

Winter Wonderland



**Don't let the cold stop you from exploring nature and science!
Use this booklet to help guide your nature walks, give you ideas
for crafts, and more.**

Ready? Let's explore the best that winter has to offer!

CHICAGO
ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES

PEGGY NOTEBAERT
NATURE
MUSEUM

SPONSORED BY:

ROSE[®]
PEST SOLUTIONS

Winter Wonderland

**Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
Wonder Workbook**

Table of Contents

I Notice, I Wonder	4–5
Let's Take a Microhike	6
Let's Make a Sound Map	7
Create Your Own Upcycled Journal	8–9
Let's Create With Snow	10–12
Create Your Own Nature Wreath	13–14
Our Nature Recommendations	15–17

I Notice, I Wonder

Naturalists study the nature they can find around them. They make observations and ask questions. We can be a naturalist anytime we “notice and wonder” about the world around us! Use words or drawings to describe what you notice. Then, write down questions you have about what you are observing. **Can any of your observations help to answer your questions?**

My _____

Observation

(Fill in the title of what you are observing – it can be a Home for the Holidays live event, a Curious by Nature video, or even a walk in your neighborhood!)

I notice...

(Use words and drawings to describe what you’re observing.)

I wonder...

(Write all the questions you have about what you’re observing.)

I Notice, I Wonder

Naturalists study the nature they can find around them. They make observations and ask questions. We can be a naturalist anytime we “notice and wonder” about the world around us! Use words or drawings to describe what you notice. Then, write down questions you have about what you are observing. **Can any of your observations help to answer your questions?**

My _____

Observation

(Fill in the title of what you are observing – it can be a Home for the Holidays live event, a Curious by Nature video, or even a walk in your neighborhood!)

I notice...

(Use words and drawings to describe what you’re observing.)

I wonder...

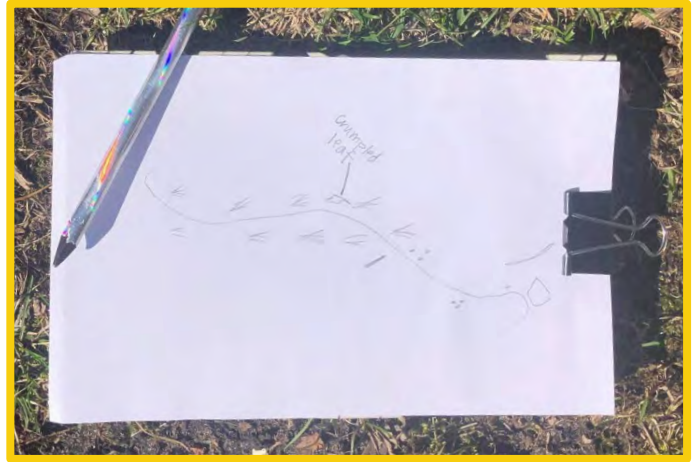
(Write all the questions you have about what you’re observing.)

Let's Take a Microhike

This mini hike is a great way to have an imaginative and unique adventure, even in the winter. Today, you'll get to take a very special nature walk. It won't be like others you may have been on before. Instead, you will imagine that you are shrinking down to the size of an ant (or other very small animal) to see what the world is like for them! Then, you'll take a hike along the length of a string. On the way, you'll make observations about what they see, hear, smell, or feel. We'll use paper to record these observations in the form of a map.

What you need:

- ☐ 3 or 4 foot piece of string
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ A piece of paper



Instructions:

1. Select a spot for the hike.
2. Share some initial observations and describe the kinds of things we see there.
3. Work together to put the string along the ground on that spot – this is our path!
 - Remember that we are on a micro hike, so we're imagining we are only the size of an ant.
4. Take time to 'hike' along their string, looking no more than 1 foot to the left or right of the string, and making and recording their observations of the area.

Parent Pro Tip: Tell kids to keep their eyes close to the ground. You could set a visual boundary (such as "no higher than their knees") if you think it will help to focus and clarify.

Share:

Afterward, share your maps or take each other on a guided "microhike" and point out the attractions and features along the string path! You could also make multiple maps by visiting different spots, or revisiting the same spot a few times. Then, compare and contrast the maps. Later, encourage your child to name their "micro hike" site based on what they encountered there.

