

OHIO

Museum Complex



Nature Journal

Getting started with your Nature Journal!

What is a Nature Journal?

A Nature Journal is a place to grow your thoughts, feelings, ideas, activities, observations, and relationship with the natural world on the pages of a notebook using words pictures, and numbers! You don't need any experience to get started.

In this guided journal there will be multiple activities to choose from. You can do the same activities in new locations, at different times in the day, as many times as you want!

What you'll need:

This guide

Blank paper or a journal

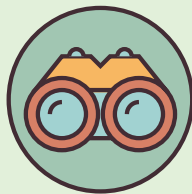
Something to write or draw with (Pen/Pencil/Crayon/Marker)

For quick reference, activities are listed in order of 'difficulty' but each one is fun for all ages.

These activities will ask you to observe, touch, get active, listen, smell, sketch and most importantly be present! You will see the following icons on the directions page for each activity:



Write or Draw



Observe



**Touch, Listen,
or Smell**



Get Active

The icons will be at the top of each activity page so you know what will be involved before reading the prompt, look for things you like to do or try something new! Grab your pencil and have fun!

In your notebook or on a blank sheet of paper write down the following information before each activity or journal entry:

Name:

Date:

Place:

Time:

Weather:



Nature Hike Scavenger Hunt!

On a blank journal page write or draw about some of the items on your scavenger hunt list, check them off when you have found or done these activities...

Find an insect and watch what it's doing

Smell something

Find a bumpy stick

Jump over the stick

Find something green

Find something round

Find something brown

Build a house of sticks

Listen to birds chirping

Find a smooth rock

Find something very big

Find something very small



Red Light, Green Light - Look Up, Look Down!

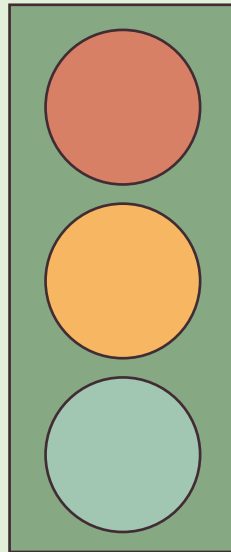
One person is chosen to be 'It' (the traffic light) When It calls 'Green Light,' everyone moves forward down the trail until It calls 'Red Light.'

When 'Red Light' is called the players must freeze on the spot.

While frozen in place, players will play a round of Look Up, Look Down and make nature observations. Nature observation is the practice of using our basic human senses to watch, listen, learn and appreciate our local environment while observing patterns in the life of plants, birds, trees & animals.

Players will look up and make 3 observations (what do you see, smell, or hear?), then look down and make 3 more observations. Players can draw or write what they see on their journal page! The players should remain frozen in place until the next 'Green Light' command is given. Once players have made their observations and recorded them in their journals, It can call 'Green Light' again. Before calling 'Green Light,' It or the supervising adult can select a new way of moving - hopping, crawling, walking backwards, etc.

Continue down the trail making observations at 'Red Light' and hiking during 'Green Light'





I notice, I wonder, it reminds me of...

During this activity, you will choose a natural object, then make I notice . . . statements out loud with a parent or friend. Then do the same with I wonder, . . . questions and It reminds me of . . . connections. Continue this format for any interesting objects along your hike!

I Notice...

See something? Make a list of observations. When making a nature observation, say your observations aloud. Do not filter out any of your observations or thoughts. Anything that you see (object, behavior, color, movement) you should say out loud. Give it a try. You will be surprised how much more you will see and remember. Then jot down your observations.

I Wonder...

As you say your observations out loud, be aware of any questions that occur to you. Ask these out loud to whoever you're hiking with, or just yourself! Do not be afraid of asking questions. The point is not to answer them now but just to get them out there. A good scientist should be able to ask many more questions than they can answer. Some of the questions you can answer with further observation. Some questions you will be able to research, or explore how one might go about answering the question with research or observation. There are other questions that cannot be answered because they are outside the realm of science. If no questions come to you, try saying "I wonder..." and see what fills the silence afterward. You can make yourself a more curious person!

It Reminds Me of...

Ask yourself what your observations remind you of. Try to come up with as many connections as you can. Is this like something you studied before, observed in another context, or saw on a nature special? Have you seen this bird before or seen similar behavior? Can you make an analogy or metaphor that ties to a new observation? Why does this new observation remind you of that? Connecting with existing memories can help you develop more interesting and deeper questions. The relationships and similarities that you uncover in this way often reveal unsuspected connections— it triggers a memory for a reason.

Be sure to say your "it reminds me of 's" out loud as well.



Comparisons

We are used to seeing differences between individual people. None of us look alike. There are differences between individuals of other species as well, but we have to train our eyes to see them. No two flowers in a meadow, mushrooms on a hill, or leaves on a tree look exactly alike. Here's your challenge. Find two similar appearing flowers, leaves, mushrooms, grasses, etc., of the same species. Make a careful diagram in your journal of each side-by-side. If they are small, you may want to draw them larger than life size. Look for as many differences between them as you can find and point them out in your drawings or written notes. You will have to look very carefully because the differences will be very small. If you are drawing a live plant, do not pick it but make your drawing while it is still rooted in the ground.



