

March 2020

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

Foraging Horsetail & Wild Mustard

Collectible Nature Cards:
Trees & Their Uses

Making Land Art

Foraging Word
Search

Seasonal poems,
activities,
nature journal
pages and more!



From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

What's the weather like where you are this month?

Here in Minnesota, we've just started tapping our maple trees to collect the sap and boil it down into syrup. This takes a very long time and makes our house very steamy, but that's good because we have dry air in our house this time of year and we have a small enough amount of sap that it doesn't steam it up too much. Some people who boil down lots of sap have reported that it made so much steam it made their wallpaper come off the walls!

This month in Wild Kids Magazine, we have information about making land art and foraging horsetail, along with botanical coloring pages for wild mustard and horsetail, plus nature cards of trees and their uses. There's also a foraging word search and all of the usual nature study pages.

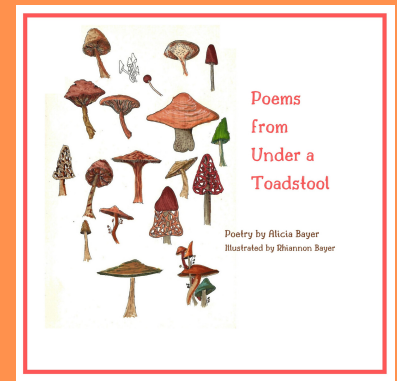
We also have something a little different for poetry this month. I've included a few poems from a poetry book I just published with one of my kids, Rhiannon (Rhia for short). Rhia loves hiking and foraging, especially wild mushrooms. She also loves to draw, and last year she showed me some mushroom doodles she had drawn in her journal. I loved them so much I told her they should be in a children's book, and she suggested that I could write some poems to accompany them for a book. I did, and together we made a children's poetry book we call *Poems From Under a Toadstool*. I've included a few of the poems and her drawings this month to share them with you. If you'd like to make your own drawings or poems about mushrooms (or anything else nature-related), you can send them to us and we'll feature them in upcoming issues.

Have a wonderful, wild month!

Alicia

Why is Wild Kids free?

Kids (and their grown ups) need nature, and nature needs us! Our family believes in the importance of sharing & helping each other, and of passing on skills to help our world and each other. As long as we are able, we plan to produce Wild Kids to help do this for families who find it useful.



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Find lots more links, information and fun to accompany this month's themes at www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids.

Go Wild in March

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Color in the circles of the ones you do!

Go on a flashlight walk at night and see what wildlife you can spot

In the Northern Hemisphere: Bring budding branches like lilacs inside to force early blooming

Find a good walking stick and paint, carve or decorate it

In the Southern Hemisphere: Look for ripening wild berries and try to positively ID them

Look for signs of the changing seasons

Make some land art (we have some fun ideas for how in this issue)

Put out nest materials for neighborhood birds (see the website for more info)

Use fallen or trimmed branches to make something crafty

Go rock hunting or beach combing

Go on a walk in your neighborhood and see how many wild edible plants you can spot

Let's Make Some Land Art!



Here's a fun way to get creative outside this month. Make some land art!

You can use sticks, leaves, rocks, shells, feathers, flowers, petals or other natural materials that you find.

You can make sculptures, designs or whatever else you dream up!



Just make sure you don't harm any plants or animals and that your art doesn't interfere with things like pathways.

If you like, take pictures of your creations and send them to Wild Kids. We'll put the photos in future issues.

Foraging Word Search

H V Y V L H
B W U S U B F X L O K R
S G E R W D B D R F Y W E T R J S K
B G L A U A I C A W I L D P L U M S
G R D M K K Q O Q G A S P A R A G U S U
G Y N P R R M O U B P D A N D E L I O N
H M D S E A C B Y W L W B E R N E T T L E H
B F R G D C H O K E C H E R R I E S M I F Y
D D T Y U C R A B A P P L E S F Q O N N
L A M B S Q U A R T E R S O Y
A C G B B W S Z N
T B L H W N G K J V B A B
L P W D E L V A A C O R N S M
X C D W J O B K Y R V C L O V E R P N
M U L B E R R I E S L K G F P U S Z R D E
T G O O S E B E R R I E S J O I O J X V A
C A T T A I L S D H U C K L E B E R R I E S G
M A P L E S A P K B M G B K H R D V D D U
S W A L N U T S O K U W N G G E X I A N A
M T Q E E X N F N S W M X L M O Y Y U
B G L U Z X R X T G W Y F L F E S
S C P E T J A P T V E G V
Y W C U R L S T E
H D O
Q L M

Word List:

