

November 2023

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS



**Nature
Toys to Make
& Gather**

**November
Nature Notes
& Sky Wheel**

**How to
Whistle with
an Acorn Cap**

**Earth Star &
Bird's Nest
Mushrooms**

**Plus
Seasonal
Activities, Poetry,
Nature Journal
Pages & More**

From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Happy November!

What are you hoping to do in nature this month?

It's finally getting cold here in Minnesota, and we had our first real snow the other day. We're still hoping to get some hiking in and some late season foraging. We usually do a lot of nature photography this time of year too!

Our 23 year old's fiance has been visiting for a month from West Virginia. It's been fun to show her all the parts of Minnesota that we love and to hear about her life in "the holler" (a valley between hills or mountains). I love how nature is so different in different places, and there's so much to love wherever you go.

Some of our family's favorite places to visit for their nature are the Badlands in South Dakota, Acadia National Park in Maine, Big Talbot Island in Florida, the Upper Peninsula (UP) in Michigan, Banff National Park in Canada (a place my kids have never been to yet but is one of my favorites), plus so many more!

I grew up traveling (and living) all over the country. Sometimes it was hard to move so much but I loved getting to know so many different places, from Arkansas to California to Ohio and so many more. Nature was always my favorite part of wherever we went. Do you have favorite places to explore nature?

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



Alicia



A West Virginia holler

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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Find lots more information and back issues at
www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids

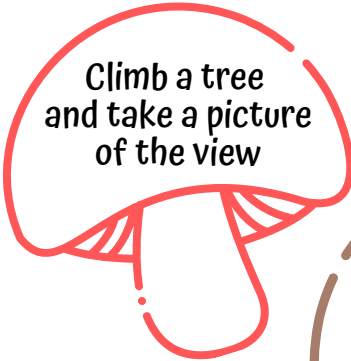
Go Wild in November

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH


Color in the ones you do!



Look for three wild mushrooms to do spore prints of



Climb a tree and take a picture of the view




Check out a big pile of fun nature books from the library



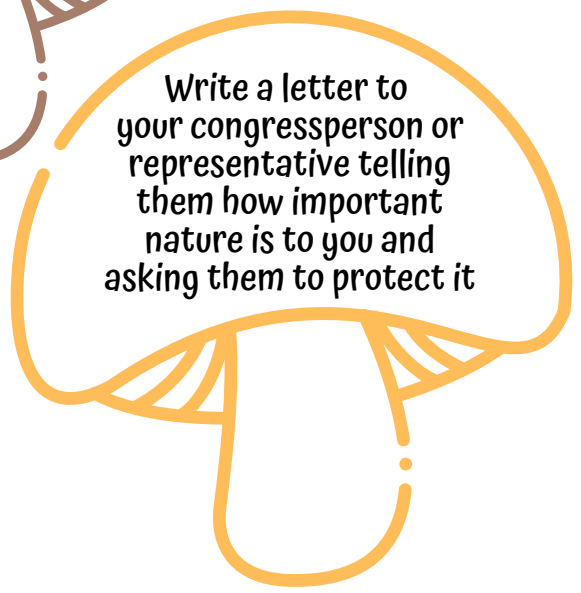
Go outside with colored pencils or pastels and draw the landscape



Pretend to be a nature host and take a video of yourself teaching your audience about something wild



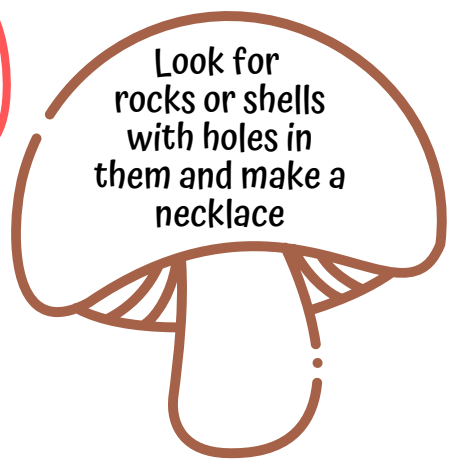
Go outside and write down the first 10 nature sounds you hear




Write a letter to your congressperson or representative telling them how important nature is to you and asking them to protect it



Go geocaching



Look for rocks or shells with holes in them and make a necklace



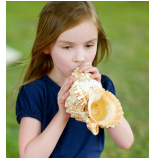
Take pictures of silhouettes of different trees against the sky -- can you tell the type of tree by its silhouette?

