



To aide in nature connection remotely, we have created self-guided activities and lessons for children and adults to enjoy the park and learn along the way. We hope this inspires you to slow down, learn about our beautiful park, and build deep connections with nature.

Create a Nature Journal

Keeping a field journal is critical in field biology for scientists and naturalists. It is a scientific tool just like binoculars and compasses and should not be forgotten on any trip out! A field journal is used to write observations, data, notes, and drawings to document what was seen in the field. This is important for identifying unknown species, documenting and recording observations, and learning more about the natural world.

Depending on age, access, and ability, you can design your journal any way you would like. For younger children, we recommend either using a journal you already have laying around or creating a simple journal by following the directions below.

1. Take 12-15 sheets of paper (plain or graph) and fold them all in half hamburger style.
2. Create a cover sheet with cardstock or some other thick paper, fold in half.
3. Staple or sew together in 3-4 places along the spine.
4. Have student draw a sample observation page in the front of their journal with the following (allow about a half a page of space after "observations" and "sketches":
 - Name
 - Date and Time
 - Location
 - Weather
 - Observations/Data/Activity
 - Sketches
 - List a few questions generated from your observations:
5. Have student personalize the cover with drawings or collage.

Journal Page Template

Name
Date
Location
Weather
Observations/Data/Activity with time of day
Sketches
List a few questions generated from your observations:

Go deeper with older children and adults with the following prompts:

- ◇ Listen to nature's voice, literally and figuratively, and provide descriptive words and details for what you see: trees, water, flowers, creatures, mountains, etc.; and the way the natural world interacts and is engaged in daily activity. Consider how you are a part of that ecosystem and that diversity. Look at nature as if through a lens. Study sounds, movements, and atmosphere.
- ◇ Incorporate your feelings, mood, observations, and those you might attribute to wildflowers, meadows, rivers, and mountains. Provide nature with a voice.
- ◇ Write as if writing a letter to yourself or a close friend or family member. Create a narrative account, write a story for yourself.
- ◇ Write prose or poetry or a combination of both – you need not worry about skill, anyone who writes is a writer! Complete sentences are optional.
- ◇ Draw pictures with words, incorporate drawings into your journal, incorporate photographs or press a leaf or flower between pages of your journal.
- ◇ Read the writings of other nature writers: Gilbert White, William Bartram, John Wesley Powell, Susan Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, John Burroughs, Edward Abbey, Mary Austin, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Annie Dillard, Barry Lopez, Gary Snyder, Bill McKibben, Diane Ackerman, Gretel Ehrlich, Terry Tempest Williams, Kathleen Dean Moore, Camille Dungy, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and more. Look into the John Burroughs Medal winners.
- ◇ Look into books that teach you even more about nature journaling:
 - The Curious Nature Guide
 - The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling
 - Drawn to Nature: Through the Journals of Clare Walker Leslie
 - Hello Nature: Draw, Collect, Make, and Grow
 - The Julia Rothman Collection: Farm Anatomy, Nature Anatomy, Food Anatomy
 - How to Be a Wildflower: A Field Guide
 - Learn to Draw Calligraphy Nature

