

November 2024

# WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

A child wearing a grey knit hat and a dark jacket is leaning over a campfire. The fire is burning brightly in a stone fire pit. In the background, other people are visible, and the sky is a warm orange color from the setting or rising sun. The scene is outdoors, likely in a natural setting.

**Make  
a Feather  
Paintbrush**

**Fun Vintage  
Flower & Bird  
Book**

**Osage Oranges  
& Autumn  
Olive**

**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 is just starting to get cold and to snow a bit here in Minnesota. There are a few more plants I'm hoping to harvest from the garden, and we may go hiking and look for some late season mushrooms to forage. Now that it's cooler again, our family is going to go back to our "hiking Monday" tradition of taking weekly family hikes in nearby parks.

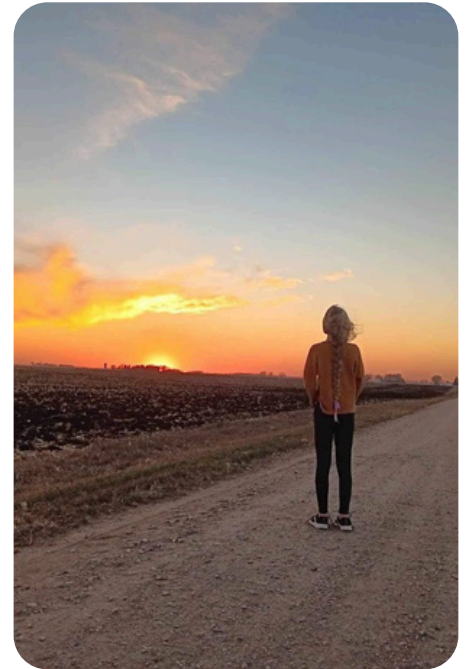
I'm still working on a book that I'm writing about foraging for fun art supplies, so the kids and I will be having more fun with that. We found some wild clay we'll be playing with and we froze and dried some berries for ink that we can change the colors of by adding different things. We made feather paint-brushes last summer and we'll be painting more with those. We have the directions on how to make them in this month's magazine.

American Thanksgiving is this month, and we'll be having some wild foods for our dinner like acorn muffins, wild mushroom gravy & elderberry lemonade.

The cold November weather is also perfect for sipping hot teas, including ones we foraged or grew and then dried. Some of our favorite herbs and leaves that we use for tea blends are elderflowers, wild mint, raspberry leaves, nettles, catmint, lemon balm, chocolate mint, anise hyssop and dried mulberries. Other wild plants that people really like for tea include bee balm, red clover, ground ivy, pine, spruce tips, chamomile and pineapple weed, just to name a few.

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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Find lots more information and back issues at  
[www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids](http://www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids)

# Go Wild in November

## 10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Start a shadow photo collection, taking photos of the shadows of trees, rocks and other natural items

Collect some dried flowers, seed pods, sticks and other plants and arrange them in a jar or can for a decoration

Find a plant that has seeds that you can collect and try growing them in a pot inside

Paint a painting outside with mud

Collect a variety of soft rocks in different colors and try drawing with them on a light or dark surface like a driveway or boulder

Sit absolutely quietly outside for 10 minutes and listen for all the different sounds you can hear

Collect water from 5 different sources (puddles, streams, ocean...) in bottles and let it settle to see how different they look

