

Nature Journal

Record your nature observations, discoveries, reflections and adventures in your very own journal.

Time: 10 minutes and up (determined by you)

Ages: 5 and up

Materials Required: Blank notebook, pen or pencil

Nature-Friendly Park Experience: Help keep people, wildlife and habitat healthy.

Stay on designated trails at all times. Walking off trails can damage small plants and tree roots.

Admire berries, leaves and flowers without picking them. Animals use them for food and to make homes.

Return everything to the way you found it. If you look under logs or stones, gently put them back in place.

Everything in the park must stay in the park. All things found in nature have a role to play.

Have you had a moment in nature that you would like to savour, whether it was a sighting, sound, smell, feeling or adventurous excursion? One way to remember and reflect on these moments is to record them in a nature journal. Recordings can include writings, drawings, poems, paintings, rubbings and more.

The benefits of keeping a nature journal include physical activity, mental stimulation, creativity, quiet contemplation and mindfulness of your surroundings. Nature journaling can also help you discover and build a long lasting relationship with nature. You can keep a nature journal for yourself or share one amongst your friends or family.

Nature journaling is done in many different ways depending on a person's preference and the nature that surrounds them. Nature journals range from blank notebooks – where a person decides what they will record and how they will record it – to journals that provide guidance through nature activity and observation pages. You decide which type of nature journal suits you best.

For those of you interested in guided activities for your journal, here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Wondrous Weather:**
Draw what the weather is like today.
- **Tree Life:**
 - Draw what you see growing or living on a live tree.
 - Draw what you see growing or living on a dead tree.
- **Bark or Leaf Rubbings**
- **Sound Map:** Choose a spot in nature. Draw an "x" in the centre of your map (page) to represent where you are. When you hear a sound, make a mark on the paper to represent the sound. For example, a few wavy lines could be a gust of wind and a musical note could be a singing bird. The location of the mark should indicate the direction and distance of the sound from your spot.
- **Zoom In / Zoom Out:**
 - Draw or describe something you find that is very small.
 - Draw or describe something you find that is very big.

- **Hug a Tree:** Find a tree you like and give it a hug. Listen carefully. Did the tree tell you anything? Write what your tree said.
- **Leaf Love:** Draw or write about four different leaves that you love.
- **Animal Sightings and Signs:** Write down or draw any animals or signs that an animal was there (e.g. tracks, bird nest, spider web, animal sound, woodpecker holes).
- **Time to Reflect:**
 - Describe what you noticed today.
 - Describe what you wondered about today.
 - Describe what reminded you of something today.
 - Describe what you learned today.
- **Sit Spot:** Sitting quietly in one spot, observe and record your surroundings.
 - What do you hear, see, smell and feel?
 - What is above, below and around you?
 - What does the earth feel like underneath you?
 - What does the wind, sun or rain feel like on your skin?
 - What emotions do you feel e.g. calm, antsy?

Now find a special spot in nature and start recording!