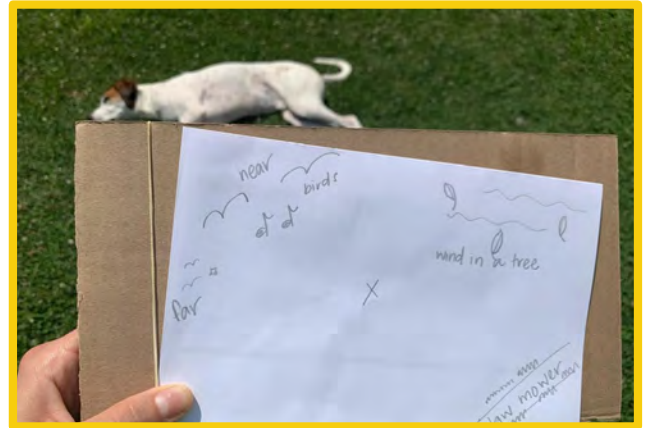
Source: Microhikes and many other nature activities can be found in a book we love—"Sharing Nature with Children" by Joseph Cornell.

Let's Make a Sound Map

What can you hear in the winter? Let's find out by making a special kind of map—a map of sounds! Scientists use their senses to learn about the world around them. Let's focus on our sense of hearing and see what we can discover!

What you need:

- ☐ Paper or note card
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Piece of cardboard and rubber band (optional)



Instructions:

1. Find in an appropriate spot outside.
 - If you want to do this activity indoors, you can use a video or audio clip.
 - *Optional: Make a DIY clipboard by placing your paper onto a piece of cardboard and attaching it with a rubber band.*
2. On your map, draw an "X" that indicates your location.
3. Use pictures, words, and/or symbols to indicate interesting sounds around you. We like to try to focus on the natural sounds!
 - For example, a small wavy line could represent a small breeze, or a drawing of a bird could indicate bird songs.
4. *Optional: You can add other senses, like smells or sights, to the "sensory" map, too!*

Prompts to use during Sound Mapping: What sounds do you hear? What will you use to represent that sound? Are the sounds close or far away? Do you hear any sounds of nature? The wind or birds? Do you hear sounds caused by people?

Parent Pro Tip: Encourage your child to close their eyes while listening for sounds. To help them increase their hearing ability, ask them to make "deer" ears by cupping their hands behind the ears. This hand position will create a greater surface area to capture sounds.

Share:

Afterward, share your maps with each other. You could make multiple maps in the same spot and compare them. Or ask your child to explain what symbols they used and why. Later, kids could color and add details to their map!

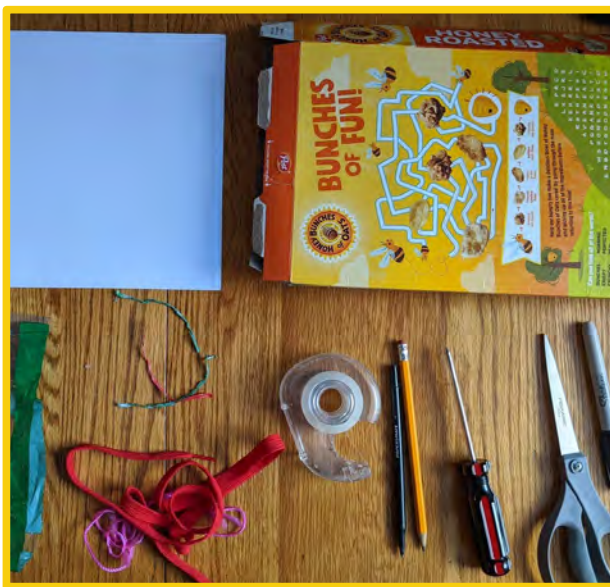
Source: Microhikes and many other nature activities can be found in a book we love—"Sharing Nature with Children" by Joseph Cornell.

Create Your Own Upcycled Journal

There are so many sights and sounds to see in the winter. Let's create our own upcycled nature journal to record them all! You can reuse materials that might otherwise get thrown away to create your very own nature journal.