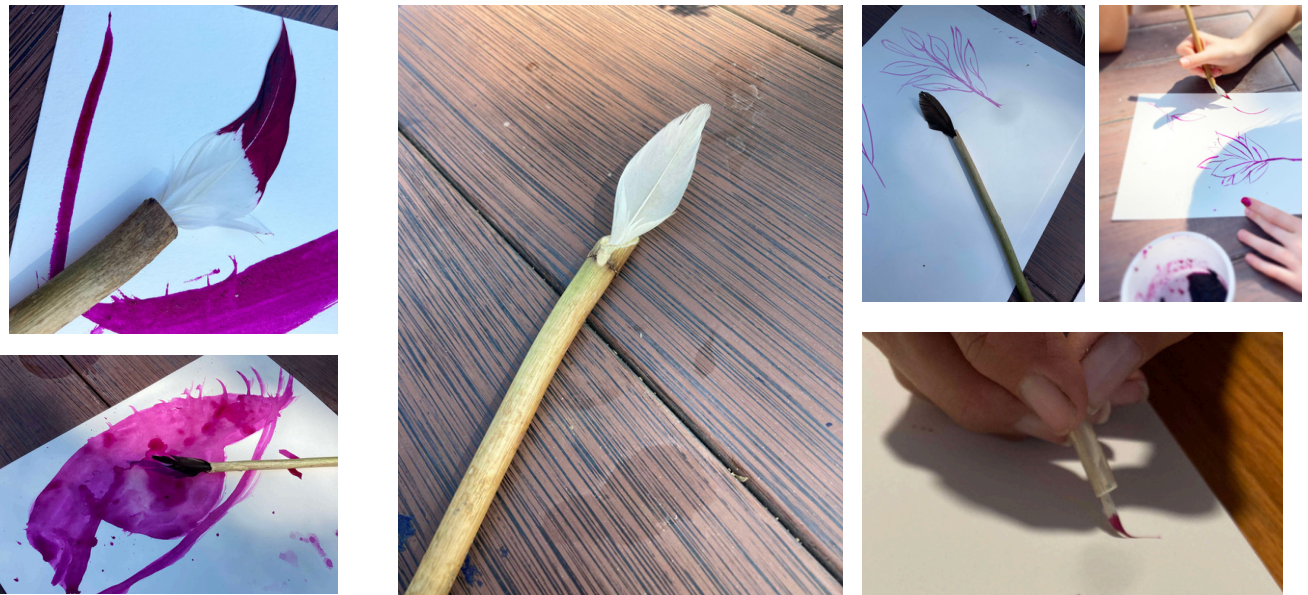
Make a nature challenge course outside using things like logs, sticks and pine cones with sections to balance, jump, climb and throw

Gather fallen or pruned branches and tie them with twine into stars, snowflakes or other shapes to decorate outside

Go geocaching



# Make a Feather Paintbrush



You can easily make a paintbrush with a feather and a hollow stick or stem, like the ways people did long ago. Here's all you do.

Gather a feather. (Remember that some feathers are illegal to gather or own in most of the world. See the next section if you want to learn about why that is and what feathers are legal) Also find a hollow stem or stick to use as the handle, about the length of a pencil. There are lots of hollow stems this time of year in gardens and nature like dock and daylily stems, but you can also just use a stick.

There are two ways to make your feather paintbrush now.

To make a fine tip paintbrush for painting details or writing: Cut off the bottom hollow part of the quill, about an inch long. If it's not nice and hollow, cut off the very tip so you can see right into it. Then cut off the top few inches of the feather, and push that feather part through the hollow quill end to gather it into a point.



Or you can just cut the tip of the feather off and leave it full. Either way, then push the feather into your hollow stem. It should wedge in easily. If you don't have a hollow stem, you can wrap the feather around the end of your stick with yarn or tape. If you want a really full brush, you can even put several feathers in one paintbrush. Now just find some paint (we used pokeberry ink) and paint!





(Reprinted from the February 2021 issue of Wild Kids Magazine)

# Why Is It Illegal to Keep Feathers?

Imagine you're walking along your neighborhood and you see a pretty bird feather on the sidewalk. You pick it up and take it home to show your family. Did you know that in countries like the United States and Japan, you've just broken the law?

It sounds crazy, but yes, it is illegal to collect feathers and take them home, even if you find them lying on the ground. There's actually a really good reason though! It's to protect birds.

About a hundred years ago, many birds were hunted almost to extinction to make fancy hats for ladies.

Back then, it was very fashionable to wear huge hats that were covered in feathers. Billions of birds were killed to make these hats, until the governments in many countries stepped in and made it a law to own feathers from birds like songbirds and birds of prey.

Lots of people think it's okay to own a feather from a bird if you just found it, but that's also against the law. Why? Because many people would kill birds and then just lie and say they found them already dead. This was especially true for birds like eagles whose feathers could be worth a lot of money.

Yes, even if you find a dead owl on the road, it's a federal crime to take its feathers home. To protect these birds we are all just supposed to leave their feathers alone.

This doesn't mean that the police are going to storm your house if you bring home a blue jay's feather that you found on the street! But it does mean that it's technically against the law to own it, and that's one reason many nature books caution you against collecting feathers. That's also why if you want to buy feathers for crafts, you can only buy feathers from birds that are legal to raise on farms or to hunt, such as peacocks and some ducks, or some other birds that are not protected (see the next page for more on those).

