


October 2022

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS



**Measure the
blueness of the
sky with a
cyanometer**

Autumn Bingo

**Why Can't You Forage
for Wild Broccoli?**

Fall Leaf Art

**Plus seasonal poetry,
activities, nature
journal pages & more!**

From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Happy October!

What are you hoping to do outdoors this month?

We are usually really busy in October! We're finishing the end of our harvesting season where we process wild and garden foods for the upcoming year. Right now our dining room table is completely covered with jars of homemade applesauce, roasted acorns, dried hawthorn berries and more. We have pears that we gathered at a rural county park that are canned in sugar syrup, dried elderberries that are all ready for making homemade elderberry syrup this winter, mullein leaves tincturing in alcohol for a cough remedy for the adults in our family, and lots more. It's a lot of work but it heats the kitchen and keeps us stocked with all kinds of tasty and helpful goodies all winter.

This time of year we volunteer for four days at an outdoor historic event every year too. It's funny how it's always the same week in October but the weather is always different! Some years we have had snow and we've huddled around fires and pot bellied stoves to keep warm. Some years we've kicked off our shoes as the day went on and went barefoot in the grass, feeling overly hot in our heavy costumes. Do you have anything you do outside every year at the same time? Can you think of how the weather has been different over the years?

Wherever you are in the world, I hope you have a fantastic month 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.

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Contact: alicia.bayer@gmail.com

Go Wild in October

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Look for wild grapevines or other vines to weave into a wreath for your wall or door

Make art with leaves (see the next page for ideas)

Take a cyanometer outside to measure the blueness of the sky (we have one in this issue)

Make nature guesses and see how right you are (we have a form in this issue)

Look for wild mushrooms -- How many can you ID?

Collect flower seeds to plant next year (make sure they're fully dried)

Play autumn BINGO (we have one in this issue)

Lie on your back outside and watch the clouds -- what shapes do you see?

Rake leaves and jump in them

Make a jar of nature souvenirs from this year with items like dried milkweed pods, found shells and shed cicada skins

Fall Leaf Art

This is the perfect time of year to do some art with leaves!

There are lots of ways to use leaves for crafts.



- You can paint them and stamp them on paper to make leaf prints.



- You can paint onto them.
- You can put a piece of paper over them and rub them with a crayon to make leaf rubbings.
- You can make leaf rubbings with white crayons and then paint over them with watercolor paints (the white parts will stay white).
- You can arrange them in designs.

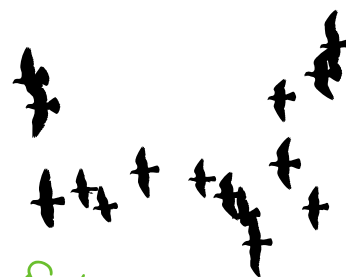


What can you think of do art with leaves?



NATURE

predictions



If I spent 10 minutes in my yard or neighborhood, I'll see this many different types of birds and animals:

If I spend time in my back yard or neighborhood today, the kind of bird I'll see the most of is:

If I go outside today, the nature sounds I'll hear are:

If I go outside at night today, the nature sounds I'll hear are:

If I go outside for 10 minutes, I think I'll hear this many different kinds of birds singing:

I think the biggest bird I will see in my neighborhood today will be this kind of bird:

If I go on a walk around my neighborhood I think I will find this many different kinds of flowers in bloom:



What's a Cyanometer?

A cyanometer (from the color cyan and meter for measuring) is a tool for measuring "blueness" in the sky.

A mountain climber and scientist named Horace-Bénédict de Saussure designed the first cyanometer over 200 years ago. His was made of squares of paper dyed in darker and darker shades of blue and arranged in a circle to be held up and compared to the color of the sky. It had 53 sections with numbered cards ranging from white to all different shades of blue to black.

De Saussure figured out that the shade of blue of the sky depended on how many water droplets and ice crystals were in the air.

