



My Nature Journal

UConn 4-H STEM Lab

The natural world around us is full of interesting wonders to discover and explore. In today's activity we you will create your own nature journal using the materials in your kit. Once your journal is assembled you will be able to use it to explore outside taking note of all the fascinating things you find along your travels.

Supplies and Tools

Two sheets of cardboard

Nature Journal pages

Tape Strips & Leather binding string

Pencil, ruler, cutting blade, glue stick

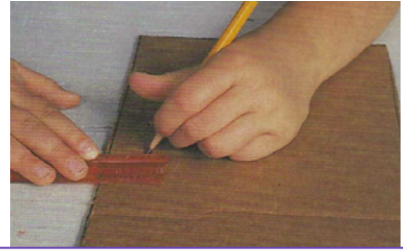


Activity Steps

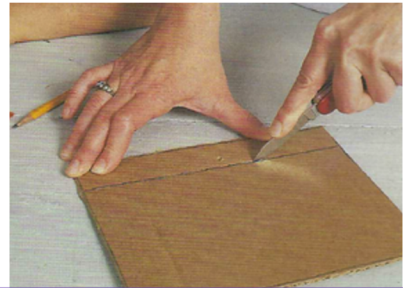
Notes

1. Take the 2 pieces of cardboard in your kit and lay them on top of one another like a book cover with the holes to the left. Flip with front cover so you are working on the inside. Measure 2 inches from the side with the holes and make a line with your pencil the length of the page. Do the same on the inside of the back cover.

Visuals



2. You may need an adult to help you with this next part. Using a blade, score across the line you just made, but try not to cut all the way through the cardboard. You just want a shallow cut to allow the cardboard to bend.



3. Next, you want to take the tape strips and place them on the outside of your covers over where you made the cuts. Be careful however not to cover the holes. This will give the bend in your cover more strength so it won't come apart on you.



4. Once that is done take your nature journal pages and put them in between your two cardboard covers. Take the leather string and loop it through the holes to bind your book together. You now have a nature journal.



5. Find natural materials such as twigs, leaves, small rocks, etc. to decorate the front cover of your nature journal. You can also use crayons or markers to decorate it if you don't have access to the outdoors. Put your name inside your journal so everyone knows its yours.



Bonus Activity

Building with nature: What are things can you make using natural elements such as twigs, rocks, moss, leaves, acorns, pine cones, etc.

- **Nature Sculpture** - Using natural materials design a sculpture that represents something you love about nature. Share it with family and friends, explaining it meaning for you.
- **Sensory Walk** - Take a hike through nature, paying special attention to your senses. What do you hear around you when you close your eyes? What colors do you see when you look around you? What smells are coming from the ground or sky? What textures do you experience through touch? Use your senses to fully explore your environment.
- **Pine Cone Bird Feeder** - Take a pine cone and cover it in peanut or sunflower butter. Then roll it around in bird seed. Attach a string and hang it from a tree that you can see from your house. What kinds of birds show up to enjoy your nature treat?
- **Pollinator Garden** - Go to a local nursery and get some plants or flower bulbs. Ask for plants that attract pollinators. Plant them around your yard and see all the beautiful colors that appear. This helps insects around you that rely on flowers for food. What species of insects are attracted to the flowers that you planted? You can download the “**Seek**” app by iNaturalist onto a phone to help you identify the insects you encounter. It can also help you identify plants and fungi.

Nature Alphabet - Make a list of things in nature for each letter of the alphabet. Can you get something for all 26 letters of the alphabet?

Activity Adapted from “*Ecology Crafts for Kids*” by Bobbe Needham, Sterling Publishing , 1999



We want to know what you thought of this activity. Please take a few minutes to complete the short survey. You can access it by the QR code on the left or going to [s.uconn.edu/4hstem2026](https://uconn.edu/4hstem2026).

If you enjoyed this project, visit [s.uconn.edu/4-h](https://uconn.edu/4-h) to learn more about **UConn 4-H**. Check out the **UConn Extension YouTube** page to view the video associated with this activity.

You can also find more fun, hands-on learning activities at **Clover by 4-H**. To discover a wide selection of 4-H activities and online courses, visit 4-H.org/Clover.

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