Natural Toys to Make and Gather



Nature provides us with so many cool toys! Here are a few to try...

- Shells make scoops, nesting toys and manipulatives that are naturally beautiful with fun textures. You can even use conch shells for horns!



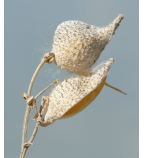
- You can make blocks & game pieces by sawing thin tree branches and then sanding the edges.



- Acorns and other natural items can become fun dolls.



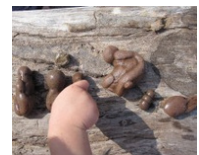
- Milkweed pods can be used as boats in the bath or stream. You can also have fun popping them open and scattering the super-soft and fluffy seeds to the wind before bringing the pods inside.



- River rocks are wonderful math manipulatives and can be used for homemade games.



- Concretions can be found in some areas like Lake Superior, North Dakota and California. These cool rock formations are great fun to find and to use for play.



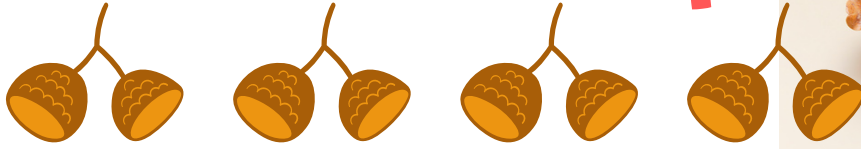
- Driftwood often comes in shapes that look like so many things! Gather some and decide what each piece is. They can change from day to day, too, like becoming a flute one time and a sword the next.



- Nature tables are great fun. Simply set up a bowl, basket or tabletop filled with natural items like feathers, pine cones, rocks, wool, a wasp nest, and so on. Add a magnifying glass so you can look at them up close. You can also use them to make seasonal crafts.

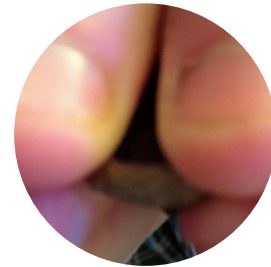


How to Whistle with an Acorn Cap



Did you know you can whistle with an acorn cap? It's surprisingly loud and quite fun once you get the hang of it! Here's how...

Put your thumb knuckles over the acorn cap in a V shape about 4/5 up the acorn, being sure to press so no air can escape except in the V between your thumbs.



Put your lips over your thumb knuckles and then blow hard.



You'll probably have to experiment with how far you hold your thumbs apart and exactly where you blow. Keep practicing and you'll get it!

Fun fact: Smaller acorn caps have higher pitches.

No acorns? Use a bottle cap!



NOVEMBER NATURE NOTES

EACH DAY THIS MONTH, WRITE OR DRAW SOMETHING TO REMEMBER FROM NATURE THAT DAY LIKE SEEING A HAWK, GOING TO THE STATE PARK, HAVING THE FIRST SNOW OR FINDING A WILD MUSHROOM.

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 |

Large empty rectangular box for additional notes or a summary.

