

Autumn Diaries



www.parks.sa.gov.au

Autumn Diaries

Nature Journaling is easy, flexible and good for the soul! It has been practiced throughout history by naturalists, ecologists, artists and rangers.

Record your curiosity and capture observations in a park or open space in your neighbourhood – or even in your back yard.

Name: _____

What do I want to find out? _____

Where do I want to go exploring? _____

Activities I could do to help protect the environment:



What do I need?

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your own notebook
(or printer to print
off pages) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pencils | <input type="checkbox"/> camera |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Paints | <input type="checkbox"/> sound recorder |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> ruler | |

How do I journal?

- 
- 1 Grab your notebook and pens and tools
 - 2 Find inspiration! Explore or sit in the bush or your backyard
 - 3 Capture ideas, notes, dates and any other thoughts and reflections
 - 4 Have a go at creating a poem or detailed scientific drawings
 - 5 Keep asking yourself 'I wonder why....?'
 - 6 Look up things when you get home
 - 7 Think about any action you can take
 - 8 Follow our Facebook or our WEBSITE for park updates and information
- www.parks.sa.gov.au
 www.facebook.com/NPWSSA

Images: River red gums in watercolour (Ethan Brown) and robin in pencil (Oskar Scarman), Willunga Waldorf School. 96062

Journaling tips

How to start

Do two drawings

– one up close and another of your treasure in its surroundings



Write down the date and time

Note the weather conditions



Ask questions and make any other observations



Capture its colour, texture, smell and sound

Write a poem or some fun words



Give your page or drawing a title



Autumn Diaries

Autumn along the coast and in marine parks

The first Autumn storms wash up 'beach wrack' and animals like **by-the-wind-sailors**. Many animals are starting to breed – Little penguins are starting to lay their eggs, **blue-ring octopus** are mating, **spider crabs** are coming inshore to mate and **King George whiting** are spawning in the gulfs.



□ CHALLENGE

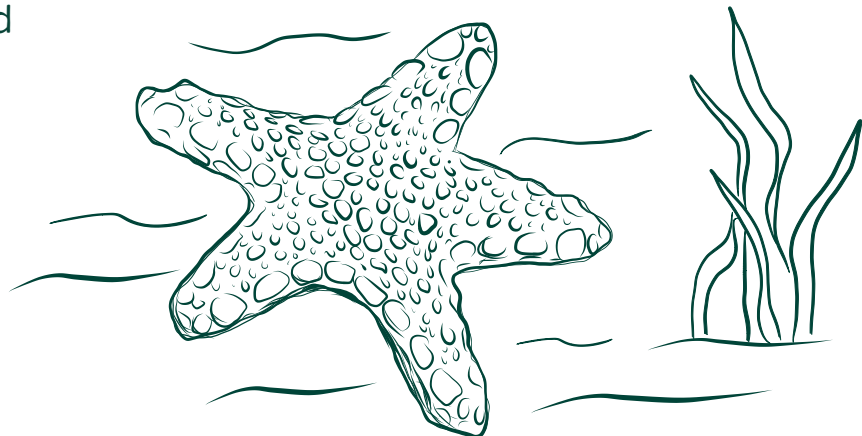


Visit the beach or a marine park, go for a walk and take a photo of something washed up (or find a photo if you can't get to the beach) and start journaling!

□ CHALLENGE



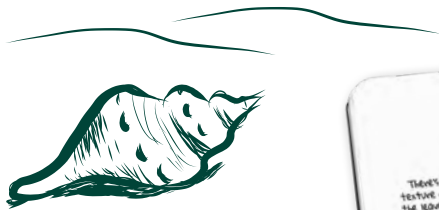
Pick up at least 3 bits of rubbish (if safe to do so) and bin it. If you can't get to the beach help with some recycling at home.



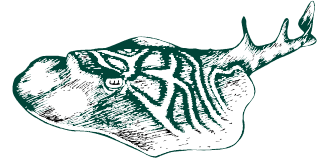
Journaling tips

Marine creatures

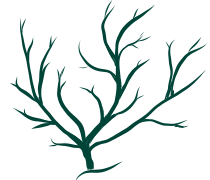
Make two drawings
– one up close and one
in it's surroundings



Use the
journaling tips
from Page 2
'How to start'



Is it an
animal or
plant?



Write a poem
or some fun
words

Capture its
colour, texture
and smell
(yew!)

