

January 2023

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

January Treasure Hunt

2023 Sky in
Pixels

Turkey Tail
& Artist's Conk
Mushrooms

123 Ways
to Have
Fun in
Nature in
2023

Seasonal
poems,
activities,
nature journal
pages and
more!



From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Happy 2023! What are you hoping to do in the wild this year? If you need some ideas on fun ways to play and work outside this year, we have 123 ideas in this issue. We also have a fun form where you can keep track of all the different things you do in nature this year. And those are just the tip of the iceberg!

For the past 4 years we featured plant coloring pages by the wonderful Elizabeth Blackwell (see the very first issue of Wild Kids to learn more about her interesting life!). This year we're doing something different and our coloring pages will be of wild mushrooms. There are so many fun and interesting wild mushrooms to get to know!

Please write me and tell me if there's anything you'd like us to feature in the magazine. You can also send in artwork, photos, poetry or letters. I love to hear from you!

Wherever you are, I hope you have a wonderful month and a wonderful year, full 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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www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids.



Go Wild in January



10 WAYS TO LEARN AND PLAY WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Color in the ones you do!

Use
binoculars to
look at the
moon

Plant seeds
from all the fruits &
veggies you eat this
month & see what
sprouts *

Make
a snow or
sand
sculpture

Sit quietly
outside for 15
minutes & count
how many birds &
animals you can
see

Write a
haiku about
nature in the
snow, dirt or
sand

Freeze some
natural items like rose
hips and seed pods in
water in muffin tins with
a loop of string to hang
outside, and guess how
long it will take them to
melt

Use a
magnifying app or
pocket microscope
to look at sand,
snowflakes or other
tiny natural items

Take a box of
64 crayons outside &
see how many you can
match to something in
nature, then draw a
picture using all those
colors

Do an
outdoor activity
that you've
never done
before

Start a list of
all the different ways
you spend time in
nature in 2023 & set a
goal like 100 different
ways (we have a form
in this issue)

*Remember that plants make seeds in the fruit part so parts like the flowers (broccoli), stems (celery), roots (carrots) and leaves (spinach) won't have seeds, and some fruits are harvested before the seeds are developed enough to plant. Lots of plants that we think of as veggies are fruits though, like squash and peppers.

JANUARY TREASURE HUNT



Head out into nature and see what you can find for each category. Draw them or write them in the box. We have an example for each one.

Living

Non living

Once Living



Owl



Cloud



Antler

123 in 2023



This year, see how many different ways you can play, learn and work in nature! Here are 123 ideas, but there are so many more. Some won't work where you live but you'll have opportunities that other people won't have. These are just examples.

We have a chart for you to keep track of all the ways you have fun in nature this year.

How many different ways can you have fun in nature this year?

- Gathering nature items
- Playing in the mud
- Sketching outside
- Making leaf mandalas
- Painting with berry ink
- Reading under a tree
- Playing horseshoes
- Going on a moonlight walk
- Feeding the birds
- Foraging
- Playing at a playground
- Taking a nap outside
- Playing frisbee golf
- Windsurfing
- Meditating outside
- Rafting
- Paddle boarding
- Rolling down a hill
- Ziplining
- Making a toad house
- IDing animal scat
- Making plant prints
- Looking for petrified wood
- Watching a sunrise
- Doing a "mud run"
- Doing a nature scavenger hunt
- Making cordage (natural rope)
- Doing cartwheels
- Doing bark & leaf rubbings
- Making sun tea
- Collecting wildflower seeds
- Doing back yard yoga
- Looking for four leaf clovers
- Carving artist conk mushrooms
- Grounding (walking barefoot)
- Making dandelion wishes
- Looking for owl pellets
- Doing weed experiments
- Lying in a hammock
- Propagating cuttings
- Cooking dinner on a campfire
- Catching (and releasing) frogs
- Visiting a nature preserve
- Doing an outdoor painting
- Making a nature sundial
- Doing a weather tree
- Making a natural wreath
- Scattering wildflower seeds
- Watching a meteor shower
- Whistling with an acorn cap
- Spelunking (cave exploring)
- Making back yard obstacle courses

