

Journaling to Build Knowledge about Nature

Lisa E. Davis - LMNGBR Project - Spring 2022

WHY JOURNAL?

- ~ Observe the world around you. It is about your personal observations.
- ~ To remember details and learn more about your subject
- ~ Adds an element of perspective to your field observations.
- ~ How you use your journal is up to you. It is your tool.
- ~ For scientific purposes
- ~ Just to enjoy and reflect

SUGGESTIONS - What's in your journal?

- ~ While in the field, carry a little notebook to get quick notes, sketches, and observations.
- ~ Update larger journal soon after returning as to not forget details
- ~ Research classifications and do analysis of the subject
- ~ Take pictures for reference and/or use i-naturalist app
- ~ Can be drawings, pictures and/or notes only
- ~ Take your larger sketch book into the field if you have time to record, draw and observe.
- ~ Ways to order your journal
 - * Chronologically
 - * By subject. ex. Animal, Plant, Tree
 - * Same object or place over different periods of time
 - * By season
 - * By location
- ~ Number pages and create an index at front of journal.
- ~ Use of Grinnell Method - rigid scientific method used by biologist worldwide

BEGIN EXPLORING AND PONDERING

- ~ Your first impressions
- ~ Use all your senses
- ~ Feelings-yours and/or how the subject feels to the touch
- ~ Sounds (phonically write the sound as you hear it, ex. Kaw-kee-kee)
- ~ Time and Date
- ~ Moon cycle
- ~ Locality and/or GPS coordinates
- ~ Directional orientation - north, southwest, etc.
- ~ Route or name of path
- ~ Weather- clouds, temperature, notation about the season
- ~ Habitat, note surrounding vegetation and/or other species seen
- ~ Behavioral Observations
- ~ Note the largest and/or the smallest part of the specimen
- ~ Count, how many do you see?
- ~ Young or old
- ~ Soil Type
- ~ Elevation
- ~ Colors
- ~ Measurements
- ~ Be curious and follow the questions
- ~ Unanswered questions you have

~ Anything Else?

- * Photographs
- * Printed pictures
- * Tape or glue specimens
- * Newspaper clippings
- * Maps - drawn or printed
- * Reflections, sayings, poems
- * Tickets, receipts, miscellaneous

RESOURCES FOR NATURE JOURNALING

Books

Keeping a Natural Journal, Discover a Whole New Way of Seeing the World Around You by Clare Walker Leslie and Charles E. Roth, copyright 2000.

<http://www.clarewalkerleslie.com/books.htm>

The Sierra Club Guide to Sketching in Nature, by Cathy Johnson

Any book by Cathy Johnson

<https://cathyjohnson.info/>

The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling, by John Muir Laws

<https://johnmuirlaws.com/>

Keeping a Naturalist's Field Journal, 2012 Donna L. Long, found in LMNGBR Certification Training materials. <https://www.lmngbr.org/uploads/1/2/5/5/12552641/grinnell-journaling.pdf>

Online

John Muir Laws - Getting Started with Nature Journaling. YouTube videos. All of his videos are excellent. <https://johnmuirlaws.com/>

Cornell Online - Nature Journaling and Field Sketching. Online course.

Margaret Stone- Research Materials. Native Flora of Louisiana. LSU Press books and available through LSU digital Library. <https://guides.lib.lsu.edu/c.php?g=1004243>

Nature Journaling for a Wild Life, Roseann Hanson. Naturalist, Artist, Explorer. Webpage, Facebook, online course, books, YouTube videos. Field Arts Bootcamps.

<https://www.exploringoverland.com/constantapprentice>

Facebook

"Nature Artists" - A page for artists who sketch or paint from nature to share their work.

"Field Naturalists" - there are quite a few Field Naturalist sites specifically by city. The post are usually camera pictures posted by individuals of their observation of all types of nature.

"The Nature Journal Club" - This is both picture and drawn posts as well as techniques.

We live in a world of beauty and wonder. Train your mind to see deeply and with intentional curiosity, and the world will open before you. Keeping a journal of your observations, questions, and reflections will enrich your experiences and develop gratitude, reverence, and the skills of naturalist.

John Muir Laws