What do you think it
eats? If it has been
washed up find out
where it grows



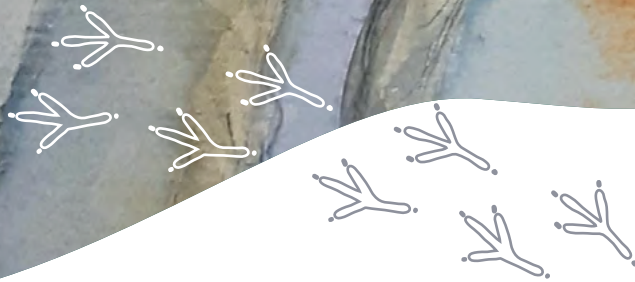
Write down an action in your journal (examples below):

- Find out how to become a coastal ambassador
- In Winter, visit the southern right whales in Encounter Marine Park (Victor Harbor)

Autumn Diaries

Autumn – a time for birds

When the first rains of Autumn fall, fungus starts to grow in the leaf litter. Seeds, like the **sweet bursaria**, fall to the ground and are eaten by small birds. **Messmate stringybark** and **blue gums** are flowering. Kurna people refer to this time of the year as **Parnati**. **Parnati is a time of plentiful birdlife**, and when small stone fruits, seeds and roots are eaten.



Did you know that magpies use their excellent hearing to locate prey (insects) beneath the surface?!

CHALLENGE 1

Go for a walk and watch the birds. Take a photo, jot in your journal the features of the birds you see.

CHALLENGE 2

Do you know what the colour variations of magpies are in Australia? Which one is found in South Australia?

CHALLENGE 3

How many different bird calls can you hear in your local park?

Journaling tips

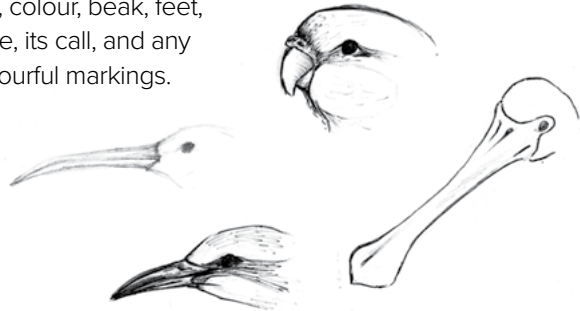
How to identify and draw birds

Use the journaling tips from Page 2 'How to start'



Capture features

– size, colour, beak, feet, shape, its call, and any colourful markings.



What do you think it eats?

insects, fish, flowers, small lizards, seeds?



Beaks can be used to tear flesh, scoop or filter in water or mud, probe for nectar, worms or shellfish, peck insects or crack and chew seeds.



Write a poem or some fun words

*Cheeky beady eye
glistens black with snow atop
Are you watching me?*



Feet help birds to wade or swim, hold onto food, perch or cling onto branches or seize and hold prey.

Write down an action in your journal (examples below):

- Build a nesting box for your garden
- Look up a nature club or volunteer group to join

Autumn Diaries

Autumn in colour – trees and flowers

The soil is getting damper and seeds are starting to germinate. Some will become big trees and will need to grow well before next summer. Kurna people refer to this time of the year as Parnati and it marks the time that bark is ready to be stripped to make canoes and shelters. Autumn flowers (like the flame heath) start blooming providing an important energy source for small birds.



Did you know
that the flowers of South Australian blue gum can vary in colour, from cream to pink and even deep red?

CHALLENGE

1

Get colourful and creative, find flowers to paint or press, do a bark rubbing with charcoal on a piece of paper, or draw a tree.



CHALLENGE

2

Find out the local Aboriginal name, meaning or significance of a tree in your local park.

Journaling tips

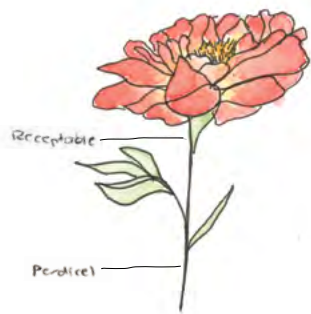
Rubbings, drawings and pressings

Pressings

Pick an Autumn flower (from your garden, not a national park). **Draw** the flower, label its parts. Then **press** it between paper underneath heavy books (this will get the moisture out). When it's dry stick it carefully into your journal.

