

THE NATURAL TREASURE HUNT



Find the plants and trees using the clues and photos. Draw a line from the correct plant name to the correct picture. Most of the plants you will find are called “native” since they lived here before the Europeans arrived. Growing and protecting native plants helps the earth because they save water, don’t need pesticides, and provide food and shelter for the animals, birds, insects, and butterflies.



How many different ...

...bird sounds can you count?

...insects do you see?



My bark is rough and usually covered with moss. My leaves turn red or yellow in autumn and I can produce between 200-300 pounds of acorns per year. You can grind up my acorns, leach them in water, and use them to make bread. I don't have any leaves in the winter, but I grow new green leaves in the spring.

Scotch Broom*

Scientific Name:

Cytisus scoparius (non-native)



My bark looks like pieces of a puzzle and I produce cones that carry my seeds. Native Americans used the pitch and the green buds as a gum for the kids. Most parts of me were used as a food, include a nut that comes from my cones. When fully grown, I'm one of the tallest trees you can see.

Whiteleaf Manzanita

Scientific Name:

Arctostaphylos viscida



My evergreen leaves smell good and can be tied into bundles to burn like incense, which is part of my name. My bark is reddish in color and rough and I grow into a very tall tree.

Black Oak*

Scientific Name:

Quercus kelloggii



Even though I'm pretty when I bloom all in yellow, no one likes me. I came here all the way from Europe, can produce up to 12,000 seeds, overtake the native plants and wildflowers, and can be a fire hazard.

Incense Cedar

Scientific Name:

Calocedrus decurrens



I'm an evergreen shrub with light green leaves, peeling red bark, pink flowers in the winter, and red berries in the summer. You can eat my flowers raw or make them into a jelly and my red berries can be crushed and made into a sweet sugar. My green-grey leaves appear white in the moonlight.

Ponderosa Pine

Scientific Name:

Pinus ponderosa

*Deciduous—plants or trees that lose their leaves

SEASONAL ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

SPRING

EAT FLOWERS When you see ripe Manzanita flowers, enjoy a tasty snack. Shake off any ants that got there first.

GO ON A NATURAL TREASURE HUNT Count how many native plants and trees you can identify in your yard or nearby nature spot. Then see how many different bugs and birds you can find. **VARIATION 1** Go outside without your child and draw and label a map of the native plants and trees. Give your child the map and see if they can follow the map and discover the plants. **VARIATION 2** Photograph native plants and trees and then print out the photos. On separate pieces of paper, write the names of each plant followed by clues about the plant's uses and its appearance. See if your child can use the clues to match the correct plant name to each plant photograph.

SUMMER

PLAY WITH LEAVES Collect leaves of different shapes and textures. To make a leaf rubbing card, arrange leaves close together on a smooth table. Cover with a piece of paper. Pressing hard, color the paper with crayons until the leaves appear. Another fun activity is to arrange your leaves on a sheet of clear contact paper with the sticky side up. Cover with another piece of contact paper and smooth down until flat. Cut into a pretty shape and hang in a window.

BAKE MANZANITA BERRY MUFFINS Collect and dry Manzanita berries. To make Manzanita berry sugar, grind the berries roughly in a coffee grinder, then pour powder through a colander to sift out the seeds.

- 1½ cups all purpose, wheat, or Oak nut flour
- ½ cup Manzanita berry sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas
- ½ cup milk (substitute with soy, rice, or oat milk if desired)
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1½ cups fresh or frozen wild or local seasonal fruits

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 400°.
- Line muffin pan with paper cups or grease with vegetable oil.
- Mash bananas and stir in milk, egg, oil and lemon juice.
- In a separate bowl, mix together dry ingredients—flour, manzanita sugar, baking powder, salt.
- Mix wet ingredients together, then add to the dry and gently stir in fruit.
- Bake for approximately 20 minutes.^[64]

Makes 12 muffins.

FALL

COUNT OAK NUTS Find an Oak tree and see how many Oak nuts you can find. Count your total and then combine in a basket with the nuts other family members have found. Store in a dry location to use for baking next year.

BEAD A MADRONE BERRY NECKLACE Collect red Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) berries. String berries before drying. **NOTE** If it will be several days or a week before you use the berries, keep them refrigerated to keep them moist. For a strong thread, use dental floss.

PLANT NATIVE FRUITS Order a native plant that produces edible fruit, such as Chokecherry, Elderberry, Currant, Gooseberry or Thimbleberry (See "Native Plant Nurseries"). With your child, dig a hole and follow the nursery's planting guidelines. Allow winter rains to help the plant get established. Enjoy watching it grow and tasting unique, delicious local fruits.

WINTER

MAKE A HOLIDAY CARD Using crayons and pushing down hard, draw a winter scene of native trees. Watercolor over the scene. The crayon will resist the paint and shine through clearly. A fun variation is to use a white crayon on white paper. Your scene will stay an invisible secret until you add the watercolor.

RACE FOR TWIGS Before the game begins, collect an assortment of winter twigs from different types of native trees. If you have 5 players, collect at least 6 twigs from each kind of tree. The person who is "it" then keeps one twig before scattering the rest at the opposite side of the room or a flat, outdoor area. The players line up at one end, and "it" shows them the twig. At the count of three, the players run to find a matching twig. Everyone who gets back to the starting line with the right kind of twig within 30 seconds gets a point. Continue the game with the remaining types of twigs. At the end of the game, make sure all of the players can match the twigs to the correct tree.

BAKE OAK NUT CHOCOLATE MUFFINS

- 1 cup whole wheat, rice or all purpose flour
- ¾ cup prepared Oak nut flour (See "Food—Oak Nut Flour" for details)
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 cup dairy, soy, oat, rice or other type of milk
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 375°. Grease a 12-cup muffin pan.
- Combine dry ingredients in a medium bowl.
- Stir the eggs, milk and melted butter together, then add to the dry ingredients and mix until just combined.
- Pour into muffin pan.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Tiny Seed by Eric Carle. Ages 2-6

In a Nutshell by Joseph Anthony. Ages 3-7

Miss Rumphias by Barbara Cooney. Ages 4-8

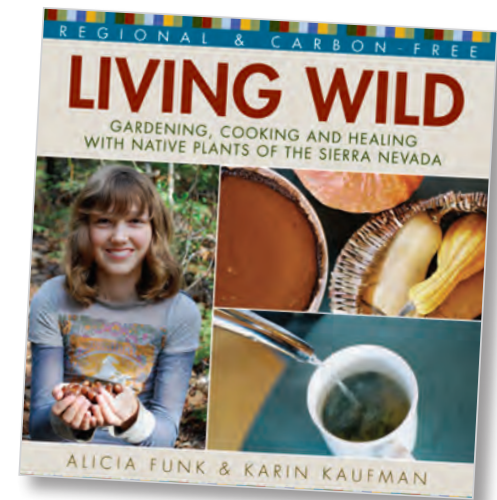
The Little Creek by Jennifer Ward. Ages 9-12

Shanleya's Quest by Thomas Elpel. Ages 9-12

Walking the World in Wonder: A Children's Herbal by Ellen Evert Hopman. Ages 6-9

A Kid's Herb Book by Lesley Tierra. Ages 9-12

Juniper by Monica Furlong. Ages 10 and up



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