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- Going on a walk
 - Bike riding
 - Mowing the lawn
 - Building a sand castle
 - Swimming
 - Skate boarding
 - Sledding
 - Building a snowman
 - Planting a garden
 - Visiting a state park
 - Picking up litter
 - Hiking
 - Having a snowball fight
 - Boating
 - Having a picnic
 - Bird watching
 - Fishing
 - Building a snow fort
 - Planting a tree
 - Rock hunting
 - Blowing bubbles
 - Camping
 - Chopping wood
 - Surfing
 - Digging a pond
 - Watching a sunset
 - Feeding the ducks
 - Raking leaves
 - Rock climbing
 - Pulling weeds
 - Picking apples
 - Building a fire
 - Flying a kite
 - IDing animal tracks
 - Doing math with natural materials
 - Cloud watching
 - Collecting seashells
 - Tree climbing
 - Strawberry picking
 - Stomping in puddles
 - Building a shelter
 - IDing animal tracks
 - Looking for constellations
 - Watching wildlife
 - Pulling invasive weeds
 - Making mud pies
 - Taking photos
 - Walking the dog
 - Tossing seed bombs
 - Chasing fireflies
 - Wading in a creek
 - Walking in the rain
 - Skiing
 - Floating bark boats
 - Snow shoeing
 - Maple syrup tapping
 - Mushroom hunting
 - Exploring tide pools
 - Visiting a nature site
 - Shoveling snow
 - Horseback riding
 - Making a butterfly puddler
 - Watching "heat lightning"
 - Skipping rocks
 - Pressing flowers
 - Weaving grapevines
 - Trimming trees & bushes
 - Making snow angels
 - Raising & releasing butterflies
 - Making mushroom spore prints
 - Doing Citizen Science projects like squirrel counts

MY WILD TIMES 2023



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MAKE AS MANY COPIES OF THIS PAGE AS YOU NEED THIS YEAR!

Let's Learn About Mushrooms

This year we're going to learn about two new wild mushrooms in each issue of Wild Kids Magazine. They'll all be fairly common mushrooms that are pretty easy to find and ID.

Don't ever eat wild mushrooms unless an adult who knows how to safely ID mushrooms has cooked it for you!

There are mushrooms that can make you sick and a few that can even kill you. Besides that, you should cook mushrooms before eating them.

We'll be learning about these mushrooms as a first step in identifying them in case you and your grown ups want to start foraging mushrooms and also because it's just cool to know how to identify wild mushrooms! These pages are just the very first step in learning about them.

You don't have to be afraid of mushrooms.

Mushrooms can't make you sick just by touching them. Professor George Wong of the University of Hawaii says, "As deadly as some toxins may be, touching the mushroom is harmless. The harmful toxins in mushrooms must be consumed in order to harm you." Wash your hands after handling wild mushrooms just to be safer, but they cannot hurt you if you don't eat them.

There are lots of wonderful wild mushrooms that don't have any poisonous look-alikes.

Look for these mushrooms first and get to know them.

Mushrooms help the world.

Mushrooms clean up pollution, feed animals, decompose trees, provide us with food & medicine, and much more. They are really cool life forms that we have so much more to learn about!

There are some great books to help you and your grown ups learn more about wild mushrooms.

We'll feature some in upcoming issues of Wild Kids Magazine.

Remember you don't have to pick a wild mushroom to enjoy it.

Take pictures, log it in your nature journal and/or sketch it instead!



ARTIST'S CONK

(*Ganoderma applanatum*)

Artist's Conk mushrooms are so fun! They are called that because artists use them to carve pictures. If you use a sharp stick or pen to carve into them, the marks will turn dark and will be preserved that way. Some people also paint on these mushrooms.

My kids carved funny little headstones out of some small artist's conk mushrooms years ago and one of them is still perched above our stove.



This man carved an artist's conk as an anniversary card for his wife. He told the Concord Observer, "During the years I have been traipsing through the woods, I have always been on the lookout for shelf fungi. When I find the right kind, I will write or draw on its white underside. A prime example is a small shelf fungus I used as a 50th wedding anniversary card for my wife, as shown in the photo."