NOVEMBER SKYWHEEL

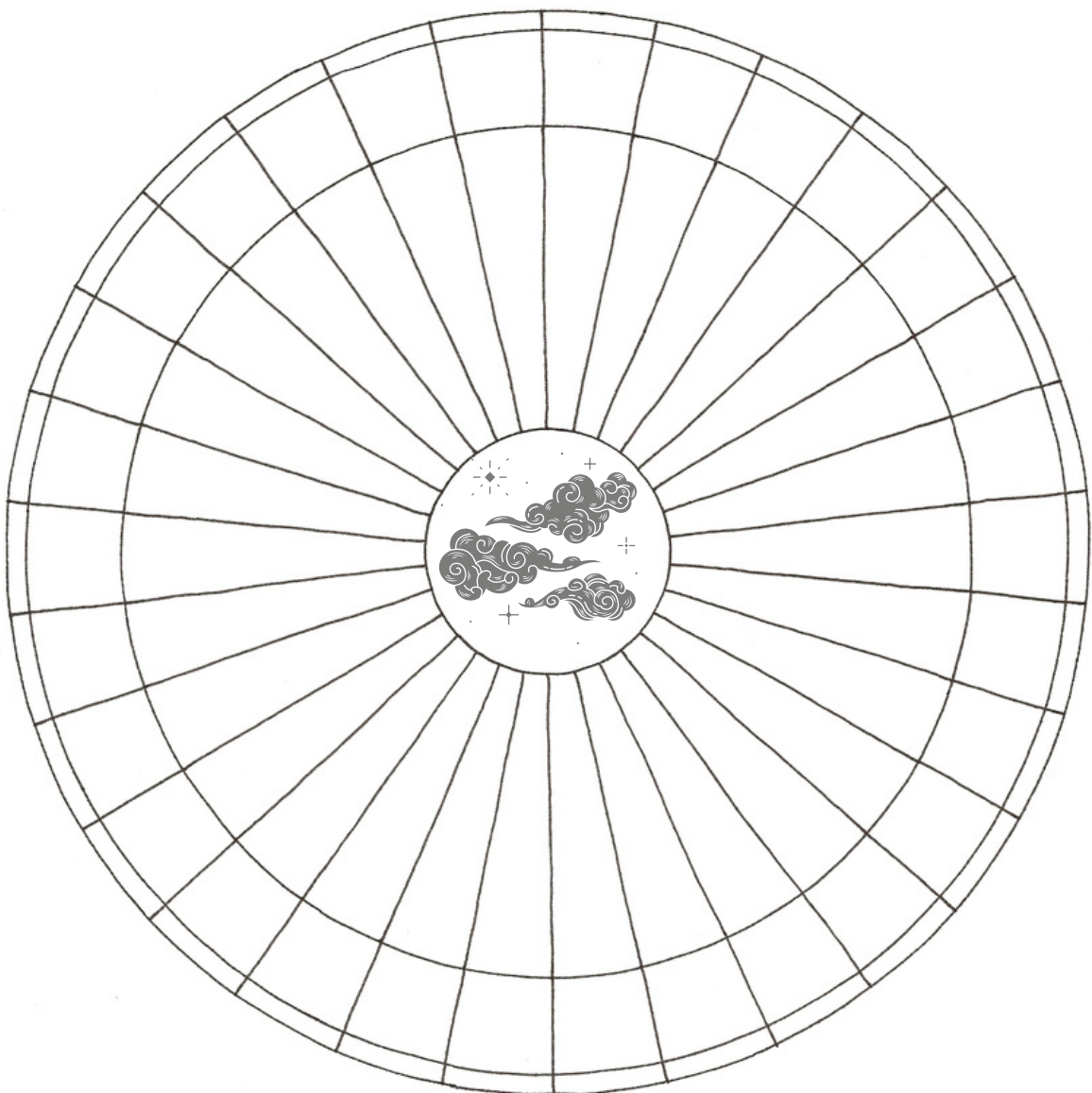
Make a picture record of your observations of the sky in November!

Draw, paint or color how the sky looks each day this month.

Is it cloudy? Gray? Are there big fluffy clouds? Did you see lightning, rain, fog or a rainbow?

At the end of the month, look back and see what trends you can see for the month.

It's art, math and science!



Earth Star Mushrooms

By Daryl Hrdlicka

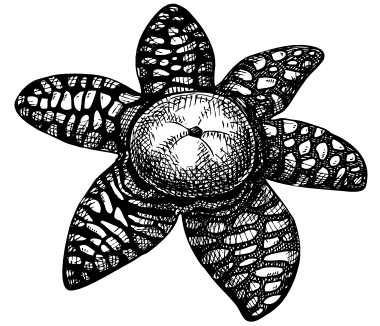
Earth stars look like they belong at the bottom of the ocean!

Their species name is *Geastrales* ("Gea" means earth, "astrales" means "stars").

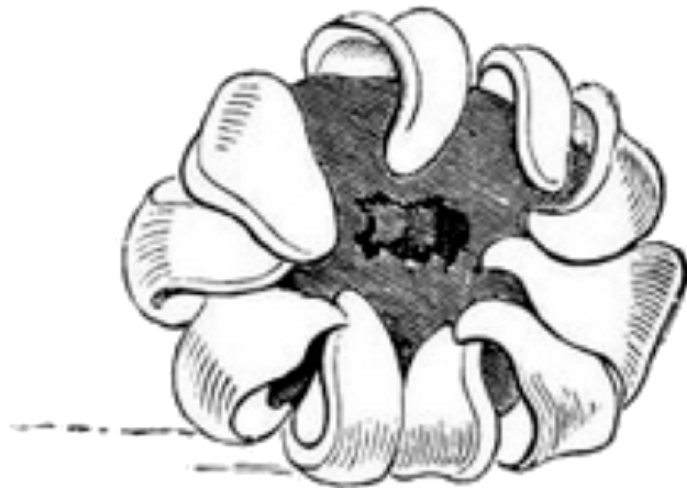
They are a kind of "puff ball" fungus, and grow on wood mulch and in woods with lots of leaf litter. We have even found them in the wood mulch of a playground after lots of rain! They are found around the world.