These laws do not apply to Native American people who use feathers for religious purposes. In the U.S., the Eagle Feather Law allows the collection of Golden Eagle and Bald Eagle feathers for religious purposes by Native Americans who have certifiable ancestry and are enrolled in a tribe.



**It's not just feathers that are illegal to collect!  
The law also includes eggs and nests.**

# LEGAL Feathers

Here are feathers it's legal to collect and to use in crafts:



- Feathers from pet birds like parrots, doves and finches
- Feathers from legally farmed birds like chickens
- Feathers from non-native birds like pigeons, house sparrows, European starlings, peacocks, ringneck pheasants & Eurasian collared doves (as long as they are not endangered)
- Feathers from game birds like wild turkeys & pheasants (in some states you still need a hunting permit to collect some of these feathers though)
- Feathers from most wild ducks & geese (there are exceptions like mallards)
- Purchased feathers (*Search for people on sites like Etsy who sell naturally molted feathers that are ethically obtained*)
- Feathers collected by educators who have a permit to use them for educational purposes

*"The possession of feathers and other parts of native North American birds without a permit is prohibited by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). This protects wild birds by preventing their killing by collectors and the commercial trade in their feathers, and extends to all feathers, regardless of how they were obtained. There is no exemption for molted feathers or those taken from road- or window-killed birds."*

~U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



# A FUN LITTLE HISTORIC RHYMING BOOK

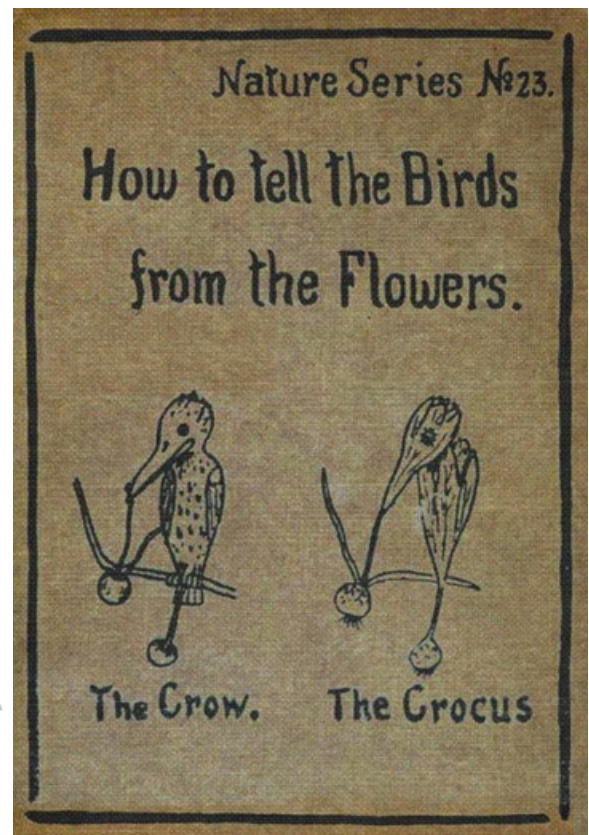
How to Tell the Birds from the Flowers  
was written by Robert Williams Wood  
over 100 years ago, in 1907.

Mr. Wood wrote the book and illustrated it  
with drawings he cut into wood.

It's a fun (and silly!) way to learn about birds and plants!

## Author's Apology.

Not every one is always able  
To recognize a vegetable,  
For some are guided by tradition,  
While others use their intuition,  
And even I make no pretense  
Of having more than common sense;  
Indeed these strange homologies  
Are in most flornithologies,  
And I have freely drawn upon  
The works of Gray and Audubon,  
Avoiding though the frequent blunders  
Of those who study Nature's wonders.





Burd.



Bird

### The Bird and the Burdock.

Who is there who has never heard,  
About the Burdock and the Bird?  
And yet how very very few,  
Discriminate between the two,  
While even Mr. Burbank can't  
Transform a Bird into a Plant!



Burbank.

- 1 -



### The Clover. The Plover.

The Plover and the Clover can be told  
apart with ease,  
By paying close attention to the  
habits of the Bees,  
For ento-molo-gists aver, the Bee  
can be in Clover,  
While ety-molo-gists concur, there  
is no B in Plover.

- 2 -



The Crow.



The Crocus.