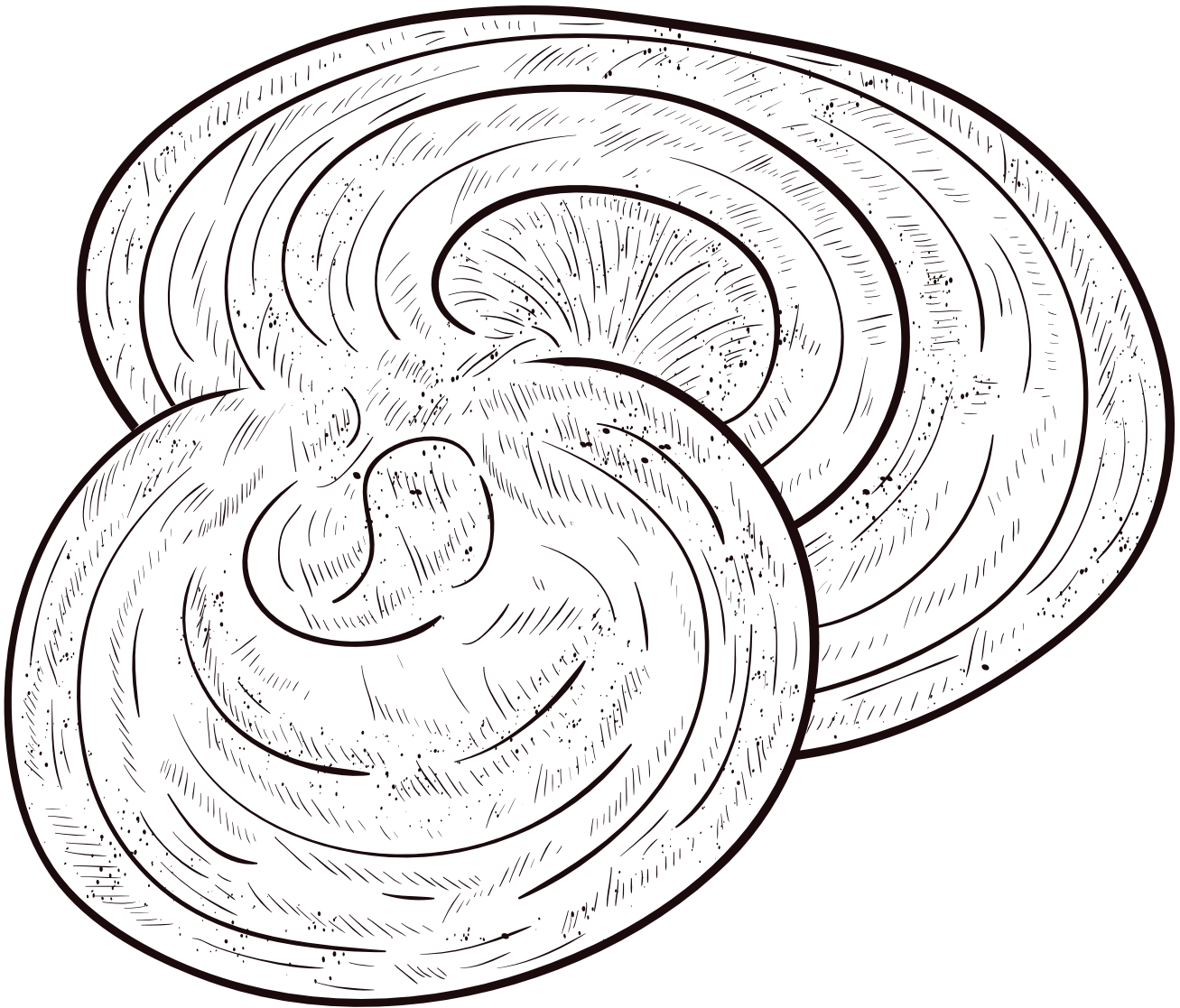


Here are some more tips from Paul:

"Artist's conks are woody and very difficult to break off from the tree or stump where they are growing. In pulling off a shelf fungus, you should be careful not to accidentally bruise the underside, making a mark that can not be removed. You can use a nail or another sharp point to print words or create artistic etchings on its white underside exposing the brown tissue below. In craft fairs I have seen elaborate art work on some shelf fungi.

