

Citizen Science Saturdays- Record

Citizen Science projects only work when you properly collect and record your findings (your data). Scientists need to know that the data you give them is correct and relevant to their study. Keeping good notes on your observations and measurements are invaluable and are required as proof to support your conclusions.

Always record your findings (data) whether that's on a phone app or in your journal. Write down or draw what you see. Make sure to include lots of details and labels.

Practice your recording skills:

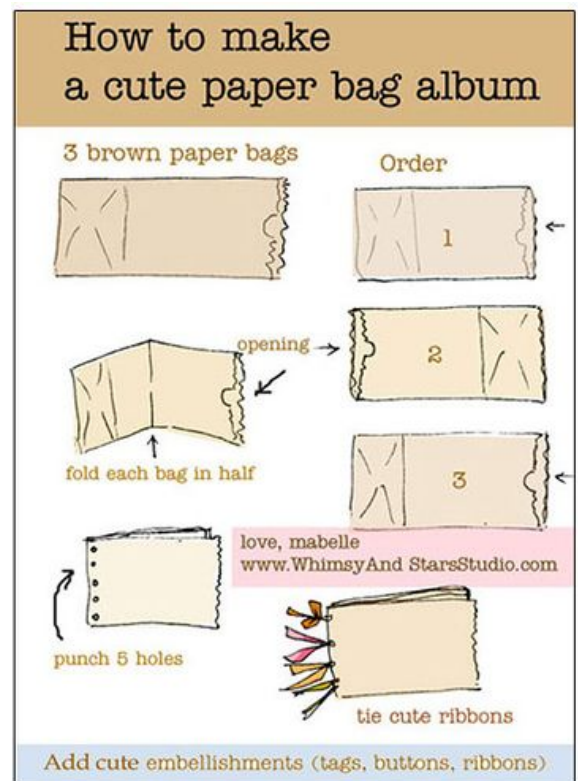
Make a Nature Journal: Children love to collect leaves, sticks, flowers and everything that attracts their attention to study and research the things of the world. Make a nature journal that can collect your child's thoughts and neat nature finds!

Materials:

- 3 Food paper bags
- Scissors
- Adhesive tape
- Photocopies with the design for the cover and the internal sheets or make your own designs with blank paper
- Ribbon to close
- Stapler

Here's a graphic on how to assemble the journal.

Here is a [journal cover & graphics](#) you can use.



How to Journal: Your nature journal is the special place where you can record all the interesting things you see, smell, hear, feel, eat and wonder about, throughout the year. You are the author and illustrator of your journal and it is unique to you and the place where you live.

You can take your journal out on your nature walks. Find a place to sit in the forest or your backyard and write and sketch out in nature. Working outside lets you really feel the natural world with your senses, and your writing and drawing can be inspired by all the things you hear, smell and feel, as well as what you can see.

How to journal like a scientist:

1. Look closely. Draw what you see.
2. Look again, perhaps with a magnifying glass, and draw some more.
3. Label your drawing. Note the details you can see, where you found your item, and the date.
4. Wonder. Ask questions. Think about what you see and why things look the way they do.
5. Share your findings with others. Ask them if they know about your item. Research in books and online to find out more. Learn and discover!

Ideas for your Nature Journal:

- Notes of all your wonderings. (I wonder why that tree still has leaves in winter? I wonder what squirrels like to eat?)
- Pressed flowers, leaves, seeds, feathers. You can stick envelopes in your journal to hold your nature finds
- Notes on the colors, shape and size of the plants and animals. What habitats do they prefer? How do they grow? What do they eat?
- Drawings of the plants and animals that you have seen
- Poems you have written, or copies of famous poems inspired by the natural world
- Creative writing you have made
- Descriptions of picnics and days out that you have enjoyed
- Tracing and rubbings from leaves and bark
- Cuttings from newspapers and magazines of the nature happenings in your area
- A map of your favorite local places
- Watercolor paintings, markers or crayon illustrations of the plants and animals you are learning about

These and other great ideas for Nature Journaling can be found online at Nurture Store

<https://nurturestore.co.uk/13-nature-journal-prompts-children>

Participate in *Celebrate Urban Birds*: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a fun & easy citizen science project you can join to help hone your observation and recording skills called *Celebrate Urban Birds*.

Visit the website for instructions on how to collect data and share. They even provide you with a local bird field guide to help you ID birds! <https://celebrateurbanbirds.org/cub/instructions>

This project takes 5 easy steps:

1. Learn to ID your neighborhood birds
2. Pick a time & place to watch birds
3. Watch for only 10 minutes
4. Repeat your bird-watch in the same area 2 more times
5. Enter your data

Use your nature journal to record your data!

The screenshot shows the 'Get Started! Instructions' page on the Celebrate Urban Birds website. The page has a blue header with navigation links: ABOUT, LEARN, RESOURCES, COMMUNITY, DATA, and SEARCH. Below the header, there's a section titled 'Get Started! Instructions' with a progress bar showing 'Instructions' as the active step, followed by 'Learn Species', 'My Location', 'Day 1', 'Day 2', 'Day 3', 'Add Days', and 'My Summary'. A 'Download Instructions' link is also present. A message box says 'Thanks for your interest in taking part in the CUBs Data study! It's fun and easy - here's how it works'. The main content area lists two steps: 1. Learn to identify your neighborhood birds, and 2. Pick a time and place to watch birds and stick to it. Step 1 includes a bird icon and a list of instructions. Step 2 includes a clock and map icon and a list of instructions. An illustration on the right shows a person in a park setting up a 50x50 ft bird-watching area with various icons for birds and a 10-minute timer.

1. Learn to identify your neighborhood birds

- Based on your location (US state or country), we'll provide you with a list of birds to observe
- [Click here](#) to learn about birds in your region

2. Pick a time and place to watch birds and stick to it:

- Your bird-watching area should be approximately 50 feet by 50 feet — the size of half a basketball court.
- Visually set the boundaries of your bird-watch area.