Some are unable, as you know,  
To tell the CROCUS from the Crow;  
The reason why is just because  
They are not versed in Nature's laws.  
The noisy, cawing Crows all come,  
Obedient to the Cro' custom,  
A large Crow Caw-cus to convoke.  
You never hear the Crocus croak!

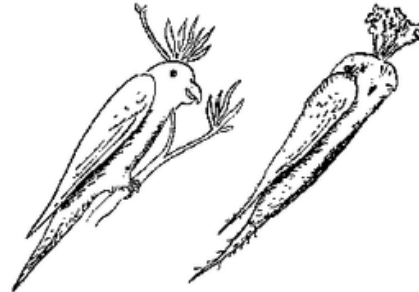
- 3 -



### The Rue. The Rooster.

Of Rooster the rudiment clearly  
is "Roo".  
And the bird from the plant  
very probably grew.  
You can easily tell them apart  
without fail,  
By merely observing the Rue  
lacks de-tail.

- 4 -



### The Parrot. The Carrot.

The Parrot and the Carrot we may  
easily confound,  
They're very much alike in looks  
and similar in sound,  
We recognize the Parrot by his  
clear articulation,  
For Carrots are unable to engage  
in conversation.

- 5 -



### The Pea. The Pewee.

To tell the Pewee from the Pea,  
Requires great per-spi-cac-ity.  
Here in the pod we see the Pea,  
While perched close by is the Pewee;  
The Pea he hears the Pewee peep,  
While Pewee sees the wee Pea weep.  
There'll be but little time to see,  
How Pewee differs from the Pea.

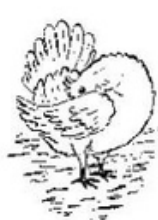
- 6 -



### The Pelican. The Panicle.

The Panicle and Pelican  
Have often been confused;  
The letters which spell Pelican  
In Panicle are used.  
You never need confound the two,  
There are many ways of telling;  
The simplest thing that one can do,  
Is to observe the spelling.

- 7 -



### The Hen. The Lichen.

The Lichens lie on rocks and bark,  
They look somewhat like Hens:  
Hens lay, they lie, we may remark,  
A difference of tense.

- 8 -



### The Hawk. The Hollyhock.

To recognize this Bird-of-Prey,  
The broody Hen you should survey;  
She takes her Chick on daily walks,  
Among the neighboring Hollyhocks,  
While with the Hawk association,  
Is quite beyond her toleration.

- 9 -

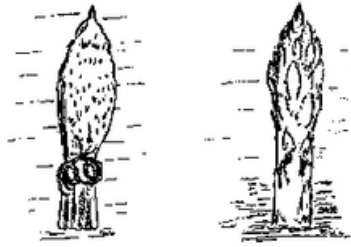




The Cowbird. The Cowslip.

Growing in mires, in gold attired,  
The Cowslip has been much admired,  
Altho' its proper name, we're told,  
Is really the Marsh Marigold;  
The Cow Bird picture, I suspect,  
Is absolutely incorrect,  
We make such errors now and then,  
A sort of cow slip of the pen.

- 10 -



A Sparrow. Asparagus.

The Sparrow, from flying, is quite  
out of breath,  
In fact he has worked himself  
almost to death,  
While the lazy Asparagus, —  
— so it is said, —  
Spends all of his time in the  
'sparagus bed.

- 11 -



The Tern. The Turnip.

To tell the Turnip from the Tern,  
A thing which everyone should learn,  
Observe the Tern up in the air,  
See how he turns, — and now compare  
Him with this inert vegetable,  
Who thus to turn is quite unable,  
For he is rooted to the spot,

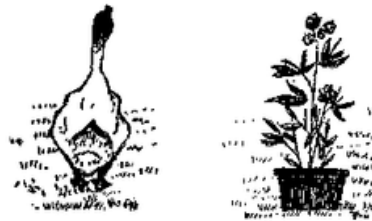
- 12 -

While as we see the Tern is not:  
He is not always doomed to be  
Thus bound to earth e-tern-ally,  
For "Cooked to a turn may be inferred,  
To change the Turnip to the Bird.



Observe the Turnip in the pot,  
The Tern is glad that he is not!

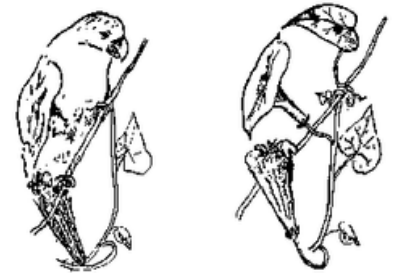
- 13 -



The Ole Gander. The Oleander.