In scientific terms, the blueness of the sky is due to something called Rayleigh scattering by nitrogen and oxygen molecules. Our air is 78% nitrogen and 21% oxygen (air can also hold up to 5% water, which we know is hydrogen and oxygen).

When you look up through a clear sky, sunlight of all wavelengths goes through something called Mie scattering. If the air is not polluted, Mie scattering means that really tiny drops of water form around tiny bits of natural dust. This is called "wet haze". More wet haze makes a brighter and paler blue sky color.

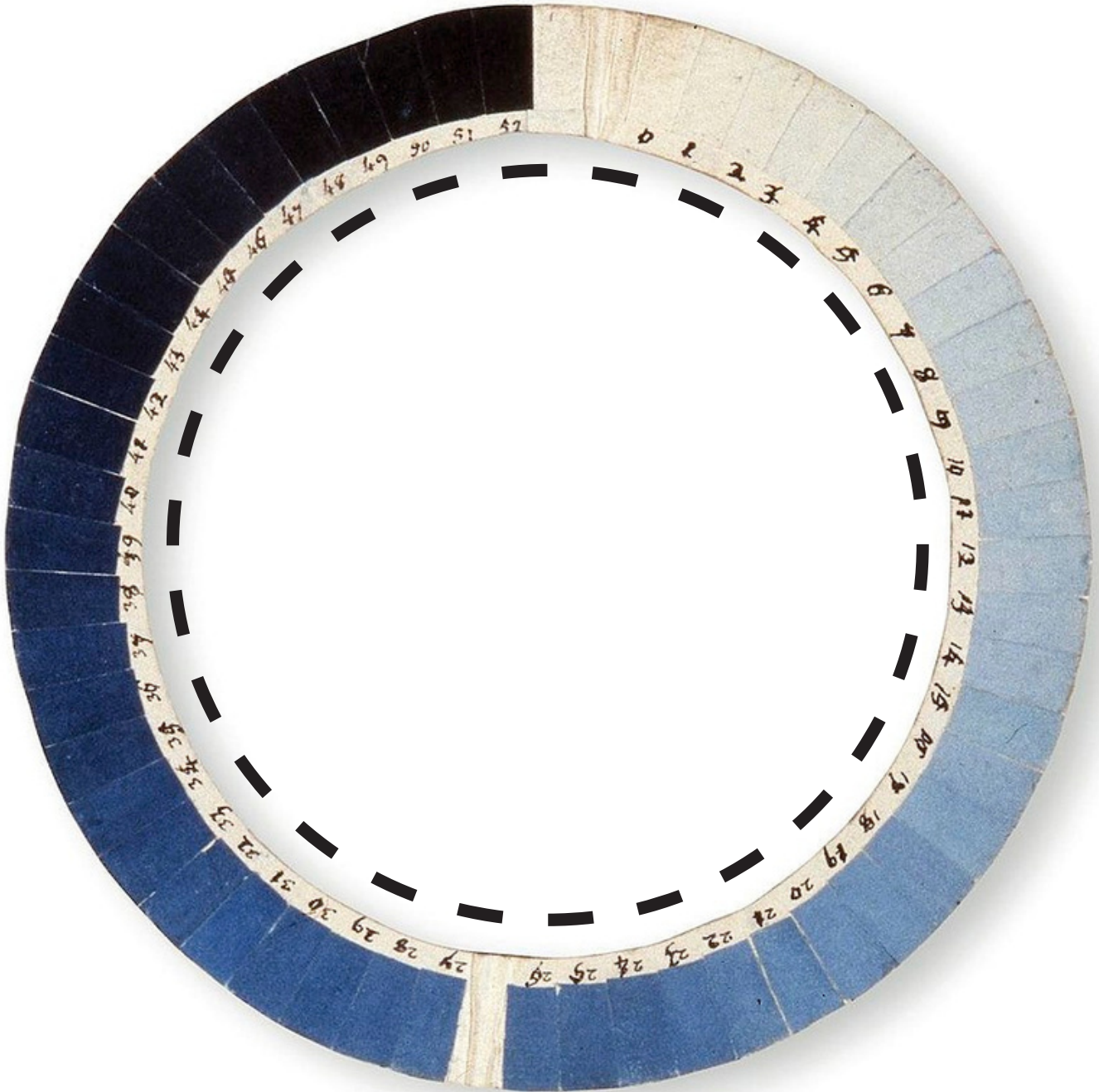
When you look towards the horizon where the sky meets the ground, you look through up to 40 times as much atmosphere as you do when you look straight up. That means you see more Mie scattering when you look at the sky closer to the horizon. You're seeing more tiny water droplets around these dust particles.