In dry weather the "petals" curl up and protect the spore sac, but when it gets wet they open up into a star shape so rain and animals can disperse the spores.

They're not edible, but many Native American tribes used them as medicine, to help stop bleeding. Other people around the world used them for other medicinal purposes (mostly externally). They are quite fun to find and photograph!



EARTH STAR MUSHROOM
(*Geastrales*)



Bird's Nest Mushrooms

By Daryl Hrdlicka

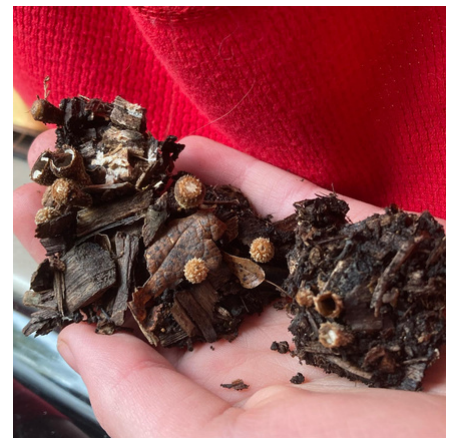
"Bird's Nest" fungi (Nidulariaceae) are one of the coolest mushrooms you'll ever see!

They have several "eggs" inside each "nest." These "eggs" are the spore cases. When rain falls into the "nest," the spores are washed out and scattered.

They're tiny (about 1/4" across) and grow on wood mulch and plant debris. They grow in large clusters, sometimes hundreds in a group.

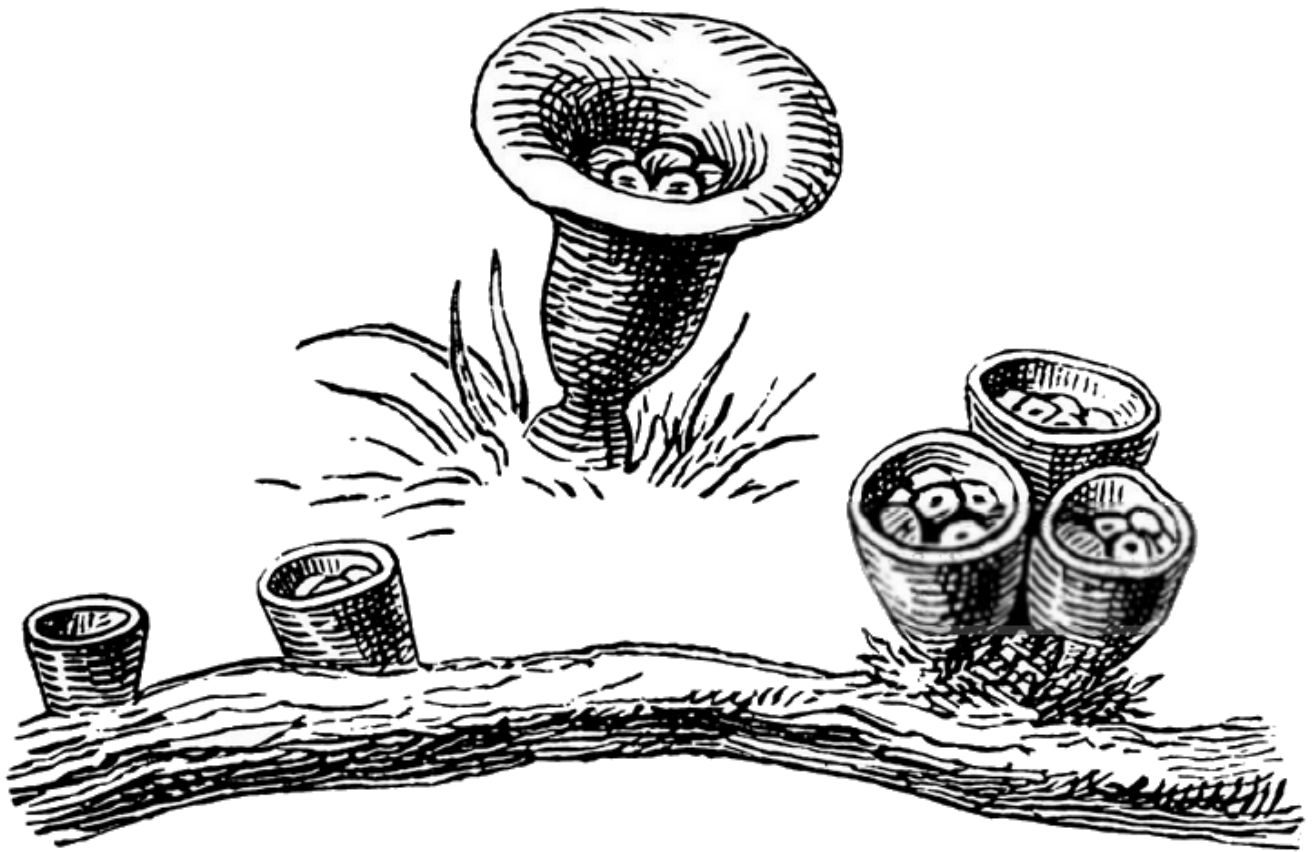
We found some growing in wood mulch in a playground last week after lots of rain.