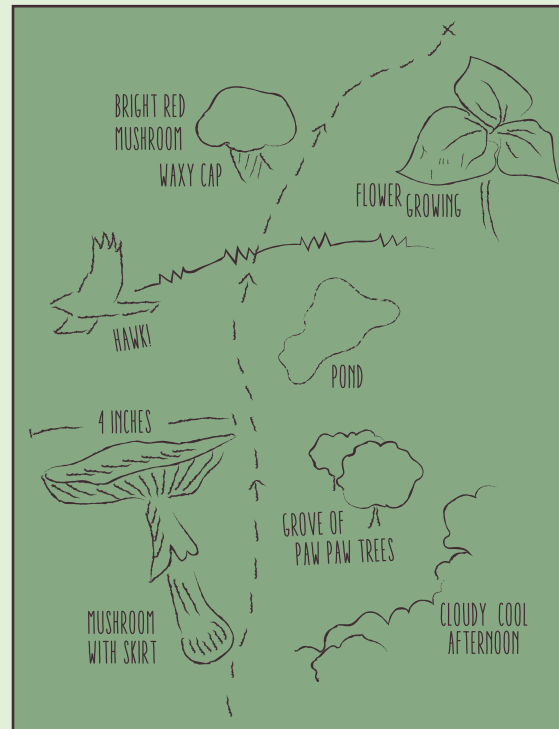


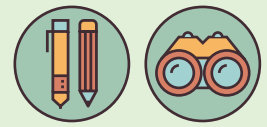
Nature's Treasure Map

We are going to search for hidden treasure. You will make your own map. Unlike a pirate map where the treasure is found at the end, this map is of the treasures we discover along the way.

To get started, make one drawing in a corner of your journal page.

Start by drawing a plant, landform or other feature that can be easily seen from the start of the trail. Then start a dashed line that will show the hiking route. It will grow as the hike progresses. Make a one-minute sketch of each treasure, then continue your hike! Treasures can be anything from hawks flying over, landmarks, a nice tree, animal tracks, opening flowers, and whatever else feels interesting to you. Connect these discoveries with the dotted line showing the route along your hike. The end result will resemble a pirate's map. Write down the names of your treasures, if you don't know the word, make one up!





Zoom In, Zoom Out

Find a plant! You will draw this plant from multiple perspectives.

In the middle of your page draw a view of your subject that is exactly life size. If the object is larger than your page, only draw part of it. Add some written notes.

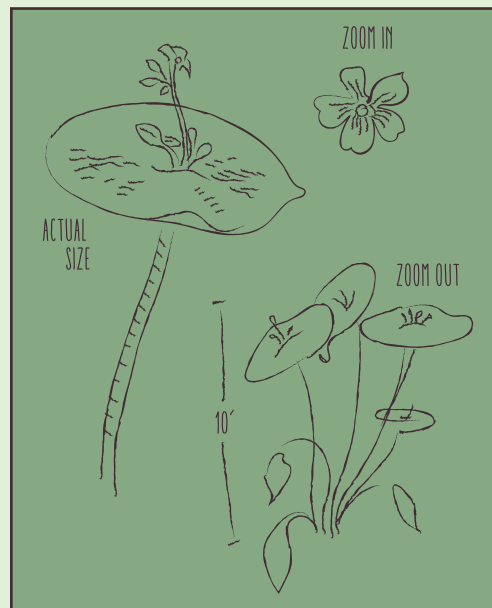
Then choose some part of the subject that you find interesting and draw a little circle around that part of your drawing. At the side of the paper, draw a larger circle and draw a magnified view of that same area showing details that are too small to be shown in the life size picture.

Include written notes.

Finally, take a few steps back from the plant and make a final sketch, this time zoomed out to take in the whole plant, and some of its environment. Use both writing and drawing. We are looking from three levels of focus, life size, a magnified view, and a more distant view, all on the same page.

Now let's see what you observe by changing your level of focus!

Do this same activity as many times as you would like throughout your hike, try finding different plants, some small, some large!



For more fun, take your journal to The Outdoor Museum at The Ridges!

Pick a loop to hike
Pick a journal activity
Enjoy your visit!

The Outdoor Museum offers opportunities for enrichment through connection with nature, expanded understanding of our region's history, deepened sense of place, and access to health and wellness activities in close proximity to daily life. Experience the Ohio University Land Laboratory, visit Radar Hill and the Observatory, and explore The Ridges conservation land. Take time to explore this space and see southeastern Ohio's natural environment from the forest edge to the interior.

While at The Ridges, be sure to check out mAppAthens, a webbased tour app curated by local experts that turns the outdoors into a museum! These tours engage visitors of all ages in place-based learning on an array of topics including art, wellness, history, geology, ecology, and more. Explore tours throughout the region using your mobile device. Travel from stop to stop, reading information at each location and following the directions provided in the app.









For more information, go to www.ohio.edu/mappathens.

Things to see at The Ridges:










Observatory
Compost Facility
Sculpture Garden
Land Laboratory
Radar Hill
Hocking River

The Ridges Trail System

TRAILS

-  Blue Loop ~ 2.2 miles
-  Yellow Loop ~ 1.2 miles
-  Red Loop ~ 1.5 miles
-  Nature Walk
-  Connector Trail
-  Hockhocking Adena Bikeway
-  Ora Anderson Nature Trails
-  Trail Marker

LAND AREAS

-  Land Lab
-  Conservation Land
-  Trailhead / Kiosk
-  Parking Lot
-  Cemetery
-  Streams / Ponds
-  Roads
-  Other Buildings
-  The Ridges Buildings

