

Sitting quietly in nature and observing the life and patterns going on around you can be a relaxing experience. Recording your thoughts, observations and feelings in a Nature Journal will help you reflect on the experience and can set the stage for future observations and reflections.

Making Journal Entries



“A notebook is the single most important piece of equipment a naturalist takes into the field. It is useful for recording daily observations, sketching plants and animals for later reference, taking notes on behavior and habitat, and assisting in identification by recording field marks that otherwise might be forgotten. The naturalist’s notebook only increases in value as time goes by and observations accumulate. Soon, patterns begin to emerge from what initially may have been chance encounters with various plants or animals. A well-kept notebook that preserves a record of their activities at a particular place over an extended period of time can contribute information valuable to our understanding of nature.”

— from the preface to the Audubon Society Nature Guide to Western Forests, by Stephen Whitney (Knopf/Borzoi, 1985)

Materials:

Nature Journal
Pen or pencil
Colored pens or pencils
Glue or tape (optional)
Scissors (optional)

Instructions:

1. Go outside and find a comfortable and safe place where you can sit for awhile
2. Open to a blank page in your Nature Journal and record some basic information, such as:
 - Date (Allows you to check back on seasonal changes such as the length of the day or the phase of the moon.)
 - Place (Can help define what type of habitat you might expect to live there.)
 - Time (Can affect the amount of available light or what animals will be active.)
 - Weather and temperature (Can affect the amount of available light or what animals will be active.)
3. Review the tips below and then record your thoughts and observations about what you hear, see, smell or feel.

Tips for Nature Journal Entries:

Include a mixture of images and writing. Use a mixture of media (e.g. pens, colored pencils, watercolors, etc.). Label your drawings, if you make any “Paste-in” items such as leaves, postcards, etc.. Use quotations as a starting point. Create rubbings of natural objects.

Having fun?

Tag @naturalsciences on social media, so we can see you and your loved ones enjoying your nature neighborhood.