What you need:

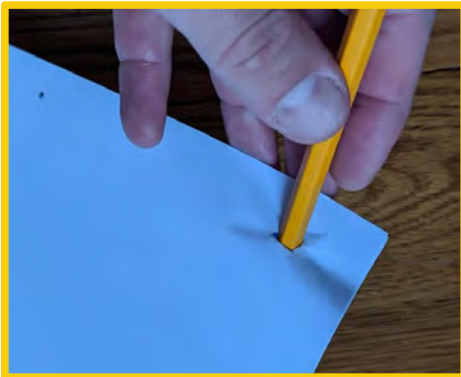
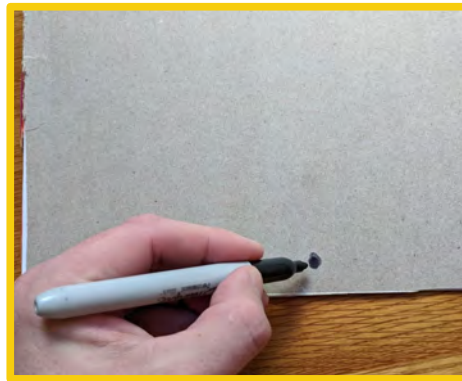
- ☐ **Material for journal cover and back cover**
 - Cereal boxes, cardboard boxes, magazine covers, old calendars, etc.
- ☐ **Paper**
- ☐ **String, yarn, rubber bands, or twist ties to bind your journal**
- ☐ **Scissors**
- ☐ **Hole Puncher**
- ☐ **Any additional decorations**
 - Glitter, flower petals, etc.



Create Your Own Upcycled Journal

Instructions:

1. Cut or tear the cardboard to the size of the journal you want to create a front and a back.
2. Cut or tear some recycled paper to fill the journal.
3. To bind your journal, punch two holes through the cardboard and paper (have an adult help you!) and use some string or other material to tie it together.
4. Decorate your journal. You can cut images from old magazines, or use recycled materials to make a nature-inspired pattern. Be creative and make it your own!
5. Use your journal to record your naturalist observations and questions:
 - What do you notice outside of your window?
 - What do the plants look like?
 - What do you notice about the animals?
 - What do you wonder about all of the spring changes happening outside?



Let's Create with Snow!

Our friend, local artist Katherine Lampert, has three fun snowy art projects to help us continue creating even when it's cold outside! Read on to explore how you can create our own snow art using all three techniques!

1 Painting on the Snow

What you need:

- ☐ Snow covered ground on a cold day
- ☐ Liquid watercolors or food coloring
- ☐ Spray bottles (3 or more)
- ☐ A stencil (optional)

Instructions:

1. Mix a little food coloring or liquid watercolor with water in spray bottles
 - Make primary colors (red, yellow, blue).
2. Squirt onto the snow to create your own colorful designs!



Photos courtesy of Katherine Lampert

Let's Create with Snow!

② Painting with the Snow

What you need:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow | <input type="checkbox"/> Washable liquid watercolors or food coloring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watercolor paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Eye dropper or pipettes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tray | <input type="checkbox"/> Empty egg carton or palette with cups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spoon | <input type="checkbox"/> Smock <input type="checkbox"/> Course sea salt (optional) |

Instructions:

NOTE: This project is good to complete outside so that snow stays frozen while working.

1. Spoon a little snow into each cup of your palette or egg carton.
2. Using an eye dropper or pipette, allow your child to add watercolors/ food coloring to the snow.
3. Place watercolor paper on the tray.
4. Spoon colored snow onto watercolor paper and allow your child to mash it around, add more paint on the paper, sprinkle on optional sea salt and use the materials however they like, as long as they like.
5. Bring inside to let the snow melt and watch what happens when your snow painting dries!



Photos courtesy of Katherine Lampert

Let's Create with Snow!

3 Fall Snow Tissue Paper Art

What you need:

- ☐ A day when snow is falling
- ☐ Watercolor paper
- ☐ Tissue paper that bleeds when wet
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Tray

Instructions:

1. While you're indoors, place watercolor paper on your tray.
2. Cut tissue paper into any shapes you like and arrange on paper.
3. Bring your project outside and allow snow to fall on it.
4. Once it is saturated with snow, bring it inside. The wet snow will make the tissue paper bleed onto the paper.
5. Let it dry.



Photos courtesy of Katherine Lampert

Create Your Own Nature Wreath

Let's celebrate the season by making our own fall-themed nature wreath to decorate your home!

What you need:

- ☐ A piece of cardboard (for the backing of the wreath)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Round objects to help you draw your circle on the cardboard
- ☐ Scissors
 - X-acto knife or utility knife work, too
- ☐ Hot glue
 - If you don't have a hot glue gun, you could also try rubber cement or a heavier craft adhesive
- ☐ Nature items
 - Evergreen branches, leaves, pine cones dried flowers, greenery (select sturdier items that won't wilt right away)



Create Your Own Nature Wreath



Step 1: Create your wreath backing

Draw out a donut shape (an inner circle and outer circle) on your piece of cardboard. If you are making a wreath to hang on your door, this may be large. Wreaths to go around a candle jar for a table decoration will be smaller. Use a bowl or other circular object to help you trace the shape. Cut out the donut with scissors or a utility knife.



