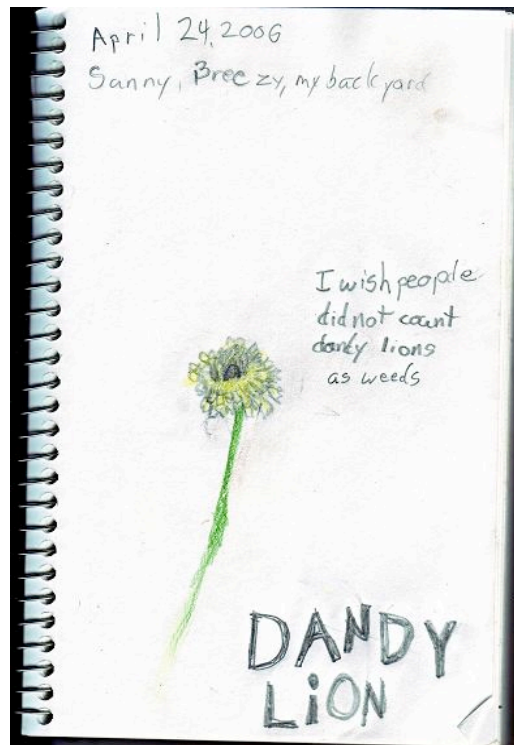


CREATING A NATURE JOURNAL

This is an on-going activity to work on daily or weekly!

What is a Nature Journal?

A nature journal is a book or notebook in which an individual records his or her thoughts, feelings, ideas, and observations about the natural world.



Student, age 9

Why Keep a Nature Journal?

1. Recording observations and feelings in a nature journal is a good way for you to get to know your natural surroundings and the geography of your home environment.
2. Journaling is an exercise in scientific data collection. For example, it can include an on-going record of a specific location and how that location changes throughout the day, week or month.
3. Just as scrapbooking helps preserve memories of events with family and friends, journaling serves as a way for you to save your feelings about your nature experiences.
4. A nature journal that includes drawings as well as a record of your thoughts can help to tie together science and art, providing opportunities for creativity and reflection!

The more you use your journals, the more your goals and ideas for journaling will change and develop.

Styles of Natural Journaling

There are no set rules to follow while nature journaling! You may decide to include only one topic in your journal. For example, one person might be interested in butterflies, while another may want to record the different types of trees. Other topics could be animals, wildflowers, rocks and minerals, insects, or birds.

You could organize it by day or by week. You might choose to organize your journal by location, such as a park or a yard. It is up to you – there is no right or wrong way to create a journal. It is your own personal book, containing your own experiences with nature.

What to Include in Your Journal

Every journal entry should include:

1. Time
2. Date
3. Place
4. Weather
5. What you saw, heard, smelled -- you should try to identify the objects, plants, and animals you find.
6. Then you can begin writing! You might write about your findings in list form, or about your experience in a narrative story, or write a poem!
7. Drawings in pencil, pen, colored pencils, or crayons. Remember to look closely and carefully at the artifact!

Your journals could also include:

- Interesting facts: notice the colors, textures, and shapes of the things you see, such as the different shapes of leaves, how tall certain plants are, or the colors of a butterfly's wings
- Photographs or sketches
- Pressed leaves or flowers
- Leaf Rubbings: Place the leaf under a sheet of paper and rub over it with the side of a crayon.

**Remember to make this nature journal your own.
Be creative and have fun!**