The secret is to write or draw on the shelf fungus within a day of picking it, because soon after being removed from the tree the the fungus' bottom surface will become very hard. Anything you write or draw on it will last forever, just like our 50-year-old marriage."

ARTIST'S CONK
(*Ganoderma applanatum*)



Traditionally used for art via drawing & carving.

TURKEY TAIL

(*Trametes versicolor*)



Turkey tail mushrooms are some of the most common wild mushrooms. They have no toxic (poisonous) lookalikes but there are other non-poisonous mushrooms that look like them. A lot of people buy turkey tail mushroom powder because of its reported health benefits. It's very expensive even though these mushrooms are so easily found.

Turkey tail mushrooms come in a big range of colors and you can find them any time of the year. Look for them on dead hardwood logs and stumps.

There is a wonderful website called www.mushroomexpert.com that has this great checklist for seeing if you found turkey tail. I recommend looking all through their site!

Totally True Turkey Tail Test

1) Is the pore surface a real pore surface? Like, can you see actual pores?

- Yes: Continue.
- No: See *Stereum ostrea* and other crust fungi.



2) Squint real hard. Would you say there are about 1–3 pores per millimeter (which would make them fairly easy to see), or about 3–8 pores per millimeter (which would make them very tiny)?

- 3–8 per mm: Continue.
- 1–3 per mm: See several other species of *Trametes*.

3) Is the cap conspicuously fuzzy, velvety, or finely hairy (use a magnifying glass or rub it with your thumb)?

- Yes: Continue.
- No: See several other species of *Trametes*.

4) Is the fresh cap whitish to grayish?

- Yes: See *Trametes hirsuta*.
- No: Continue.



5) Does the cap lack starkly contrasting color zones (are the zones merely textural, or do they represent subtle shades of the same color)?