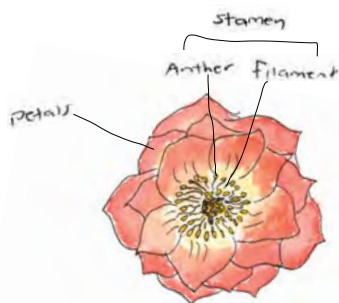


Use the journaling tips from Page 2 'How to start'



Rubbings

Use paper and charcoal (try using recently burnt wood as charcoal!)



Write down an action in your journal (examples below):

- Visit a local nursery and plant some native species in your garden
- Start your own collection of nature books to keep on your shelf

Autumn Diaries

Fungi, leaf litter and decay

As Autumn rains moisten the ground moss turns from brown to green. Creatures lay their eggs among the leaf litter and lizards burrow into the ground to hibernate until spring. Fungi is spreading throughout the soil helping to recycle dead plant and animal material. **Colourful fungi is popping up**, brightening damp forests.



Please do not touch or eat any fungus from the wild. There is no safe way of knowing if they are okay to eat.



□ CHALLENGE

1

Take a walk in a park or even your backyard and look for fungi. This time when you do your journaling, use your imagination. **See journaling tips**

Did you know

about 90% of plants depend on fungi. Most fungi is minute, forming vast networks of threads underground



□ CHALLENGE

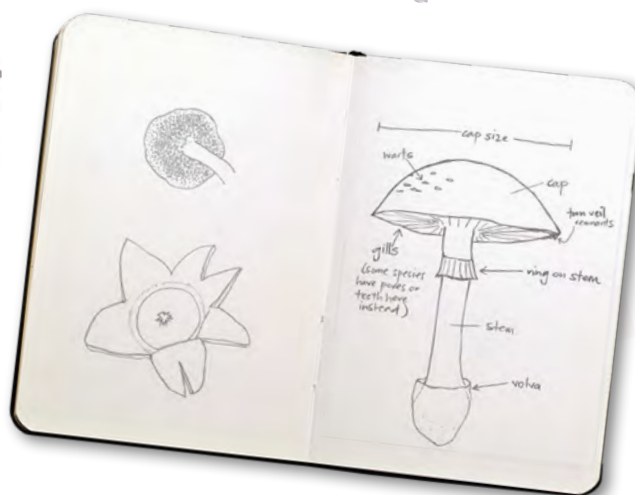
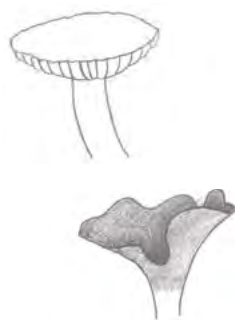
2

Draw white fungi or leaf litter using light coloured pastels on black paper.

Journaling tips

Imagining underground

Use the journaling tips from Page 2 'How to start'



What group of fungi does it belong to (puff ball, club and coral, gill, tough pore, jelly, birds nest or earth ball)

Can you describe its colour and texture?

What would you find underneath a mushroom?

Decaying leaves? Lizard eggs? A fairy?



Write down an action in your journal (examples below):

- Please leave fungi alone! DO NOT TOUCH OR EAT ANY FUNGUS FROM THE WILD
- Learn more about fungi at <https://fungimap.org.au>
- Start a simple compost bin at home and monitor how long it takes for matter to break down

Autumn Diaries

Animal tracks and traces

After the summer rains, the north east outback of South Australia comes to life. Yandruwandha and Yawarrawarrka country has only two seasons and this time of year is referred to as 'punda punda' (winter). Sandy habitats provide canvases for little feet and claws. Animal traces are found everywhere if you know how to look for them.



Did you know

In the Yandruwandha and Yawarrawarrka people's language animal tracking is known as 'marlka'.

For example when you see kangaroo tracks you say 'tjkurra marlka'.

□ CHALLENGE

1

Go out and look for some animal traces - footprints, scratchings and scats (animal poo!). Use the journaling tips to draw what you see or hear.



□ CHALLENGE

2

What animal left these markings and what do you think they were doing?

Journaling tips

Drawing paw prints and poos!

Use your power of observation and deduction

Do you know what the animal might have been doing (was it climbing, hopping, eating?)



Use the journaling tips from Page 2 'How to start'

It's a good idea to put something in your photo for size (e.g. a pencil), this will help you identify the track later.



Don't forget to write down the location, weather and even GPS points.