Step 2: Decorate your wreath

Now that you have the cardboard backing for the wreath, start attaching your natural items with the glue. You'll need to use a lot to cover up the cardboard. I trimmed branches and things we found outside so that I could glue on smaller pieces at a time.

Disclaimer: Hot glue is hot! Using something else to hold down the items in the glue until it is secure helps keep fingers safe.



Keep adding items until the cardboard is pretty well covered.



Place a candle between your wreath for some extra flair!

Our Nature Recommendations – Winter Edition



North Park Village Nature Center | Cook County

Recommended by Dawn and Patrick

The Nature Center has had a lot of restoration activities over the past few years and is a great place to explore year round for families and individuals. There is a pond where you can find frogs, toads, and dragonflies and tons of amazing native plants to captivate your interest around the trails.

Why we love it: North Park Village Nature Center is a gem located right in the heart of the city. It's a fantastic place to spend time outside while enjoying a variety of the region's natural landscapes all during a short walk.

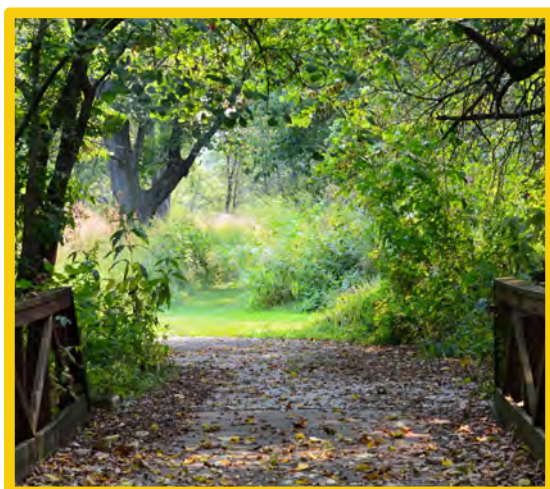


Palmisano Park | Cook County

Recommended by Dawn and Patrick

Located in the Bridgeport neighborhood, Palmisano Park used to be a dolomite limestone quarry and landfill and was transformed into a public park in 2009. Check out the audio tour on the Chicago Park District's website, which illustrates the site's fascinating history and reclamation process.

Why we love it: Palmisano Park (formerly known as Stearns Quarry Park) has features from its history as a limestone quarry all around the trails and is a great example of how a community can transform space into a green space.



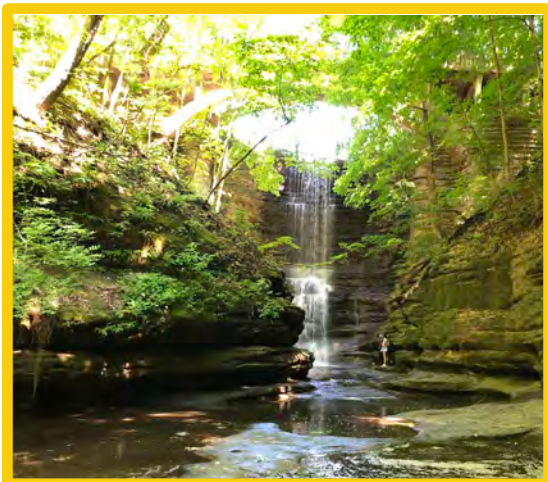
Sagawau Environmental Learning Center + Canyon Nature Preserve | Cook County; Lemont

Recommended by Sarah

The Sagawau Nature Preserve area is really interesting, with trails through forests and dolomite limestone canyons. For those interested in botany, local botanist Floyd Swink studied the unique plants in this area and aided efforts to preserve it. When it's open, visit the Sagawau Environmental Learning Center, which has displays of local geological and cultural history. During the winter, the preserve's 2.6 miles of unpaved trails become open to cross country skiers with groomed trails and provides ski rentals and lessons. Be sure to get a nature walk in before the snow falls!

Why we love it: It's a unique piece of nature in the Chicago region with easy trails and offers a lot of different activities.