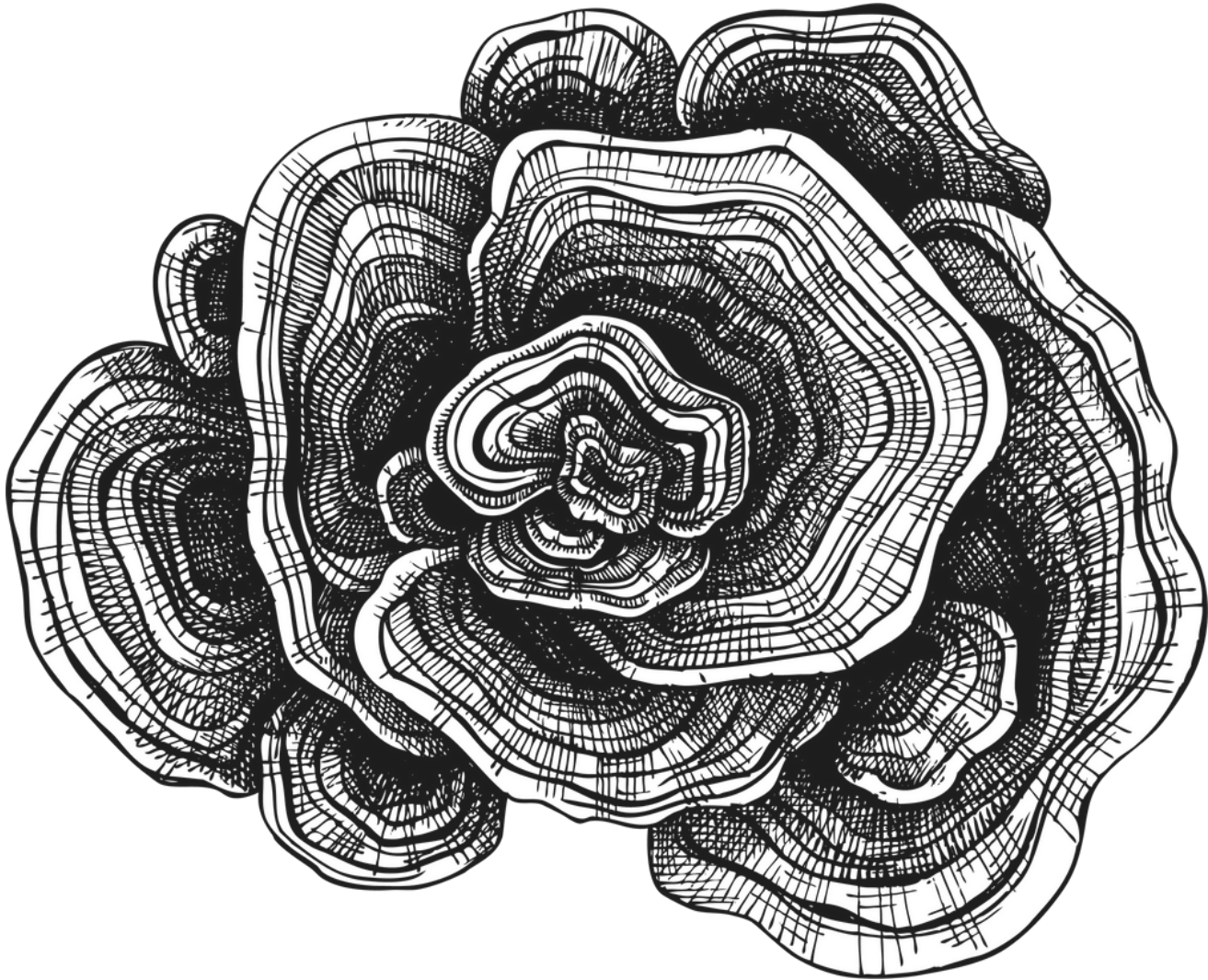
- Yes: See *Trametes pubescens*.
- No: Continue.

6) Is the fresh mushroom rigid and hard, or thin and flexible?

- Rigid and hard: See *Trametes ochracea*.
- Thin and flexible: Totally True Turkey Tail.

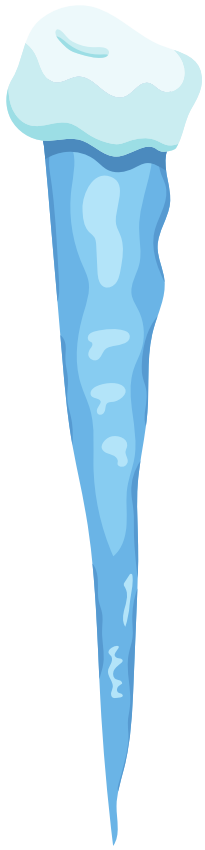


TURKEY TAIL
(*Trametes versicolor*)



Traditionally used for supporting the immune system, improving gut health, reducing inflammation, helping to treat cancer and fighting infections.

*Typically used as medicine in a tea or powder,
or as a medicinal food in soup broths.*



Poems for January

On Snow
Jonathan Swift

A Riddle

From Heaven I fall, though from earth I begin.
No lady alive can show such a skin.
I'm bright as an angel, and light as a feather,
But heavy and dark, when you squeeze me together.
Though candor and truth in my aspect I bear,
Yet many poor creatures I help to insnare.
Though so much of Heaven appears in my make,
The foulest impressions I easily take.
My parent and I produce one another,
The mother the daughter, the daughter the mother.