You'll see a darker blue sky if there is less wet haze where you're looking, which happens more when you are higher up (at a higher altitude like on a mountain) and when you look straight up.

Knowing all this, now you can measure the blueness of the sky and figure out a lot of things about the weather. It's also just fun to compare different parts of the sky on different days.

How blue is the sky where you live today?

My Cyanometer



Directions: Cut your cyanometer out on the dotted lines. An adult can use a craft knife to cut the center of the circle out. If you like, glue it onto a piece of cardboard first if you want it to be very sturdy. Take your cyanometer outside and hold it up so the sky shows through the center. What color blue does it match?

AUTUMN BINGO



How to Play: Head out into nature and see how many items you can find. Make an x over the ones you spot and try to get a BINGO either across, down, or diagonally. To make it a bigger challenge, try to get a blackout by marking off every square this month.

In a different climate? We have a blank grid on the next page to make your own nature BINGO. Write down plants and wildlife that are in your area this time of year.

orange leaf	goose	squirrel	pumpkin	bare tree
deer	acorn	yellow leaf	animal den	dried corn
seed pod	berry		snake	chestnut
spider	pinecone	duck	chipmunk	wood- pecker
rose hip	mushroom	walnut	red leaf	rabbit

Nature Bingo

How to Play: Write down plants and wildlife that are in your area this time of year, one in each square. If you need suggestions, do a web search for wildlife and your location and the month or season. Head out into nature and see how many items you can find. Make an x over the ones you spot and try to get a BINGO either across, down, or diagonally. To make it a bigger challenge, try to get a blackout by marking off every square this month.

Decorate the page with pictures of your wildlife!

		FREE		

October Poetry

October is a month when we see a lot of wild mushrooms, so I thought mushroom poems would be fun this month! These are poems I wrote and my daughter Rhia drew the pictures. Mycology means the study of mushrooms.



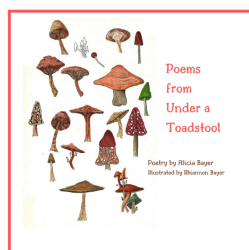
Mycology

They're tiny and slimy and black and beige,
Speckled and freckled and white and gray,
Bumpy and lumpy and thataways.



They're pretty and creepy, sinister, sweet,
Harmless or poisonous, tasty to eat.
They're funny and funky, hard to beat.
I could go on for days.

Whatever their shape, their color, their size,
Every mushroom's a wee little prize
For they're magical gifts that materialize
Right at your grateful feet.



(Reprinted From
Poems From Under a Toadstool
By Alicia Bayer
Illustrated by Rhia Bayer)

The Fairy's Retirement

Once there was a fairy who lived in the woods
under a mushroom by a wide oak tree.
She did all the things that a fairy should
And she dreamed of a life by the big blue sea



She helped the worms and she helped the spiders.
She helped the flowers and she helped the bees.
She helped her mama and she helped her neighbors.
She lived a good life and then moved to the sea.

Why Can't You Forage Wild Broccoli?



Have you ever wondered why you can't forage for plants like broccoli, cauliflower, peas, potatoes and corn?