The Gander loves to promenade  
Around the farmer's poultry-yard,  
While, as we see, the Oleander  
Is quite unable to meander.

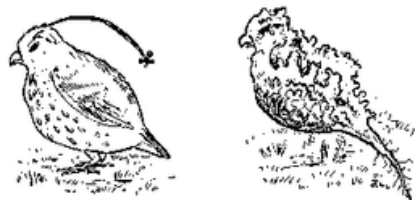
- 14 -



The Blue Mountain Lory. The Blue Morning Glory.

The Blue Mountain Lory spends most  
of his time  
In climbing about in a tropical clime;  
We therefore our efforts need only  
confine,  
To minutely observing the climb  
of the Vine.

- 15 -



The Quail. The Kale.

The California Quail is said  
To have a tail upon his head,  
While contrary-wise we style the Kale,  
A cabbage head upon a tail.  
It is not hard to tell the two,  
The Quail commences with a queue.

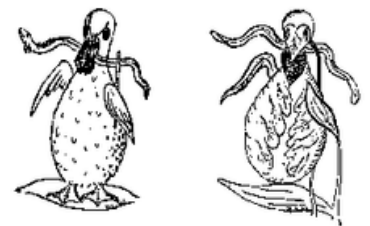
- 16 -



The Pecan. The Toucan.

Very few can  
Tell the Toucan  
From the Pecan —  
Here's a new plan:  
To take the Toucan from the tree,  
Requires immense agil-i-tee,  
While any one can pick with ease  
The Pecans from the Pecan trees:  
It's such an easy thing to do,  
That even the Toucan he can too.

- 17 -



The Auk. The Orchid.

We seldom meet, when out to walk,  
Either the Orchid or the Auk;  
The Auk indeed is only known  
To dwellers in the Auktic zone,  
While Orchids can be found in legions,  
Within the equatorial regions.  
The graceful Orchid on its stalk,  
Resembles so the awkward Auk;

- 18 -

'Tis plain we must some means discover,  
To tell the two from one another:  
The obvious difference, to be sure,  
Is merely one of temperature.

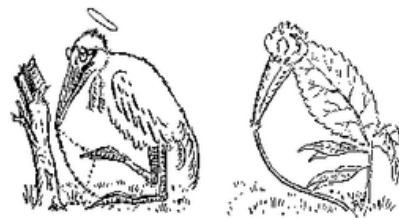


For Eskimos, perhaps, the Auk  
Performs the duties of the Stork.



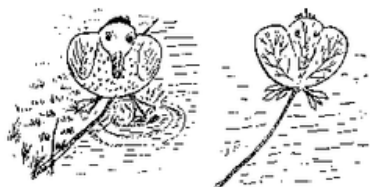
The Cat-bird. The Cat-nip.

The Cat-bird's call resembles that,  
Emitted by the Pussy Cat,  
While Cat-nip, growing by the wall,  
Is never known to caterwaul:  
Its odor though attracts the Kits,  
And throws them in Catnription fits.



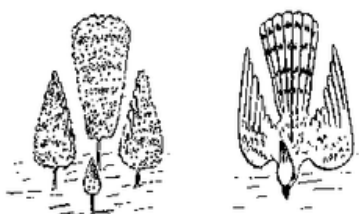
The Ibis. The 'Ibiscus.

The sacred Ibis tells his beads,  
And gravely from his prayer-book reads;  
The Ibis therefore we may say,  
Is classified a bird-of-prey,  
'Ibiscus' we have heard related,  
The "Crimson-Eye" is designated;  
Their difference is plain indeed,  
The flower is red, the bird can read.



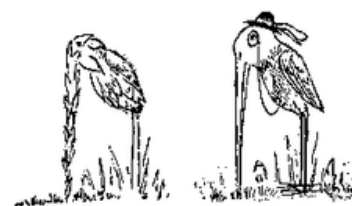
The Butter-ball. The Butter-cup.

The little Butter-cup can sing,  
From morn 'til night like anything;  
The quacking of the Butter-ball,  
Cannot be called a song at all.  
We thus the flower may learn to know,  
Its song is reproduced below.



The Bay The Jay.

The Blue-Jay, as we plainly see,  
Resembles much the green Bay tree:  
The difference between the two,  
Is ob-vi-ous-ly one of hue.  
Though this is not the only way,  
To tell the Blue-Jay from the Bay.