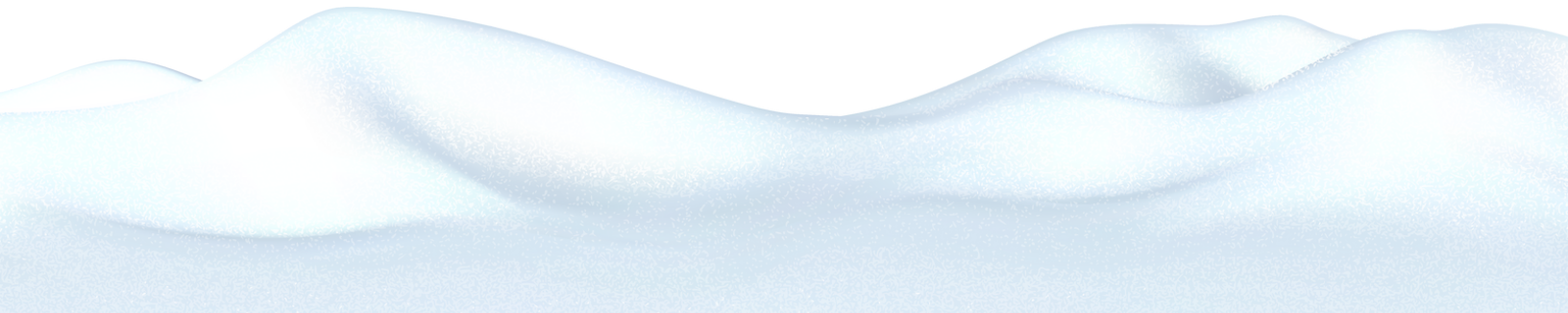
Places
Sara Teasdale

There was a bush with scarlet berries,
And there were hemlocks heaped with snow,
With a sound like surf on long sea-beaches
They took the wind and let it go.

The hills were shining in their samite,
Fold after fold they flowed away;
"Let come what may," your eyes were saying,
"At least we two have had to-day."

Snow
By Charles Bertram Johnson

All day the clouds
Grow cold and fall,
And soft the white fleece shrouds
Field, hill and wall;
And now I know
Why comes the snow:
The bare black places lie
Too near the sky.



January

Nature Journal



Phenology Calendar

Keep track of things you observe in nature that you see this month!
Write in observances like these or draw a picture if you like.

- Snowy owl spotted by highway
- Lady beetle crawling on inside window
- Chickadee call heard
- Rabbit droppings spotted in back yard
- Bald eagles seen flying over open waters