They're not edible, but not poisonous. They're actually related to button and oyster mushrooms.



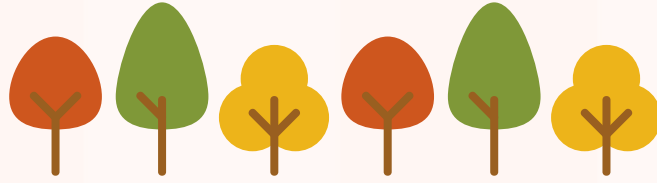
BIRD'S NEST MUSHROOMS

(Nidulariaceae)



November Poetry

A November Day
by Mary B. C. Slade



I come, a sad November day,
Gray clad from foot to head;
A few late leaves of yellow birch,
A few of maple red.

And, should you look, you might descry
Some wee ferns, hiding low,
Or late Fall dandelions shy,
Where cold winds cannot blow.

And then, you see, I'm not all gray;
A little golden light
Shines on a sad November day,
A promise for the night.

For though gray-clad, in soft gray mist,
Floating on gray-cloud wing,
I know that I the way prepare
For brightest days of Spring.

And though witch-hazel's golden flowers
Are all the blooms I know,
They promise—so do I—the hours
When sweetest Mayflowers grow.

November Night
by Adelaide Crapsey

Listen...
With faint dry sound,
Like steps of passing ghosts,
The leaves, frost-crisp'd, break from the trees
And fall.

November
By Elizabeth Stoddard

Much have I spoken of the faded leaf;
Long have I listened to the wailing wind,
And watched it ploughing through the heavy clouds;
For autumn charms my melancholy mind.

When autumn comes, the poets sing a dirge:
The year must perish; all the flowers are dead;
The sheaves are gathered; and the mottled quail
Runs in the stubble, but the lark has fled!

Still, autumn ushers in the Christmas cheer,
The holly-berries and the ivy-tree:
They weave a chaplet for the Old Year's heir;
These waiting mourners do not sing for me!

I find sweet peace in depths of autumn woods,
Where grow the ragged ferns and roughened moss;
The naked, silent trees have taught me this,—
The loss of beauty is not always loss!

November
by Ruby Archer

Our twilight month November is,
The evening of the year.
The brilliant summer noontide left
A pallor soft and clear.