NETTLE
LAMBS QUARTERS
ASPARAGUS
GARLIC MUSTARD
WALNUTS

VIOLET
ACORNS
DANDELION
CRAB APPLES
WILD PLUMS

MULBERRIES
RAMPS
CATTAILS
CLOVER
HUCKLEBERRIES

CHOKERIES
SORREL
GOOSEBERRIES
MAPLE SAP

This month's collectible nature cards:

Trees and Their Uses

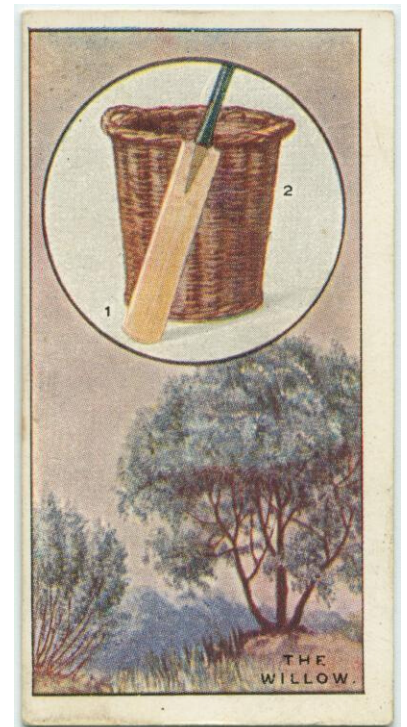
All this year, we're offering different sets of vintage collectible nature cards each month.

This month's collection is a set of common trees of Britain, from about a hundred years ago. Each card shows what the tree looks like on the front, along with some pictures of ways the tree was used in that time period.

Sometimes trees were mainly used for food, like apple trees. Sometimes they were mainly used for wood, like oak trees. Sometimes they were used for other purposes, like yew trees for decorative topiary designs. Each card has text on the back that talks about the tree and how it was used.

You may want to print these cards on card stock so they are more sturdy, or to laminate them.

How many trees can you identify? How many grow in your neighborhood?



Look for the cards at the end of the magazine!

Poems From Under a Toadstool

Mycology

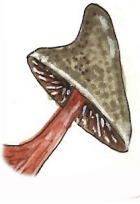


They're tiny and slimy and black and beige,
Speckled and freckled and white and gray,
Bumpy and lumpy and thataways.

They're pretty and creepy, sinister, sweet,
Harmless or poisonous, tasty to eat.
They're funny and funky, hard to beat.
I could go on for days.



Whatever their shape, their color, their size,
Every mushroom's a wee little prize
For they're magical gifts that materialize
Right at your grateful feet.



The Fairy's Retirement

Once there was a fairy who lived in the woods
under a mushroom by a wide oak tree.
She did all the things that a fairy should
And she dreamed of a life by the big blue sea

She helped the worms and she helped the spiders.
She helped the flowers and she helped the bees.
She helped her mama and she helped her neighbors.
She lived a good life and then moved to the sea.



All poems by Alicia Bayer
illustrated by Rhiannon Bayer
Courtesy of Poems from Under a Toadstool

A Promise

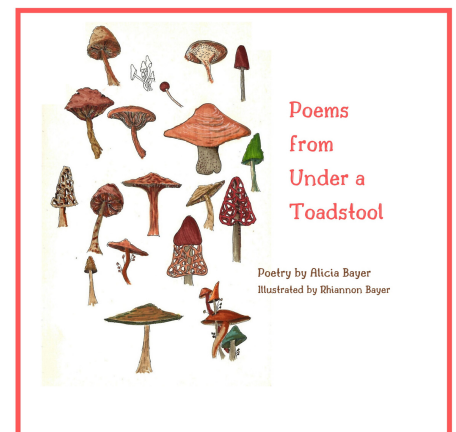
Nature loves you
like a good dog
or a burdock burr
and will follow you
no matter where you are.