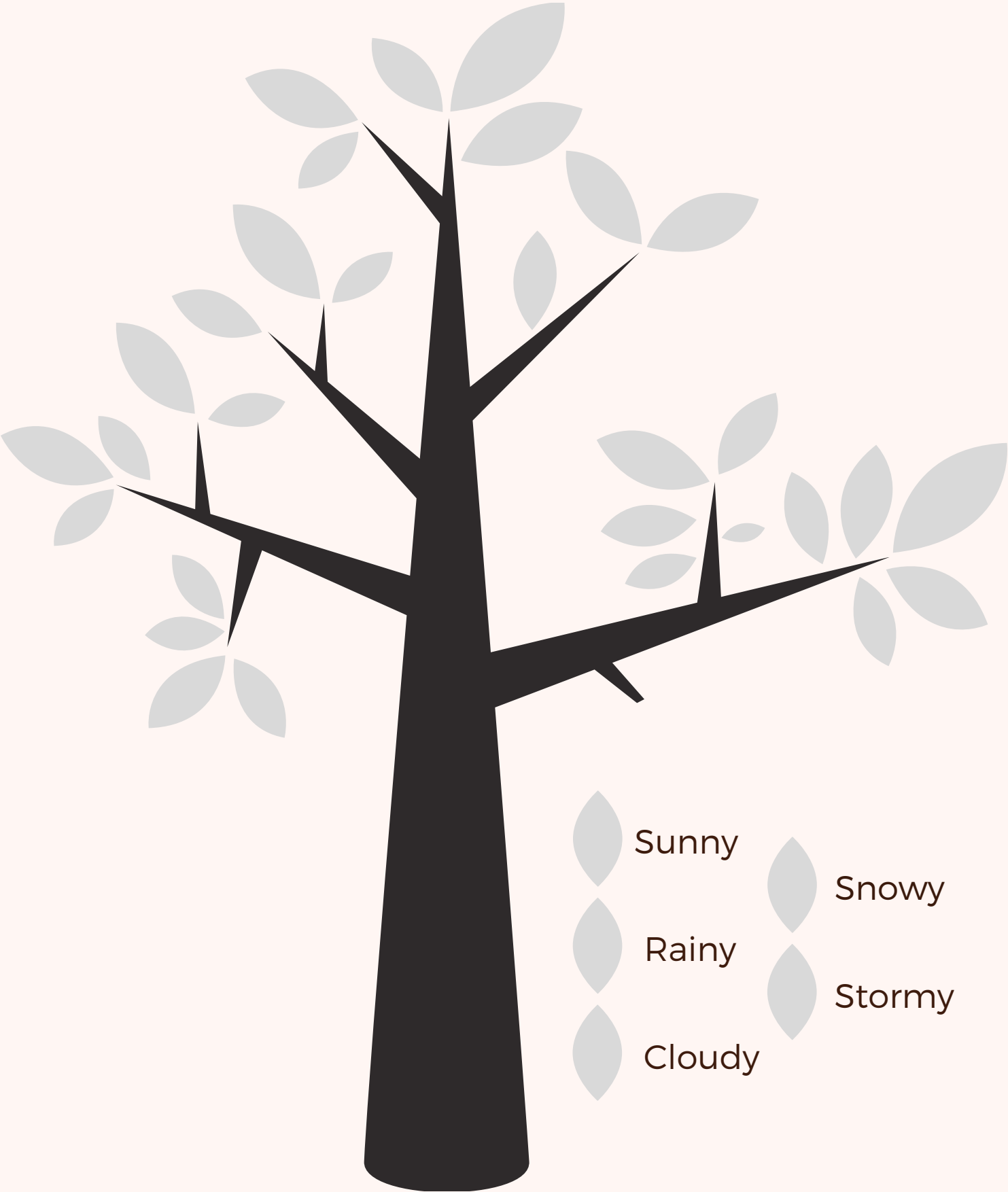


- Green ferns peeking out of the snow
- Woodpeckers eating bugs on trees
- Deer tracks in snow at state park
- Eight wild turkeys county by highway
- Record high temperature for this day

JANUARY 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January Weather Tree



