

September 2019

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

Use Weeds to Make
a Soothing Oil

Nature-Based
Bubble Blowers!

Apple Picking

Seasonal poems,
activities, nature journal
pages and more!



From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Welcome September!

What are you hoping to do outdoors this month?

Our family is hoping to do lots of hiking this month.

Our 19 year-old, Rhia, is an avid hiker and convinced us to join two hiking challenges -- the 52 Hike Challenge, where you commit to go hiking every week for a year, and a Minnesota Park Challenge where you try to visit every state park and recreation area (with no time limit). These sound like fun ways to get out and wander in nature!

We are busy harvesting tomatoes in our garden, along with herbs, onions, beans and other garden goodies. Our pumpkins are still in flowering stage, but we should have big orange pumpkins in time for Halloween jack-o-lanterns and Thanksgiving pies.

This time of year we are foraging the last of the elderberries and the first of the acorns, in addition to wild plums, apples, pears, catmint and other mints, walnuts, crab apples, wild grapes, red clover flowers, wood sorrel, burdock root and lots more.

In the Southern Hemisphere, folks are getting ready for spring, while we in the Northern Hemisphere are getting ready for fall.

Wherever you are in the world, I hope you have a fantastic September, with lots of wild adventures!

Alicia



Why is Wild Kids free?

Kids (and their grown ups) need nature, and nature needs us! Our family believes in the importance of sharing & helping each other, and of passing on skills to help our world and each other. As long as we are able, we plan to produce Wild Kids to help do this for families who find it useful.

All materials copyright Alicia Bayer and Wild Kids Magazine.
This publication is free for personal use. Please do not redistribute.

Contact: alicia.bayer@gmail.com

Find lots more links, information and fun to accompany this month's themes at
www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids.

Go Wild in September

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Take a selfie at a stream to help scientists. Visit scistarter.org/stream-selfie to learn more.

Start a leaf rubbing journal & see how many leaves you can ID and take rubbings of

Go Look for milkweed pods, cattail heads or other big fluffy seed pods to blow, scatter and make wishes on

Pick one wild food to learn about and look for in your area this month

Join the 52 hike challenge & commit to getting outside and hiking each week

Look for berries and other natural materials to make ink with and paint a picture with them

Make bubble blowers with natural materials (we tell you how in this issue)

Watch a sunrise or sunset

Go apple picking (or pick whatever else is in season near you)

Pot up a weed and bring it inside as a houseplant. See how long you can keep it healthy & happy inside.

Nature's Bubble Blowers

Here's a fun way to play with nature!

See how many natural items you can use to blow bubbles. Just find items that are round or hollow, or that you can twist into a circle or punch a circle out of.

Some ideas are large hollow stems like these dock stalks, big leaves and flexible twigs. You could also try shells with holes in them, grapevines, driftwood, you name it!

Just dip them in bubble solution and blow! See which ones work best and which ones make the biggest, best bubbles.



Let's Go Apple Picking

It's apple picking season! This time of year, you can pick apples lots of ways. You can go to an apple orchard and pay to pick apples to take home. You can also pick apples from your tree or a friend or neighbor's. Believe it or not, you can also forage for apples at lots of places.

We don't have an apple tree but a neighbor down the street has one and she doesn't use the apples. Our family picks from her tree and keeps the ground underneath it clean to make mowing easier, and we make applesauce from the apples. Last year we made over 60 big quart jars of applesauce from that one tree!

We also pick apples at some nearby parks and a few other houses where people are happy to see someone put the apples to use.

Most of the apples are tart so we use them for baking, drying (with a sprinkle of cinnamon sugar) and applesauce.

We like to thank people by bringing them some baked goods or applesauce made from their apples.



Where can you find apples?

- county parks
- city streets
- in front of businesses
- friends' and neighbors' yards
- pick-your-own orchards

Don't forget crab apples

Even if they're too small or sour for baking or fresh eating, you can use them to make homemade pectin for jellies or make crab apple cicer.

Always get permission before picking from private property! Most people are happy to see their apples put to use.

EASY CRAB APPLE CIDER

We came up with this recipe to use up some crab apples that we got from friends one year. It tastes like a cross between apple cider and lemonade, only ruby red (if your crab apples are red) with just a hint of spice. And that bright red color means lots of disease-fighting, vitamin-rich nutrients too.

Be sure to gather your crab apples from trees that have not been sprayed.