The Pipe. The Snipe.

Observe the common Indian Pipe,  
Likewise the high-bred English Snipe,  
Who is distinguished, as we see,  
By his superior pedigree.



The Roc The Shamrock.

Observe how peacefully the Cows  
Among the little Shamrocks browse,  
In contrast with their actions frantic  
When they perceive the Roc gigantic;  
We need but watch their occupation,  
And seek no other explanation.



The Lark. The Larkspur.

The Larkspur's likeness to the Lark  
Is surely worthy of remark,  
Although to see it we require  
The aid of a small magnifier,  
Which circumstance of course implies,  
Their difference is one of size.

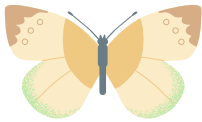


Puffin. Nuffin.

Upon this cake of ice is perched  
The paddle-footed Puffin:  
To find his double we have  
But have discovered - Nuffin!



# 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

# Autumn Olive

(Autumnberry)  
(*Elaeagnus umbellata*)



Autumn Olive is a shrub that's originally from Asia but it has become very common throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. While it can be harmful for nature like other invasive plants, it does have some ways we can use it.

A lot of people forage autumn olive berries. They use the tangy berries for syrups, jams, fruit leather and even an alternative to cranberry sauce. The berries ripen at very different times from bush to bush, so there tends to be a long season for foraging. The berries also taste a little different from bush to bush, so some foragers taste from a bush first to see if they like those before collecting. Like lots of fruits, they get sweeter when they are riper and after a frost.

Autumn olive is also called autumnberry. There is another bush called Russian Olive but that is not the same shrub. It is also sometimes confused with honeysuckle and some other shrubs with red berries. If you forage for autumn olive berries, make sure you learn how to tell them from others (as we always do when foraging any plant).

Autumn olive berries are small, red and speckled, with one seed in the middle of each berry. The back side of the leaves look silvery.



Birds like autumn olive berries too but a single plant can produce up to 80 pounds of fruit and up to 200,000 seeds, so feel free to forage all you like! There will be plenty for wildlife and you'll be helping to keep it under control.



AUTUMN OLIVE  
(*Elaeagnus umbellata*)



# Osage Orange

## *Maclura pomifera*



Have you ever seen an osage orange? They grow in lots of places around the world now, and sometimes grocery stores sell them in the fall to ward off spiders (which they don't really do). Florists use them to look like brains in Halloween arrangements sometimes too, because they are so funny looking. They are not edible, but they have an interesting history.

Osage oranges got their name from the fact that people in the Osage tribe used their wood for bow making, and the bark of the tree was a bright orange. Their wood is very strong and also very pliable (bendable), which made it excellent for making bows. Some people also call them hedge apples, even though they are not oranges or apples. In some places, people also call them monkey balls!



In the past, farmers used to plant osage oranges all around their property like barbed wire fences. They are thorny and they made a great barrier. In the 1800s, an Illinois College biology professor described those fences as "horse high, bull strong, and pig tight." They were also used for fence posts and firewood because they're very strong and burn a long time.

Osage oranges are native to the South-Central United States and parts of Europe, but they have escaped to grow far beyond their native range. In some places, they can be invasive. They can be as big a threat to civilization as to other plants, since their big strong roots can grow far and break underground things like pipelines. They also can grow up to 65 feet tall! That means they can also take down power lines. Like other invasive species, they can also crowd out native plants that wildlife needs.

There aren't any animals that really rely on osage oranges for food today, but scientists believe that giant extinct animals like woolly mammoths once ate them!

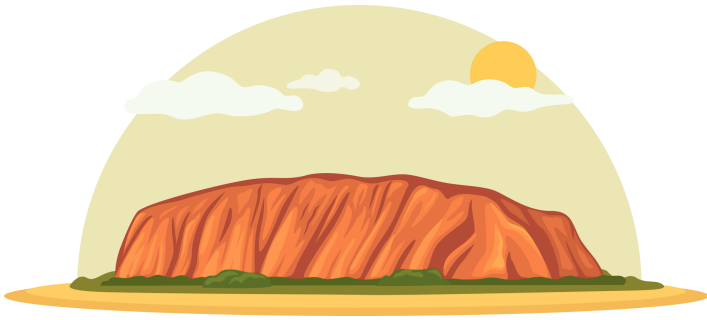


# OSAGE ORANGE

*(Maclura pomifera)*



# NOVEMBER POETRY



My Country  
by Dorothea Mackellar, 1904

The love of field and coppice,  
Of green and shaded lanes.  
Of ordered woods and gardens  
Is running in your veins,  
Strong love of grey-blue distance  
Brown streams and soft dim skies  
I know but cannot share it,  
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of ragged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains.  
I love her far horizons,  
I love her jewel-sea,  
Her beauty and her terror –  
The wide brown land for me!

