



## Getting Outside and Into Nature

### For Rainy Days:

- Take a Walk – It's really that simple! Pull out your rain gear and take to the trail or the neighborhood sidewalk and enjoy the fresh air and spring greenery. A hot cup of tea or hot cocoa will taste all the better when you come in to warm up.
- Go on Safari – plenty of animals enjoy the rain. Have you ever noticed how many worms surface after a drizzly night? Or how many birds are still flitting about, shaking off their wings on the roadside branches? Can you spot any hopping frogs or toads?  
Insects are especially interesting to look for. Keep your eyes open for slugs and snails, and carefully poke around the backyard. Are there bugs hiding under the stones lining the garden beds? Are there any flying insects sheltering under broad leaves, waiting for the shower to pass?
- Be Mindful – Take a minute and use your senses. Find a place to sit, whether wrapped up by an opened window, or outside in your rain gear. Close your eyes and listen to all the sounds. Take some deep breaths and inhale the different smells the rain brings to the surface. Look around and consider how the colors on trees, flowers, even the pavement changes with the rain.

- Get Artsy – Find fallen leaves and petals, and try some Andy Goldsworthy-style artwork! The water will help things lay flat and stick together. How does your piece change as the rain stops and the materials dry?
- Plant Some Seeds – What better time to plant some seeds than when the soil is damp and soft, and the rain will water them for you? Visit the [Resilient Roots blog](#) to read about what to plant now, and if you're really in the gardening mood what you can start inside.

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- Plan a Picnic – even sitting on the back step or on a cushion in the yard offers a change of scenery from your home office or favorite reading chair. Pull together some sandwiches and pour some tea into your favorite mug and take it outside to enjoy the spring weather and the sounds of nature.
  - Next Level: try planning ahead and baking your favorite cookies or scones to save for your picnic! Invite a friend to video call with you and chat about the different sights and sounds you are each enjoying.
- Give Gardening a Go! We know – gardening can sound like a chore, but it doesn't have to be! Just pulling weeds can be relaxing. Try putting some music on and weeding, clearing brush in the yard, or pruning back an unruly plant.
  - Next Level: try starting a Victory Garden! We're loving local organization [Resilient Root's blog](#) on starting your own garden.

- Take a photo walk! Make a list of items you think you're likely to see and try to photograph as many as you can. Then make a list of all the interesting items you found and try again the next day!
  - Next Level: Make a list for a friend to take on a photo walk, and ask them to take one for you! What did they find that you didn't?
  
- Try birdwatching! Spring is a great time to see and hear birds. Check out the [Merlin Bird App](#) to help with bird identification – our volunteer Holly gives it two thumbs up!
  - Next Level: Add a section on bird identification to your nature journal! Write about what calls they make, which trees they like to sing from, and what time of day you see them.
  - What sort of birds do you see in your neighborhood or back yard? Are you surprised by any?
  - Draw what they look like if you can get close enough.
  
- Search for animal tracks – spring is wet this year, and with spring rains and thaws comes mud. What sort of creatures have been along the trail, through your yard, or along a nearby pond or stream? [Use this resource](#) to get started.
  - Next level: can you tell what time of day the creature might have stopped by based on their tracks?
  
- Take note of blooming trees in your area. Are the leaves or the blossoms opening first?

- Next level: find one tree and track its changes in your journal.
  - What color are the buds? Are the emerging leaves or petals the same color?
  - How long are the buds on the tree before they open?
  - Does the temperature on a given day change the size or openness of the buds?
- Take a walk – it's that simple! Step out into the backyard, or take a walk around the block.
  - Next Level: make it a mindful moment. Pick a sense (hearing, smell, sight) and focus on everything you can bring in. Close your eyes and listen – how many different sounds do you hear?
    - How many of those sounds are animals? How many are caused by the breeze?
    - What else do you hear? What do you recognize? What do you think the unrecognizable sounds are?
- Start a nature journal. Find a spot to sit, either in your yard, beside a window, or under a tree on your favorite conservation property and spend a few minutes each day recording what you see, what you hear, smell, and notice.
  - Next Level: hone in on a specific item. Perhaps there is a tree that is just getting its spring buds.
    - What do the buds look like? How quickly do they grow – is it a weekly change, daily, hourly?
    - What sort of insects and animals like this tree? What kind of moss, lichen or fungus is growing on it?

- Take an extra-long walk (and bring your furry pal along!). What new places can you find by spending an extra ten minutes walking?
- Next Level: challenge yourself to walk further. Pick a distance (maybe you walk half a mile each day) and see if you can go a little further, then a little further.
  - How does the extra distance feel? Have you discovered a new neighborhood? Maybe a small street you hadn't seen before, or a cool new spot along your favorite trail?