

Drawing on Nature: Some ideas and links to get you started.

Nature Journaling is a useful way to practice observing and recording (excerpted from Keeping a Nature Journal, by Clare Walker Leslie, Charles E. Roth)

What is nature journaling?

Nature journaling is the regular recording of observations, perceptions, and feelings about the natural world around you. The recording can be done in a variety of ways, depending on your interests and purpose. Some people prefer written prose or poetry, some through drawing, painting or tape recording.

Why keep a nature journal?

Many people keep journals to explore their own creativity and express observations and experiences of the world more fully. Some keep journals to record information and data about a place they may visit many times. They keep journals to help improve and sharpen writing skills, and in the process learn to observe better. Drawing is used as a prime record-making tool because drawing and observing are mutually reinforcing activities.

Tools to get started:

Journal Most folks prefer the hardbound blank books that come in various sizes. Zip lock bags make handy journal protectors & can hold your drawing supplies too.

Pencils and Pens Pencils in a variety hardness from hard to soft. Colored pencil sets are convenient for adding color to a sketch. Pens make wonderful line and contour drawings and some people prefer them for writing. Ball point pens are generally weatherproof and are easily replaced.

Technical drawing pencils These are always ready when you need them, never needing sharpening.

Entering Observations: Basic Information for each entry – To get you started, if you cannot think of anything else to write or draw.

In either the upper right- or the upper left-hand corner of your page record the following, using both written word and illustration, as appropriate and desired:

1. Date/Time. Date establishes the season and month in relation to the year. Time. Sometimes this can just be "mid-morning" or "late afternoon"
2. Location. Where are you? Town and State? Park, campground, trailhead? If you know your Latitude and Longitude (coordinates), record them.
3. Weather. Weather conditions affect the activity of most living things. Record such things as wind speed and direction, barometric pressure, cloud patterns & clouds
4. Temperature.
5. Plant and Animal List. Feel free to use Common or Scientific (Latin) names.
6. Habitat, the general environment you are in, such as wetland, forest, river, etc.

Once you record this basic information, spend some time observing the ground, things at eye-level, overhead observation, and soak up the whole landscape you are in. You will naturally focus on the things that you find most interesting, but as you expand your awareness, you will begin to see things you have never noticed before. Using all of your senses to make observations, use your writing and sketching skills to bring those observations to life in your journal.

NATURE ART & ILLUSTRATION BIBLIOGRAPHY (updates are continually ongoing)

NATURE DRAWING & JOURNALING:

Leslie, Clare Walker	Nature Drawing, A Tool for Learning	Prentice Hall, 1980
	Notes From a Naturalist's Sketchbook (ISBN: 0395312981)	Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2002
	The Art of Field Sketching	Houghton Mifflin, 1981
	Drawn to Nature Through the Journals of Clare Walker Leslie	Prentice Hall Direct 1984
	(ISBN: 1580176143)	Storey Publishing, LLC, 2005
	Into the Field: A Guide to Locally Focused Teaching	(Nature Literacy Orion Society Series Vol. 3) (ISBN: 0913098523)
	A Naturalist's Sketchbook: Pages from the Seasons of a Year	(Teale Books) Dodd Mead 1987
	(ISBN: 0396091849)	
	Nature Journaling: Learning to Observe and Connect with the World Around You	
	The Art of Field Sketching	
	Create a Bird-Watcher's Journal: Storey's Country Wisdom Bulletin A-207	(Storey Country Wisdom Bulletin A-207)
	Nature Drawing: A Tool for Learning	
with Roth, Charles E	Keeping a Nature Journal: Discover a Whole New Way of Seeing the	Storey Books, Pownal, VT, U.S.A., 2000
	World Around You (ISBN: 1580173063)	
	Nature All Year Long	Assembled by Greg Lecker, 6/22/2013

TECHNIQUES:

Adams, Norman & Singer, Joe	Drawing Animals	Watson-Guption Publications, NY, 1989
Edwards, Betty	Drawing on the Right Side of the <i>Brain</i> (ISBN: 0874770882) Drawing on the Artist Within: A Guide to Innovation, Invention, Imagination and Creativity (ISBN: 0671493868)	J. P. Tarcher, 1989 Simon & Schuster, 1986
Mugnani, Joseph	Hidden Elements of Drawing	Van Nostrand Reinhold Co, 1974

ARTISTS AND ILLUSTRATORS

Audubon, John James	Virtually any compilation of his drawings	
Busby, John	Drawing Birds	Timber Press, 2004
Laws, John Muir	Drawing Birds	
Parnall, Peter	The Nightwatchers	Four Winds Press, 1971
Peterson, Roger Tory	His many field guides are a good start.	

NATURE JOURNALING

Stokes, Donald W.	A Guide to Nature in Winter , Illustrated by Deborah Prince and Donald W. Stokes	
Other Stokes Guides:	A Guide to the Behavior of Common Birds A Guide to Observing Insect Lives A Sand County Almanac Voyage of the Beagle	
Aldo Leopold		
Charles Darwin		
Finch, Robert & Elder, John	The Norton Book of Nature Writing (an anthology), College Edition accompanied by a study guide with questions	

FIELDGUIDES AND PICTURE IDENTIFICATION BOOKS (to help you identify your subject matter)

Peterson, Roger Tory	A Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and North-central North America	©1968 Roger Tory Peterson, Margaret McKenn
Margaret McKenn		
Moyle, John B. & Evelyn W. Moyle	Northland Wildflowers, Revised Edition ©1977, 2001 Regents of University of Minnesota, Publ by University of Minnesota Press	

NATURE JOURNALS & ANTHOLOGIES (Examples for you to read and learn from other authors)

Bates, John, 1951- Gilbert, James R	Graced by the seasons : fall and winter in the northwoods Jim Gilbert's Minnesota nature notes : exploring the changes in our backyards, field, lakes and wood, week by week, season by season	
Muir, John, 1838-1914	John Muir's last journey : south to the Amazon and east to Africa : unpublished journals and selected correspondence	
Muir, John, 1838-1914	The mountains of California	
Bates, John, 1951- Treuer, Robert	A northwoods companion: Fall and winter; and A northwoods companion: Spring and summer A Northwoods window	
Muir, John, 1838-1914	A thousand-mile walk to the Gulf	
Hoover, Helen	The years of the forest	
Maltzman, Stanley	Drawing trees: step by step	
Adams, Norman	Drawing animals	
by Postle, Joy	Drawing birds	
Maltzman, Stanley	Drawing nature	
Marsh, Janet, 1953-	Janet Marsh's Nature diary	Assembled by Greg Lecker, 2017