A stark white ring-barked forest  
All tragic to the moon,  
The sapphire-misted mountains,  
The hot gold hush of noon.  
Green tangle of the brushes,  
Where lithe lianas coil,  
And orchids deck the tree-tops  
And ferns the warm dark soil.



Core of my heart, my country!  
Her pitiless blue sky,  
When sick at heart, around us,  
We see the cattle die –  
But then the grey clouds gather,  
And we can bless again  
The drumming of an army,  
The steady, soaking rain.

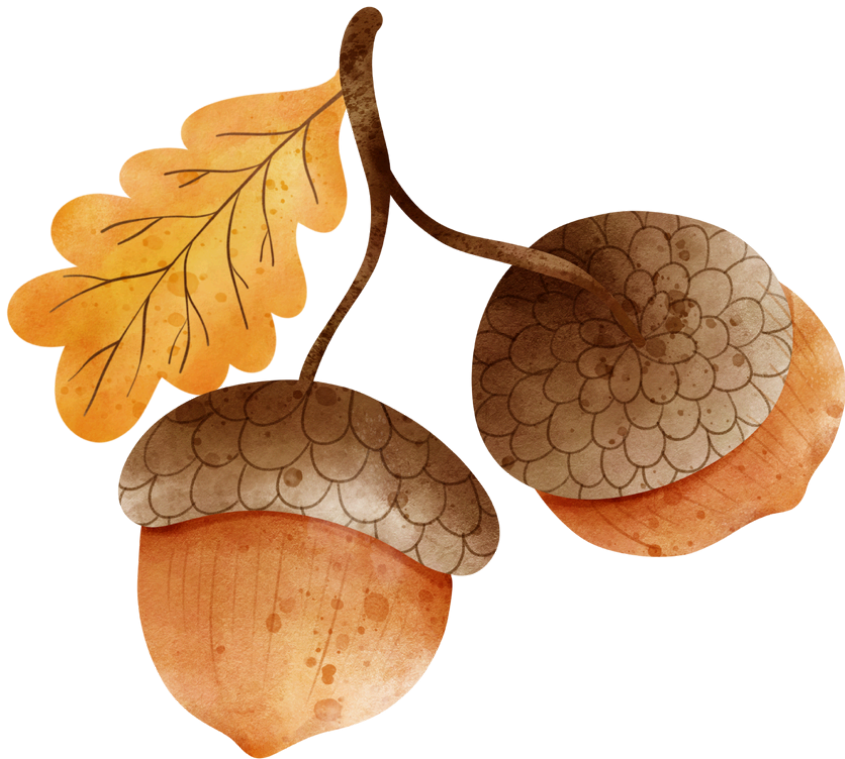
Core of my heart, my country!  
Land of the Rainbow Gold,  
For flood and fire and famine,  
She pays us back threefold –  
Over the thirsty paddocks,  
Watch, after many days,  
The filmy veil of greenness  
That thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country,  
A wilful, lavish land –  
All you who have not loved her,  
You will not understand –  
Though earth holds many splendours,  
Wherever I may die,  
I know to what brown country  
My homing thoughts will fly.

