

Resources & Equipment

Books & Articles

How to Teach Nature Journaling: Curiosity, Wonder, Attention by John Muir Laws and Emilie Lygren, includes a 19-minute video showing “Jack” John Muir Laws and his colleagues conducting several professional development programs. Good ideas on journaling prompts and activities combined with what students experience while journaling, how to share and discuss nature journals, and a bit on how to manage students while journaling. View it [here](#).

To Look Closely: Science and Literacy in the Natural World by Laurie Rubin

Put On Your Owl Eyes: Open Your Senses and Discover Nature’s Secrets by Devin Franklin

To Learn to Draw, Start With Your Shoe is a friendly New York Times [article](#) by Diane Olivier which includes the steps for contour drawing. These are handy tools that help people see with their eyes, rather than their imagination.

Websites & Videos

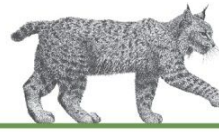
Artist, naturalist and educator **John Muir Laws’s** [website](#) is full of great ideas, opportunities, and examples of not only how to do nature journaling with students but why nature journaling is an important skill in the development of a person’s understanding of how the natural world works.

BEETLES (Better Environmental Education Teaching, Learning, and Expertise Sharing) is a program of the Lawrence Hall of Science at the University of California, Berkeley that is designed to support outdoor science program leaders. Their [curriculum](#) on field journaling is a treasure trove of best practices in the art of keeping a science-based nature journal.

The Watershed Institute’s Nature Journal Binder Based out of central New Jersey, the Watershed Institute works with teachers, students, policy makers, scientists, and clean water advocates to help keep central New Jersey’s watersheds healthy and clean. Their [binder](#) on how to keep and use nature journals as an educational tool has great examples of journal pages for students and good ideas for teachers.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Nature Journal Videos

Each of these two videos demonstrate how to keep a nature journal, what types of tools, equipment, and materials you might consider using, what kinds of questions to ask yourself when observing something, and how to make a simple journal made out of completely recycled material. Here is [Part I](#) and [Part II](#).



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Picture Books

- *Quiet* by Tomie DePaolo
- *I am an Artist* by Pat Lowry Collins
- *Notable Notebooks: Scientists and Their Writings* by Jessica Fries-Gaithe
- *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin
- *An Island Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk on a Barrier Island* by Virginia Wright-Frierson

Inspirational Nature Journalers

Hannah Stevenson, an artist who runs the Lily and Thistle webpage, includes a [section](#) on “How to Start a Nature Journal -- A Beginner’s Guide.” Filled with good types and ideas on nature journaling and beautiful visual examples.

Alex Boon, a landscape and nature journaling artist and writer, [documents](#) his experiences walking the paths around his home in England.

Clare Walker Leslie, artist, author, and educator has written many classic books on the art of [nature journaling](#).

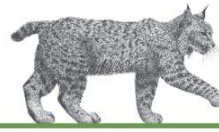
Becca Hall, an illustrator from England whose [sketchbooks](#) reflect her observations of nature in a whimsical and sweet style.

Simple Homemade Journal Ideas

Here’s a quick 1-minute [video](#) on how to make a journal using a cereal box and a stick.

Here is another way to make a journal using firm chipboard donated by a print shop in sheets that are 9 x 12” or 8.5 x 11”, 2 metal rings, paper cut to fit inside, and old nature calendars or nature magazines for students to decorate the cover:

- Cut the chipboard in half. These halves become the back and front covers.
- Use a hole punch to make holes for 2 rings.
- For the journal pages, punch holes in the paper that align with the cover holes. You can include unlined and lined paper.
- This journal can be bound together with metal rings.



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Equipment

Magnifiers We purchase ours from Acorn Naturalists. We like the large #T-104 with the plastic sleeve bag for grades K through 2. We like one with a cover for grades 3 through 12. The younger the child, the larger the lens. We tie a cord through them so a student can wear the magnifiers around their neck.

“Sit Upons” and How to Make Them

Sit Upons are dry, insulated seats for sitting on the ground. They also help us define the spot where one is sitting. Here are some designs:

1. Cut a piece of “Ensolite” camping pad closed-cell foam into 9” pieces. Each piece becomes a Sit Upon. Or, cut foam floor pads (that look like puzzle pieces) into 4 Sit Upons for smaller children.
2. Get 2-gallon freezer bags. Have students fold newspaper to fit inside the bag as insulation. Put a piece of art as the top layer and tape the layers of paper together. Seal the bag.
3. Get oilcloth (the kind used to cover picnic tables) or vinyl tablecloths. Cut to the size of half a pillow case. Fold it in half. Fill the center with folded newspaper to within 1” of each side. Use a hole punch to punch holes through two layers of the cover. Students use yarn to sew the 3 sides together.

Here are simple, written [directions](#) with photos on how to make a Sit Upon.

Here are simple, written [instructions](#) on how to make a Sit Upon with plastic bags and duct tape.

Here’s a fast-paced [video](#) from the Girl Scouts on how to make a Sit Upon, including written directions and photographs.