Our Nature Recommendations – Winter Edition



Matthiessen State Park | LaSalle County

Recommended by Allison

Located near Oglesby, Illinois, Matthiessen State Park has a treasure trove of nature, with sandstone canyons, waterfalls, and dells along the Vermillion River, and oak and hickory trees atop the bluffs (spectacular sites in winter, but watch for ice on the trails). The park has cross country ski trails in the winter, too.

Why we love it: Matthiessen State Park is beautiful any time of year, but the waterfalls when frozen over are something magical in the wintertime.



Indiana Dunes National Park | Porter County, Indiana

Recommended by Patrick

One of America's newest national parks and spanning more than 15 miles of lakefront, Indiana Dunes is an idyllic setting right on the shores of Lake Michigan and it is home to some phenomenal natural areas. In fact, Indiana Dunes is among the most biodiverse places in the entire National Parks system!

Why we love it: Even a short walk at Indiana Dunes National Park will give you a fantastic connection to nature. You'll pass through an amazing variety of landscapes while taking in some breathtaking views of the lake.



Deer Grove Forest Preserve | Cook County; Palatine

Recommended by Patrick

Words will never quite capture the experience of a visit to Deer Grove, Cook County's first forest preserve and an enchantingly beautiful place to visit. Now having undergone an ecological restoration at the site, Deer Grove offers us a glimpse into the past of what much of the Chicago region used to look like. Deer Grove is divided into two adjoining sections: the more heavily wooded west unit and the sweeping prairies in the east unit. You can often see all kinds of wildlife at Deer Grove, including great blue herons and sandhill cranes!

Why we love it: Deer Grove is a beautiful place to visit during any season. There's an accessible paved trail that loops through Deer Grove East that helps visitors take in all the natural beauty and in the wintertime you can even try out cross-country skiing!

Our Nature Recommendations – Winter Edition

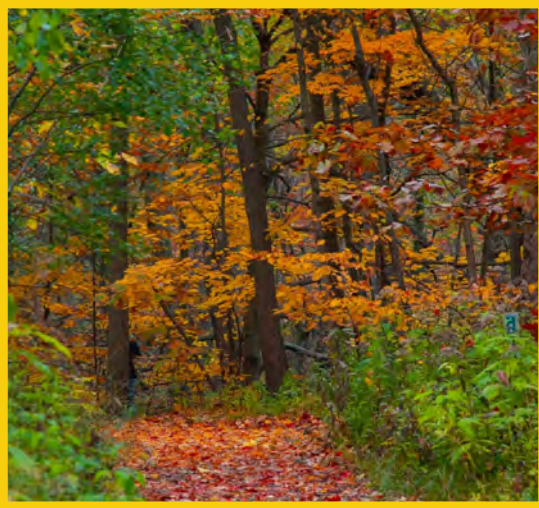


McKinley Park | Cook County

Recommended by Zack

Located on the city's southwest side, McKinley Park is one of the city's best neighborhood parks, with sports fields, playgrounds, a field house, and eight acres of natural areas surrounding the park's lagoons. A gravel path winds through the natural areas where you can see many native plants and trees.

Why we love it: McKinley Park is one of the city's best parks, and a short walk around the park's lagoons and natural area is a great place to see some local birds and wildlife.



Harms Woods Nature Preserve | Cook County; Glenview

Recommended by Patrick

Harms Woods in the north suburbs straddles the North Branch of the Chicago River, and this woodland is home to all varieties of wildlife. It's a gorgeous spot to see blooming wildflowers in the spring and a must see for fall colors, but in winter, snowfall can lead you to see the landscape in a whole new way – and there are few places where that's more evident than Harms Woods.

Why we love it: Harms Woods is a beautiful woodland ecosystem and sits right along the North Branch Trail, making it a great spot for a short walk outside or a great stop on a longer trip on the trail.



Sand Ridge | South Holland; Cook County

Recommended by Doug

Sand Ridge Nature Center, located in South Holland, sits on the ancient shoreline of Lake Michigan. As you might be able to tell from the name, the landscapes at Sand Ridge are a mix of dry sandy areas juxtaposed with wetland swales.

Why we love it: Sand Ridge offers visitors chances to see some really great plant displays and dragonfly habitats along four walking trails. Keep in mind that these trails are primarily natural, unpaved trails.

Don't forget to share your
experience on social media!

@NatureMuseum
#NatureMuseum



CHICAGO
ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES

PEGGY NOTEBAERT
NATURE
MUSEUM

SUPPORT FOR THE NATURE MUSEUM IS PROVIDED BY:

ROSE
PEST SOLUTIONS