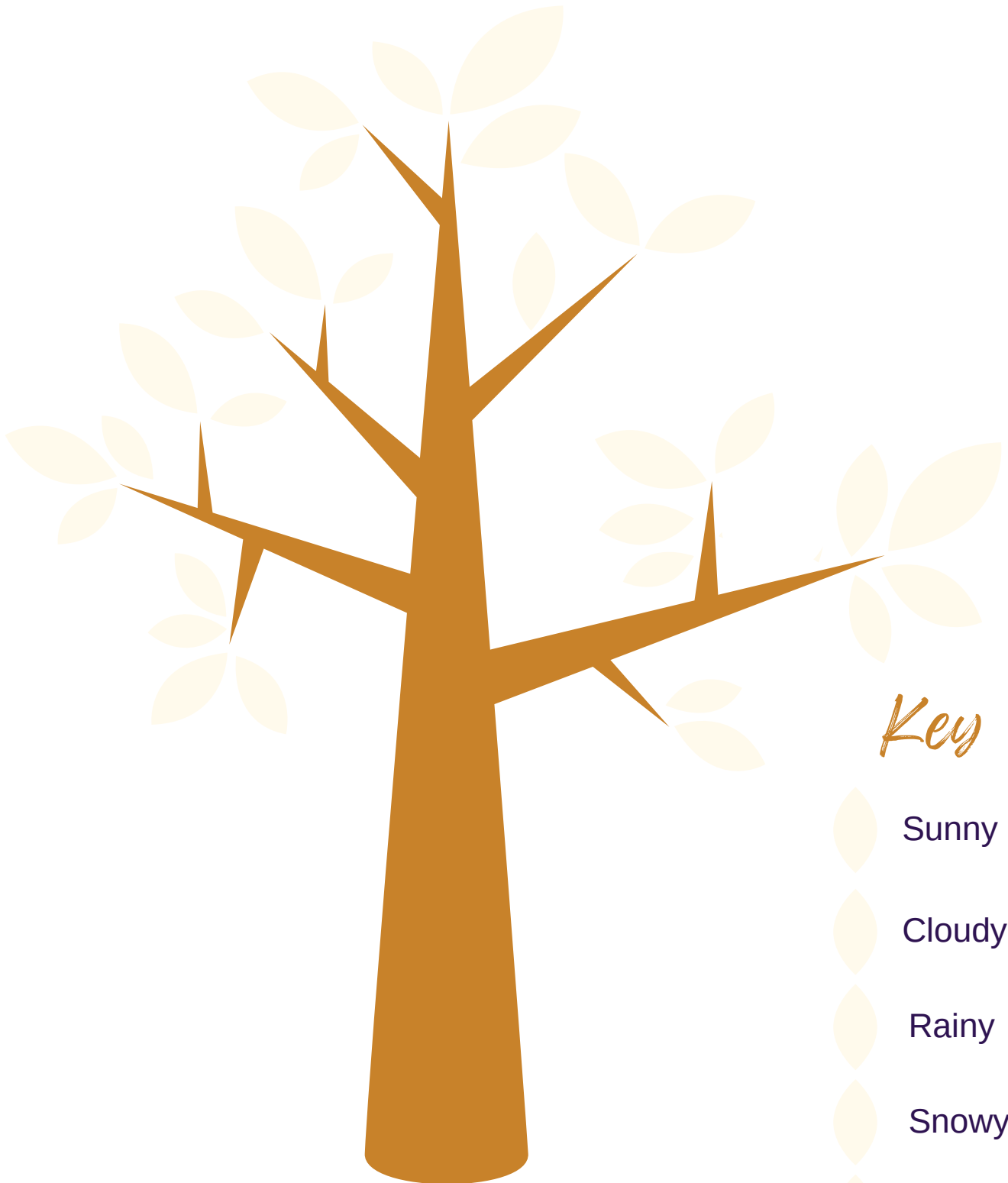


# My Nature Journal

## November



# November Weather Tree



## Key

-  Sunny
-  Cloudy
-  Rainy
-  Snowy
-  Stormy



# *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: \_\_\_\_\_

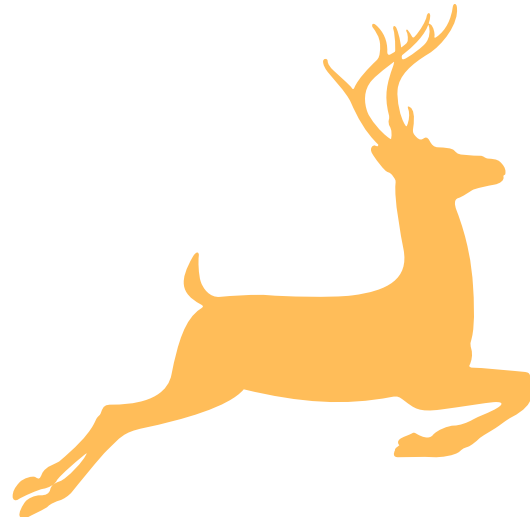
FORAGING RECORD (DATES, WHERE FOUND, HOW IT WAS USED)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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](https://magicalchildhood.com/wildkids) to learn more.