

Nature Walk, Anyone?

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"When we take up the study of nature and become somewhat acquainted with its beauties, its harmony, its grandeur and perfection, our minds expand, and we can but think of the Creator, the Organizer, the Power that controls so much life and intelligence; and almost unconsciously a feeling of reverence for that unseen Power, that great intelligence, takes possession of our hearts." -- Mattie Horne Tingey, from a speech delivered to the World's Congress of Representative Women in Chicago, Illinois, May 19, 1893 (*At The Pulpit: 185 Years of Latter-day Saint Women*, p. 84)

We love nature studies! It requires that we slow down and use all five senses (well, taste not so much 😊). After we observe as a scientist, we can begin to piece together a narrative from the observations we are making. After we have formed a narrative we can think about how the experience makes us feel. The questioning process would look something like this:

"I wonder if anything lives under that rock?"

"What is going on here? Lots of activity under the rock!"

"Why do you think some of those ants are brown and some of them are white? Are they all ants?"

"Why are the brown ones carrying the white ones? Where are they taking them?"

"Look at that spider over there. He's trying to grab one of the white ones, but the ants are fighting him off."

"Did you know so much was going on under our feet all the time? Isn't that amazing!"

"How do you feel knowing that Heavenly Father made creatures who, though they are so much smaller and simpler than people, still have the desire to help each other? What does the Family Proclamation teach about the roles that we have in the home?"

Not every discussion needs to go all the way to a spiritual analogy, but we try to focus the minds of our children on

developing a sense of wonder and respect for God's creations.

Our Favorite Resources

The Practical Naturalist by DK Publishing

Peterson Field Guides

- Birds of Eastern and Central North America*
- Wildflowers*
- First Guide series (Trees, etc.)*

A Golden Field Guide from St. Martin's Press

- Pond Life*
- Birds*
- Mammals*
- Seashore Life*

Libraries of Hope: Nature, Art, and Music Series

- Stories of the Stars*
- Stories of Rocks*
- Stories of the Ocean and Sea Life*
- Stories of Plants and Trees*
- Stories of Insects*
- Stories of Animals*
- Stories of Birds*
- Stories of Gardening*

Books by Stan Tekiela

- Bird Nests: Amazingly Ingenious and Intricate (Bird Appreciation)*
- Feathers: A Beautiful Look at a Bird's Most Unique Feature (Nature Appreciation)*
- Lives of Wolves, Coyotes and Foxes (Wildlife Appreciation)*

National Audubon Society Field Guides

- North American Birds (Eastern Region)*
- North American Trees (Eastern Region)*
- North American Reptiles and Amphibians (North America)*
- North American Insects and Spiders*
- North American Butterflies*
- North American Mushrooms*
- North American Fossils*

-The Night Sky

Stratton House Home Science Adventure Kits

- Discovering Birds*
- Astronomy Adventure*
- Discovering Insects*

DK Eyewitness Books

- Eagle & Birds of Prey*
- Plant*
- Tree*

Handbook of Nature Study by Anna Botsford Comstock

One Small Square Books by Donald M. Silver

- Backyard*
- Seashore*
- Cactus Desert*

Real Kids, Real Science series: *Woods, Ponds, and Fields*, and *Invertebrate Zoology*, by Ellen Doris

Creepy Crawlies and the Scientific Method, by Sally Kneidel

Night Science for Kids, by Terry Krautwurst

The Night Book, by Pamela Hickman

The Nature Company Guides

- Rocks and Fossils*
- Birding*
- Backyard Astronomy*
- Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises*

Color in Nature: A Visual and Scientific Exploration, by Penelope A. Farrant

The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling, by John Muir Laws

The Laws Guide to Drawing Birds, by John Muir Laws