It's because a long time ago when people started to collect seeds and grow their own crops instead of just finding and foraging them, they learned to do something called hybridizing. They didn't call it that back then, of course. They just knew to save the seeds for the biggest, tastiest varieties of their foods. If a tomato plant had really big, tasty tomatoes, they'd make sure to save some seeds from that plant so next year they could have lots more big, tasty tomatoes, for instance.

Over time they learned to take it further, and farmers and scientists learned how to select seeds for traits. Sometimes a plant would mutate and accidentally grow differently, and if it was a change that people liked they'd save the seeds to make more of that kind.

Sometimes plants would cross fertilize with related plants and make ones that were brand new.

Did you know that broccoli, cauliflower, kale, Brussels sprouts, mustard and cabbage are all descendents from the same plant? It's true! They're all descendents of wild mustard '*Brassica oleracea*'. People bred seeds over many, many years to encourage certain parts to get bigger, milder tasting, more tender and so on.



Cauliflower and broccoli were created by selecting for bigger and bigger flower buds, cabbage and brussels sprouts from doing the same thing with leaf buds, plants like kale were created from selecting for bigger, tastier stems and leaves.



"WHITE MUSTARD"



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

"HEDGE MUSTARD"

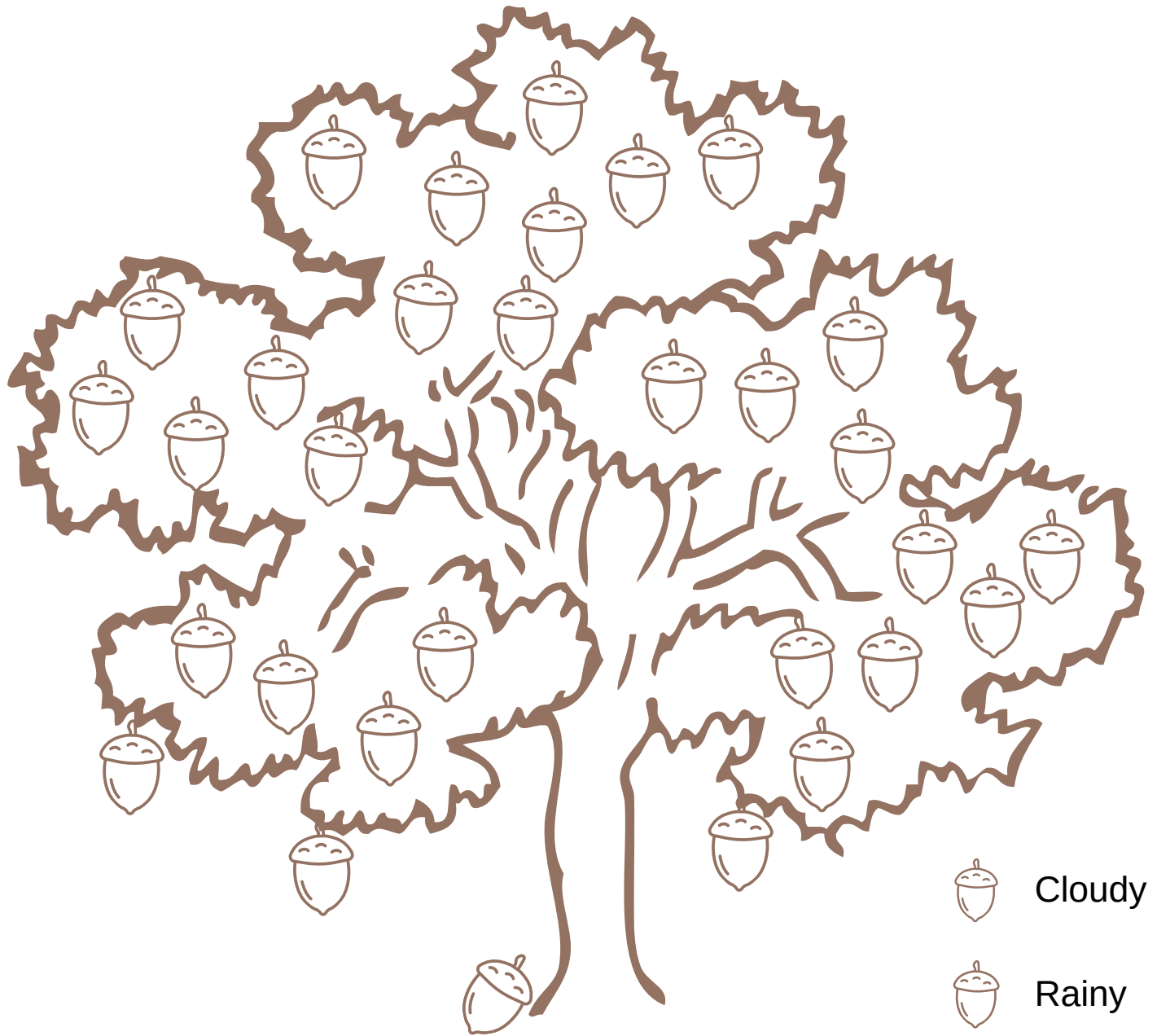


From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,*
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My Nature Journal


October

October Weather Tree




 Cloudy

 Rainy

 Sunny

 Stormy

 Snowy

October Bird List

Birds spotted this month

October Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

October 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!

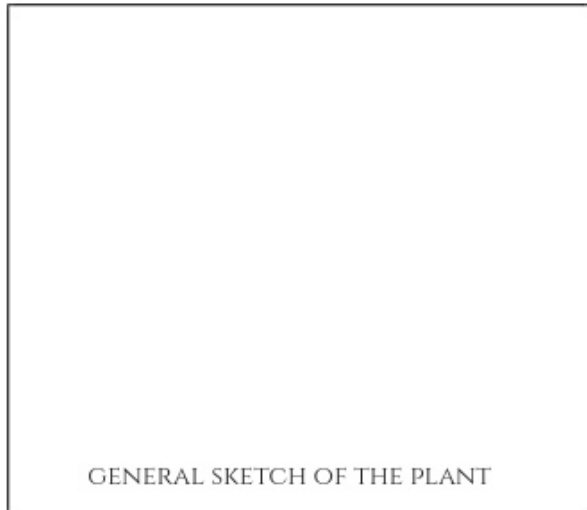
Week 1 Observations

Week 2 Observations

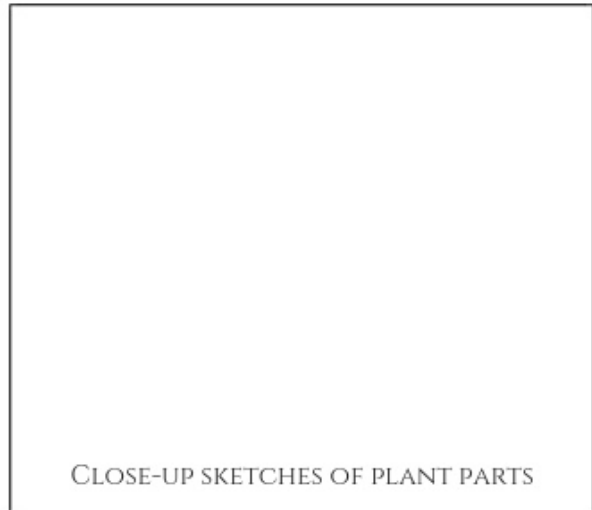
Week 3 Observations

Week 4 Observations

MY FORAGING GUIDE FOR:



GENERAL SKETCH OF THE PLANT



CLOSE-UP SKETCHES OF PLANT PARTS

LATIN NAME _____

WHERE FOUND _____

PARTS USED _____

LOOKALIKES & HOW TO POSITIVELY ID:

WARNINGS: _____

FORAGING RECORD (DATES, WHERE FOUND, HOW IT WAS USED)

MY RATING FOR THIS PLANT





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.