January Bird List

Birds spotted this month

January Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

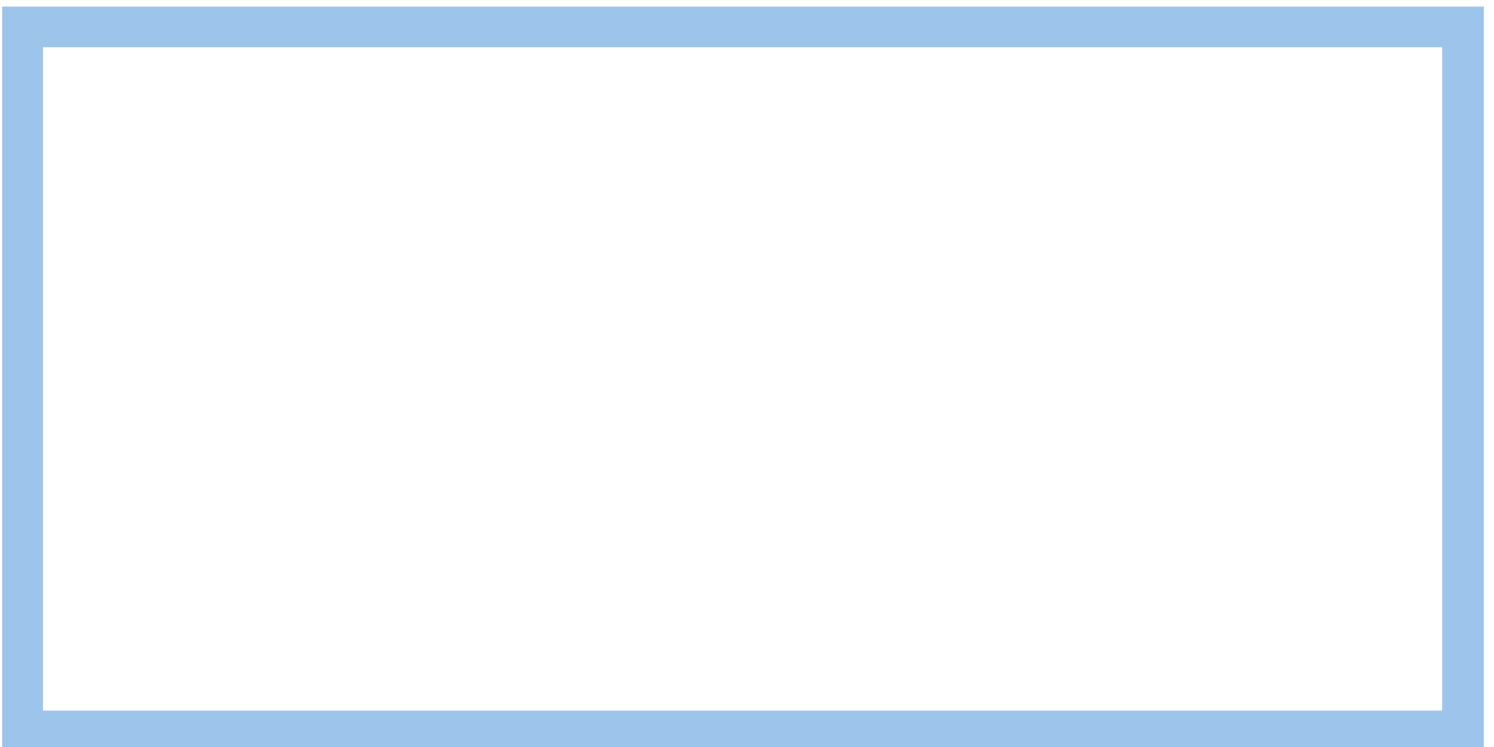
January Nature Notes

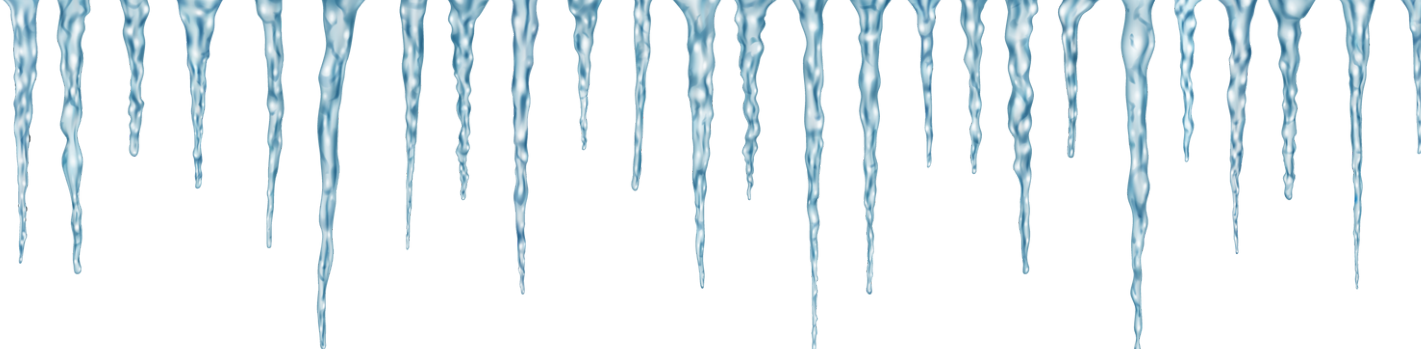
Record any interesting discoveries here -- plants you identify, foods you forage, outdoor activities, cool nature projects, nature books read, or just notes about what it's like outside this week!

Week 1 Sketches & Observations



Week 2 Sketches & Observations





Week 3 Sketches & Observations

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick blue border, intended for sketches and observations for Week 3.

Week 4 Sketches & Observations

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick blue border, intended for sketches and observations for Week 4.

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.

Send your submissions, letters or to alicia.bayer@gmail.com