Here's all you do...

1. Find yourself a friend with a crab apple tree. Pick a bunch!
2. Wash them and remove the stems and blossom ends. Cut into quarters.
3. Put them in a big pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and simmer until they are very tender and they have lost most of their color.
4. Line a strainer with some cheesecloth or a clean tea towel and place over a big bowl. Pour the cooked crab apples and liquid in and strain. Squeeze the juice out and add the crab apples to the compost pile.
5. Return the liquid to the pan and add sugar (or other sweetener) to taste. Bring back to a simmer to dissolve the sugar and add some water if it's too strong. If it's not strong enough, simmer to reduce it until it's just right.

Serve warm (our favorite way) or chill.



Making Plantain Oil

Use a common lawn weed to heal minor skin ailments

Do you know plantain? You should! This plant grows all over and is in most grassy areas like lawns and parks. It's great for skin ailments and can quickly take the sting out of an insect bite or sting when applied fresh as a poultice.

Our daughter Fiona has known plantain since her fourth birthday when she was stung by a wasp and an herbal friend made the pain go away by lightly chewing a plantain leaf she plucked from the ground next to her and applying it to the sting. Fiona has used plantain for her stings and bites ever since.

But what do you do if you get a sting or rash in the winter when there's no plantain? Make a plantain-infused oil in the summer, and you'll always have the healing power of plantain at your fingertips.



Here's all you do:

1. Gather plantain leaves on a sunny day. See this month's coloring page on plantain and the website for help finding it.
2. Gently brush off dirt. If they are very dirty you can wash them, but then you'll need to wait longer for them to dry or at least wilt. Leave them to dry overnight or for a couple of days.
3. Chop the leaves and fill a jar about half full. Cover with an oil like coconut, olive or grapeseed oil and put a lid on it.
4. Let your oil sit for several weeks, stirring every so often and making sure the leaves are below the oil.
5. Strain your oil into a jar and put a lid on it. Label it clearly. Your plantain oil should last about a year (especially if your leaves were very dry).

What is plantain oil used for?

- rashes
- chapped skin
- bug bites
- skin irritations
- eczema
- dandruff scalp treatment
- as an ingredient in healing salves

Note: People can have allergies to any plant or food. Always use just a bit of a new plant at first to be sure you don't have an allergy.

September Poetry

"There ought to be gardens for all months in the year, in which, severally, things of beauty may be then in season."

- Sir Francis Bacon

September
by Helen Hunt Jackson

**The golden-rod is yellow;
The corn is turning brown;
The trees in apple orchards
With fruit are bending down.**

**The gentian's bluest fringes
Are curling in the sun;
In dusty pods the milkweed
Its hidden silk has spun.**

**The sedges flaunt their harvest,
In every meadow nook;
And asters by the brook-side
Make asters in the brook.**

**From dewy lanes at morning
The grapes' sweet odors rise;
At noon the roads all flutter
With yellow butterflies.**

**By all these lovely tokens
September days are here,
With summer's best of weather,
And autumn's best of cheer.**

**But none of all this beauty
Which floods the earth and air
Is unto me the secret
Which makes September fair.**

**'Tis a thing which I remember;
To name it thrills me yet:
One day of one September
I never can forget.**

September Midnight
By Sara Teasdale

Lyric night of the lingering Indian Summer,
Shadowy fields that are scentless but full of singing,
Never a bird, but the passionless chant of insects,
Ceaseless, insistent.

The grasshopper's horn, and far-off, high in the maples,
The wheel of a locust leisurely grinding the silence
Under a moon waning and worn, broken,
Tired with summer.

Let me remember you, voices of little insects,
Weeds in the moonlight, fields that are tangled with asters,
Let me remember, soon will the winter be on us,
Snow-hushed and heavy.

Over my soul murmur your mute benediction,
While I gaze, O fields that rest after harvest,
As those who part look long in the eyes they lean to,
Lest they forget them.

Who Has Seen The Wind?
by Christina Georgina Rossetti

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you.
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.
Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I.

