer opportunities to not only map, but to graph and chart. An easy chart for young observers is a “Colors of the Day” chart. In the chart below, the journaler has decided to highlight the colors in full bloom each day and included the sky color in the date block. You can have your journalers collect data, chart, and recognize patterns - important pieces of the scientific process.



2022 Garden Colors of the Day				
8/12				
8/13				
8/14				
8/15				
8/16				
8/17				
8/18				
8/19				
8/20				
8/21				
8/22				
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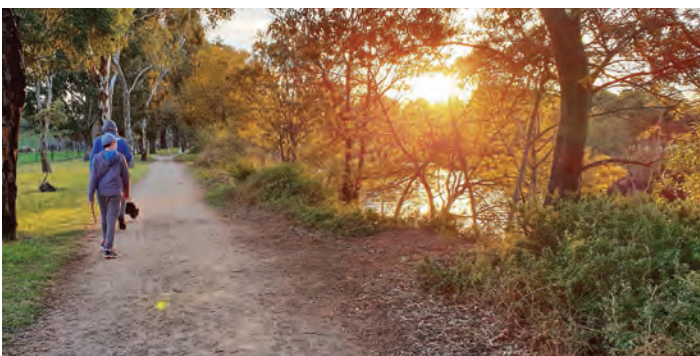
## The “Adventure” — *hours, all day, or days*

Adventures are an invigorating experience — an opportunity to see something new, change your perspective and refresh your spirit. Adventures in nature can be a day at the beach, a hike on a mountain trail, camping, or a visit to some place far away. Journaling about these new experiences can not only be a great record of your travel but a way to better understand the natural landscapes you pass through on your adventure. The birds, insects, plants and mammals you discover can help you better understand how they interact together and, importantly, can help one understand the human impacts on these environments.

As a journaler, you may not have a lot of time during your travels, but there are many ways to include the practice that are not time intensive. By keeping a daily end-of-day diary of observations, maintaining a bird, mammal, or insect species checklist, or photodocumenting plants, for example, you are keeping note so that learning continues about a place once the day is over.

Write a postcard to yourself! Sketch or take some notes at each place. Think how you would describe the natural sights.

You don't have to mail them! Soon, you'll have a stack of valuable notes on the natural highlights of each environment you've visited.



## Plan an “Adventure” for your Journaling Group

As a group leader, you can choose a place you are familiar with for a guided nature hike. Talk as you walk with your group, vocalizing your process of making observations, discovering connections, and forming inquiries. For the beginning journaler, this can provide important insight on how to approach journaling. For the experienced journaler, your observations are shared language and knowledge. Be sure to build in quiet time so that others can take in their own unique experiences and make observations. Plan sit stops along the way.

On a hike or “adventure”, the experienced journaler should strive to make connections between the landscape they walk through and what they observe at their sit spot.



Courtesy of Jan Belcove

# Documenting Change

The world is constantly changing, and documenting change can be one of the most interesting and important observation activities you can do.

Researchers need to understand change in the natural world to understand trends and patterns, as well as to identify if an ecosystem or species is doing well or is in trouble. Change occurs naturally with the changing of the seasons, with daily weather patterns, and with animal behaviors from migration to feeding and nesting. There are also long-term changes, from land development altering species habitats permanently, to climate change affecting average temperatures and precipitation patterns that affect what can live and grow in an area.

Your observations and documentation of change can provide critical insights and data on what is changing, how it is changing, and what impacts those changes have. This information is essential to help mediate, mitigate and adapt to negative consequences. The climate in Pennsylvania is trending to warmer and wetter and growing seasons are changing in start and end dates, as well as duration. What can be grown is also shifting, and more cold-loving species are shifting north as temperatures rise. The natural world is an intricate balance of interrelationships so when the availability of certain plant species changes, for instance if a certain flower blooms earlier, it affects the bees, birds, and other species that rely on that plant for survival.

Developing a habit of journaling and documenting your observations can allow you to see and be aware of these changes. Having a sit-spot helps you see the changes in one place. Making journaling a regular activity allows you to see changes over the course of a month, season, year, or several years.

To learn more about climate change visit <https://www.climate.gov/> or <https://climate.nasa.gov/>

Making journaling a regular activity allows you to see changes over the course of a month, season, year, or several years.