Most native animals will hop, bound, waddle, crawl or scurry. Sometimes it is hard to determine their movement.

When marsupials are hopping you might only see the tracks from their back feet.

When drawing scats (poo) try and capture what the animal has eaten (grass, bones).

PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH SCATS. Many animals carry worms or parasites harmful to humans.



Write down an action in your journal (examples below):

- Find video clips or stories of Aboriginal storytelling in the sand
- Find out whose country you are on and the Aboriginal name of the animal tracks you have drawn.

Autumn Diaries

Large Animal behaviour

Winter is looming! **Southern right whales** have left Antarctica for our protected shores where they will give birth and protect their young over winter. **Male western grey kangaroos** often leave the female mob to live in large groups and **emus** are pairing up ready to nest in winter.



Did you know

Western grey kangaroos can breed at any time of year and generally produce only one young at a time. Joeys stay in the pouch attached to a teat and will leave the pouch after about 10 months, but will continue to suckle milk for another 6 months.



□ CHALLENGE

1

Sit quietly and watch some kangaroos. Draw three types of behaviour - juveniles playing with their mums, fighting, hopping at high speed, moving slowly using its tail or grooming.

□ CHALLENGE

2

Find out what nocturnal, crepuscular and diurnal mean. How would you describe the activity of the animal you are drawing?

Journaling tips

How to capture behaviour

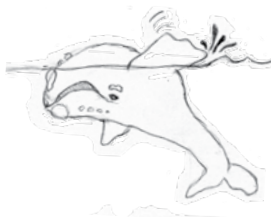
Use the journaling tips from Page 2 'How to start'

This time spend some time watching a large animal and try and draw its behaviour



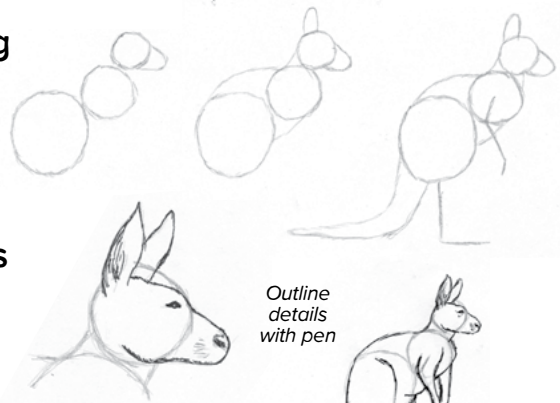
Drawing whales

Most of the time you only see their flippers or tails. If you can identify their 'above water' behaviour you can probably guess what they are doing below

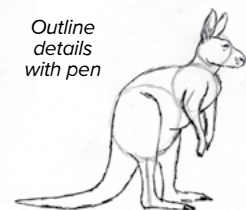


*Expectant waters
Icy smiles we watch the young
Tail slap! Again please*

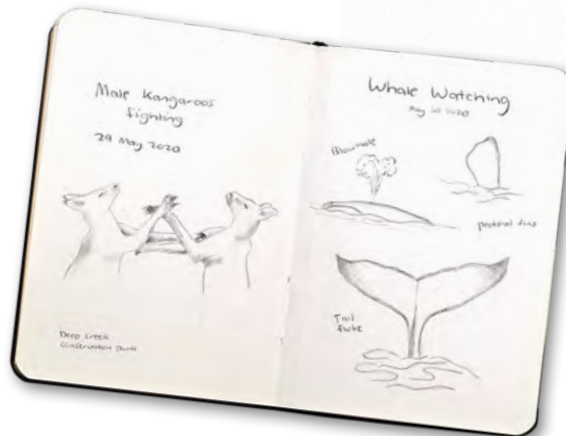
Start your drawing using circles. You can use this technique for drawing most animals



Outline details with pen



Erase pencil markings to finish



While you are watching an animal write down some words or create a poem.

For instance, Haiku poetry has three lines of 5,7,5 syllables

Drawing weight and Balance

A kangaroo's centre of mass is around its hips. They can stand, twist, crouch and sometimes use their tail to balance on.

Write down an action in your journal (examples below):

- Become a whale spotter – log a sighting with the Victor Harbor Whale Centre www.sawhalecentre.com.au
- Visit Cleland Wildlife Park in the Adelaide Hills and get close to kangaroos, wallabies and potoroos. www.clelandwildlifepark.sa.gov.au/Home

For more information:
www.parks.sa.gov.au



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