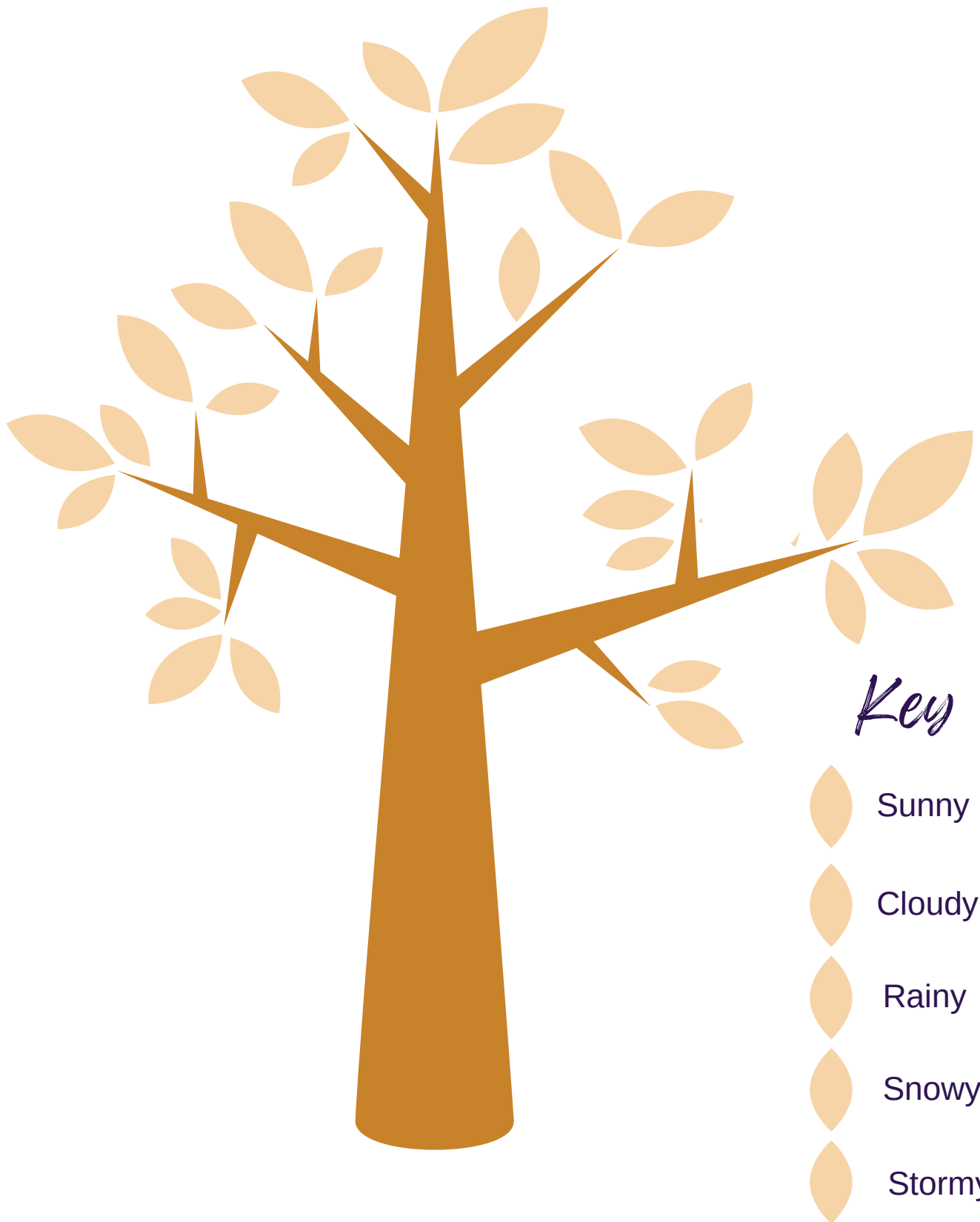
Dame Winter brings with quiet grace
Her curtains all of snow,
And pins them deftly into place
With boughs of mistletoe.

My Nature Journal

November



November Weather Tree



November Bird List

Birds spotted this month

November Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

November 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 _____

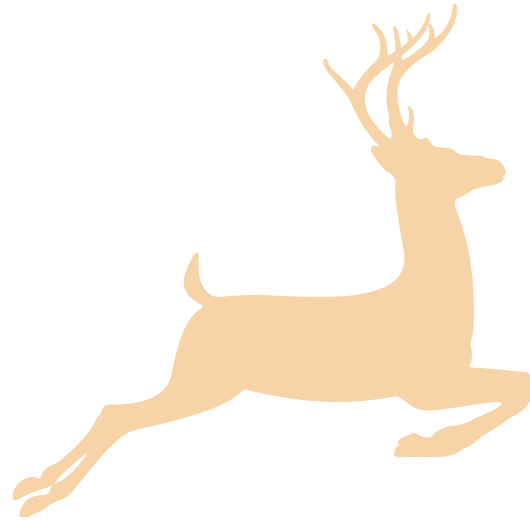
LOOKALIKES & HOW TO POSITIVELY ID:

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.