## Some questions to ask to help document change:

*What is here today that is new?*

*What was here previously that has changed in appearance, behavior, or location?*

*What is different? – notice differences in weather, what species you see, the appearance of plants, animals, or fungi, the sounds you hear, and the smells you smell.*

*Why do you think the changes you notice have occurred? Were the changes prompted by external factors (weather, land use change) or internal factors (animal behavior related to feeding, nesting, breeding)?*

*Are the changes positive, negative, or neither?  
Are they temporary or permanent?*

## For kids:

A good exercise for beginners learning to document change is to create a plant timeline. Lead journalers to an area with many of the same flower. Explain that they'll draw and write observations first of a flower at its peak. They are to make a careful diagram of it in the middle of a page and include some written observations. The journaler then seeks out flowers that represent "before and after" the full bloom, continuing to diagram and take notes of each flower in order of the bloom and wither process.



## Online Resources

**Nature's Notebook** is an online platform where you can create an account and submit your observations. The project strives to gather information on plant and animal phenology across the country. The data you collect and submit help scientists and researchers understand our environment.

[https://www.usanpn.org/natures\\_notebook](https://www.usanpn.org/natures_notebook)

**Explore citizen science projects** from all over

<https://www.citizenscience.gov/#>

**Contribute to helping understand and document our weather** through the mPING app, which collects public weather reports <https://mping.nssl.noaa.gov/>

**Be a GLOBE explorer!** Use an app to collect needed data from your local environment and support earth science research, helping NASA and other scientists. <https://observer.globe.gov/>  
Globe explorers help document land cover, tree heights and cloud cover.



**Participate in one of the largest networks of backyard weather observers!** Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) involves volunteers working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail, and snow) in their local communities. <https://www.cocorahs.org/>

**Explore projects in your community on SciStarter** – this platform allows you to search by topic and location so you can find the projects you can contribute to easily. From measuring light pollution at night to collecting observations of threatened tree species, there is something for every interest. <https://scistarter.org/>

**Document change and share your experiences of what is happening in your community** through ISeeChange. Climate change is already affecting our daily lives and you can help researchers, planners, and other professionals better understand the changes that are happening locally and regionally.

<https://www.iseechange.org/>

**Share your love of birds!** Share your bird sightings and find out where others are seeing birds on eBird through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Your sightings help researchers document and understand bird migration, the health of bird species, and more.

<https://ebird.org/home>



**Not sure what that leaf, bird, insect, flower, or animal is? There's an app for that!**

**Merlin Bird ID** by Cornell allows you to identify birds you see and hear <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/merlin-bird-id-by-cornell-lab/id773457673>

**Picture Insect:** Bug Identifier helps you identify an insect through a simple photo <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/picture-insect-bug-identifier/id1461694973>

Seek by **iNaturalist** makes identifying plants, fungi and animals fast and easy. <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/seek-by-inaturalist/id1353224144>

**PlantSnap** is able to recognize 90% of the known plant and trees species. <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/plantsnap-plant-identification/id1451054346>

**PictureThis** – Plant Identifier connects you to the name and information of the plants you see on your nature journaling observations. <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/picturethis-plant-identifier/id1252497129>

# YOU ARE AN EXPLORER

**Your mission is to document and observe the world around you as you've never seen it before.**

Take notes and keep a nature journal. Collect things you'll find on your walks and travels. Document your findings. Notice patterns. Copy. Trace. Question and look up. Focus on one thing at a time. Record what you are drawn to.

## **Here's a good way to get started with your own nature journal:**

Slow down. This is important so you can use ALL your senses. Close your eyes for a minute and listen, inhale and smell. What do you feel? Can you feel the weather? With your eyes closed, how many words can you say that describe the weather today? Open your eyes and add more words to that list.

What do you hear? Water, birds, traffic? What is going on around you?

## **Now you are ready to start your first journal page.**

1. In a corner of the page, note the date and time of day
2. Then write down where you are ( park, school yard, backyard garden...)
3. Describe what it looks like (rocky, flat, tree, grass etc.)
3. Make a note about the weather (rain, clouds, sunny, windy)

## **Explore a natural object.**

**SKETCH** — Sketch something you see that interests you. Can you capture its shape and color? Are there any signs of life? Bite marks, tracks, wearing away, growth? Try to sketch the details.

**LABEL** — Next to the sketch you have drawn, label the drawing and name at least three parts (stem, leaf, antennae, legs) you can identify. If you don't know, make a guess and SAY it's a guess.

**WRITE** — Write a short paragraph describing what you've experienced or make a list of words that describe what you see.

Remember your goal is to make lots of observations and to show them accurately. If you're more comfortable drawing, draw more to show what you see. If you're more comfortable writing, you can use more written descriptions—but use both writing and drawing to show what you see.

Learning shouldn't end on site. Try to save something to lookup when you get home. Stretch your vocabulary by describing something that will help you learn about it later.



Name:

Journal entry page:

Date:	Time:	Location:	Description:
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Weather:

Colors of the day:							

I notice...

I wonder...

It reminds me of...