But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

PLANTAIN



From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants
 Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,
 Written, illustrated and engraved by Elizabeth Blackwell, 1737*

CRAB APPLE

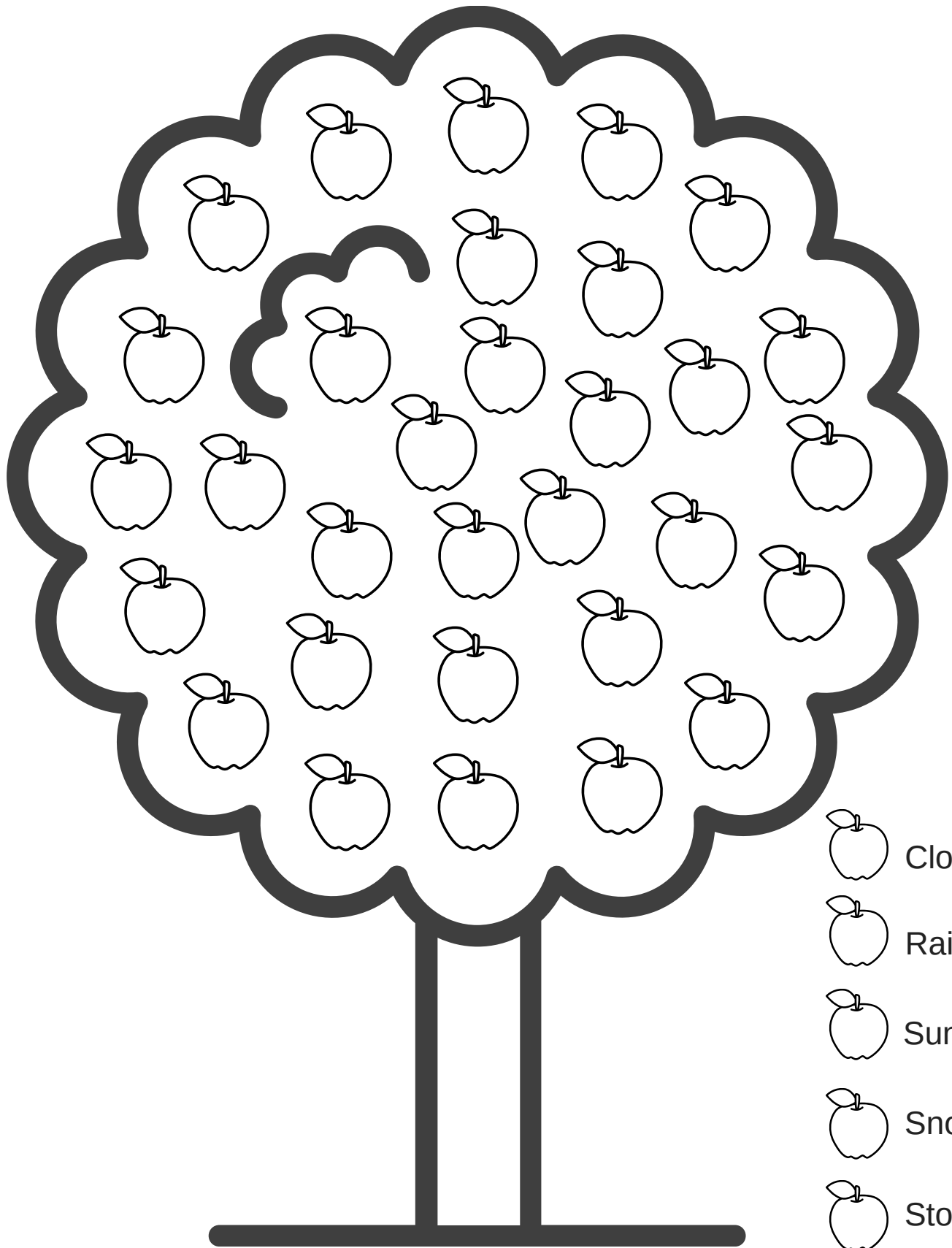



From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,*
Written, illustrated and engraved by Elizabeth Blackwell, 1737

My Nature Journal

September

September Weather Tree



-  Cloudy
-  Rainy
-  Sunny
-  Snowy
-  Stormy

September Bird List

Birds spotted this month

September Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

SEPTEMBER NATURE NOTES

Record any interesting discoveries here -- plants you identify, foods you forage, outdoor activities, cool nature projects, nature books read, or just notes about what it's like outside this week!

Week 1 Observations

Week 2 Observations

Week 3 Observations

Week 4 Observations

CLOSE-UP SKETCHES OF PLANT PARTS



Want to see your stuff in Wild Kids?

We welcome articles, photos, artwork and other submissions from kids and their grown ups.

Visit magicalchildhood.com/wildkids to learn more.