8 Things to Do with a Mushroom

Draw it
Dry it
Take it home

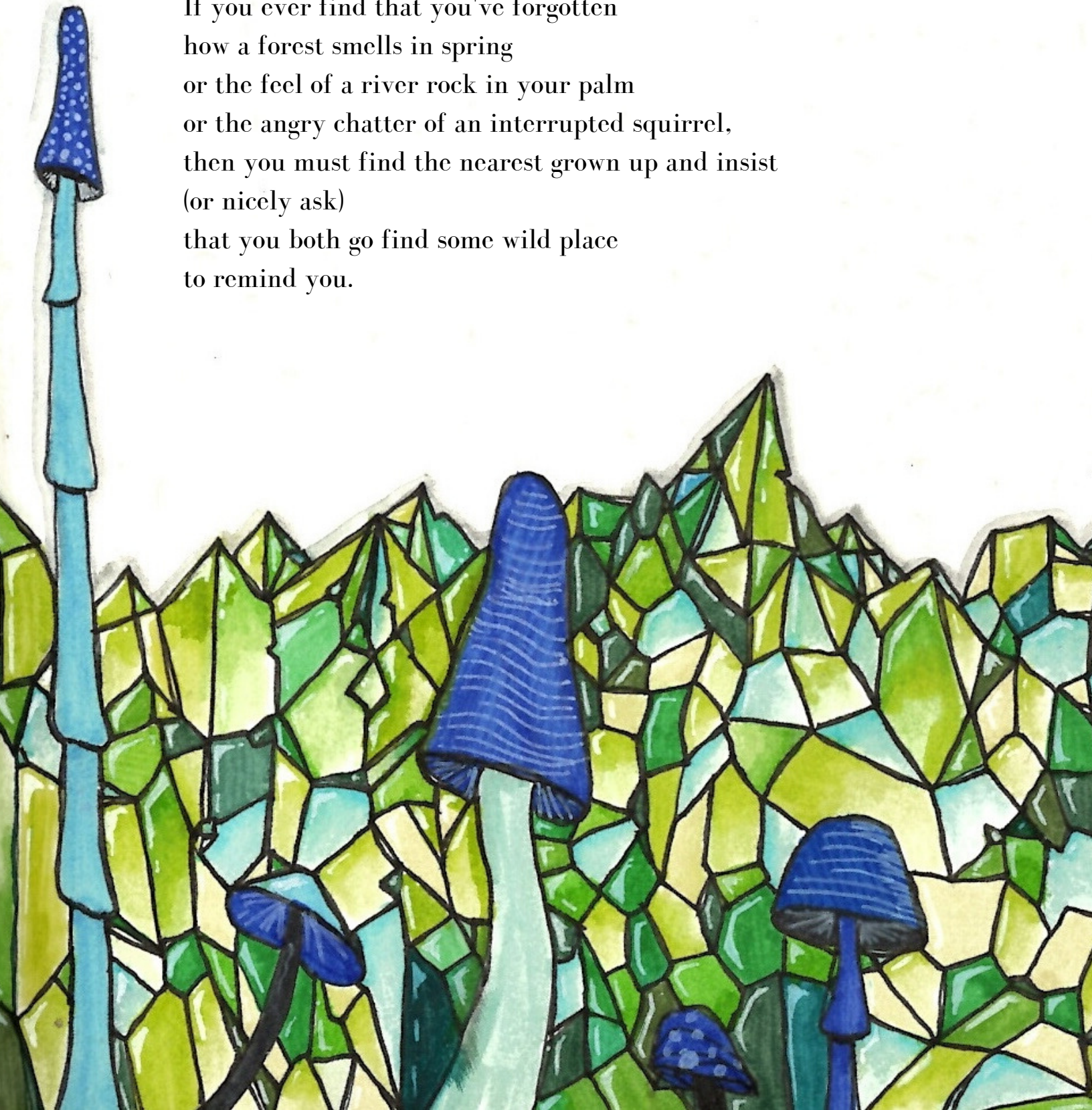
Slice it
Study it
Leave it alone

Take a spore print
Make it a poem

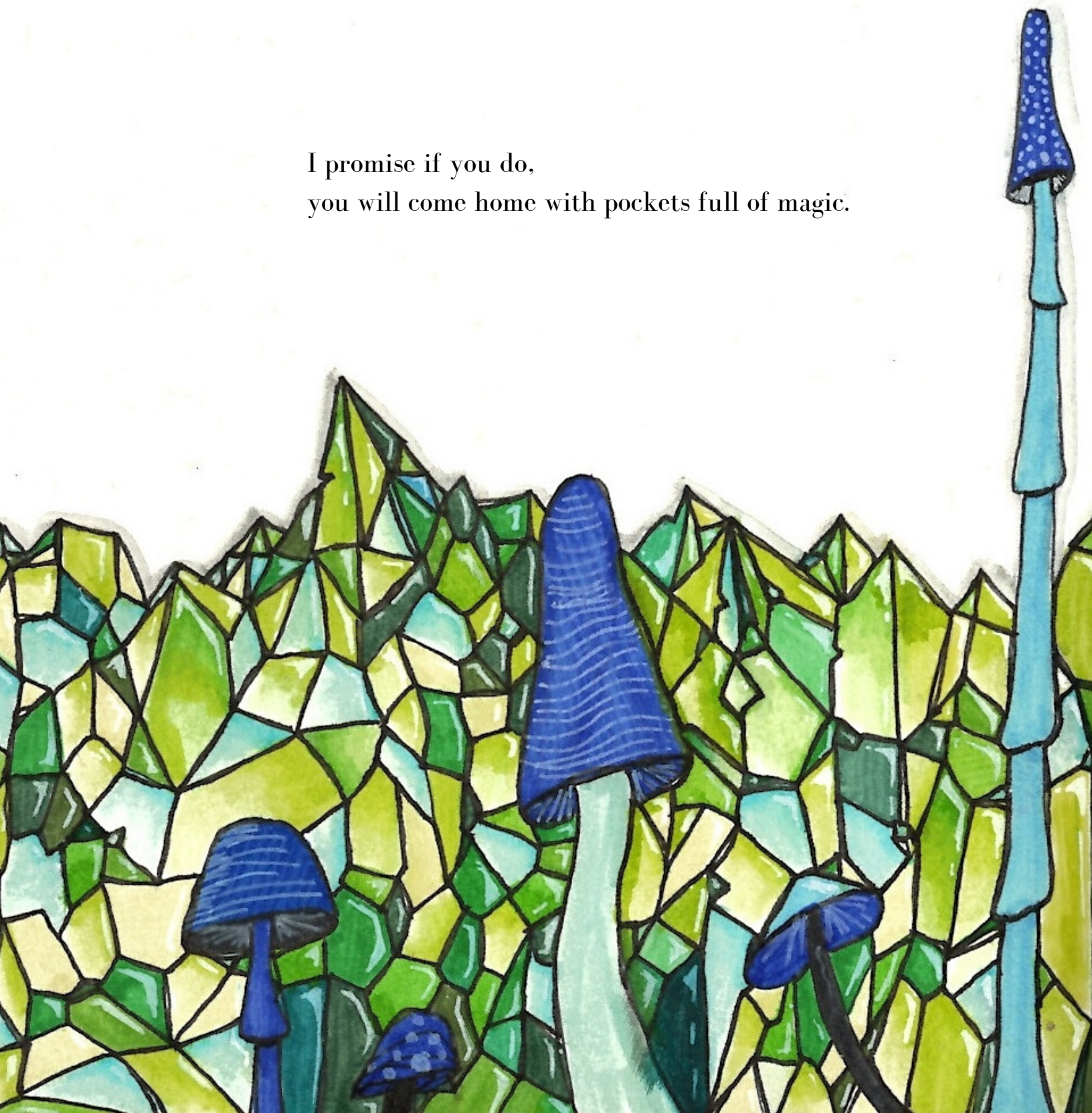


If Ever

If you ever find that you've forgotten
how a forest smells in spring
or the feel of a river rock in your palm
or the angry chatter of an interrupted squirrel,
then you must find the nearest grown up and insist
(or nicely ask)
that you both go find some wild place
to remind you.



I promise if you do,
you will come home with pockets full of magic.

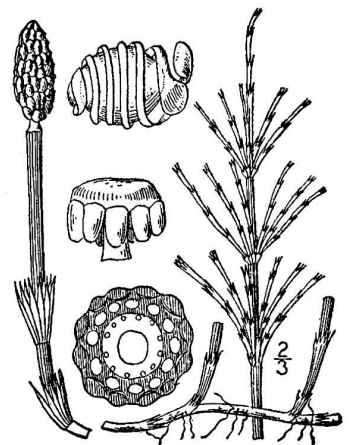


Finding Horsetail

Horsetail (Equisetaceae spp.) is an incredibly old kind of plant that was here before the dinosaurs were! It is also a very common wild plant in much of the world. People use it medicinally to do things like grow thicker hair and remineralize teeth because it is very high in a mineral called silica.

Our family has never used it medicinally or eaten it. We are looking forward to learning more about it this year.

What we do with horsetail is play with it! The parts come apart at their joints and then fit back together again, like wacky prehistoric plant toys. :)



Try to find some this year and you'll see what we mean.

We've put links to some of the best foraging information we've found on the Wild Kids website if you'd like to learn about other uses of horsetail.

Make sure to never eat a wild plant before fully researching it with credible sources and properly identifying it!

HORSETAIL

(EQUISETACEAE SPP.)

Plate 217.



Horsetail.

Eliz. Blackwell delin. sculp. et Pinx.

1. The Head which contains the Seed.
2. Seed.

cauda equina.

From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,*
Written, illustrated and engraved by Elizabeth Blackwell, 1737

WHITE MUSTARD

(SINAPIS ALBA)

Plate 29



White Mustard

Eliz. Blackwell delin sculp et Pinx.

1 Flower
2 Fruit
3 Seed

Sinapa album

From: *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts Of The Most Useful Plants Which Are Now Used In The Practice Of Physick,*
Written, illustrated and engraved by Elizabeth Blackwell, 1737

MY NATURE JOURNAL

March

March Bird List

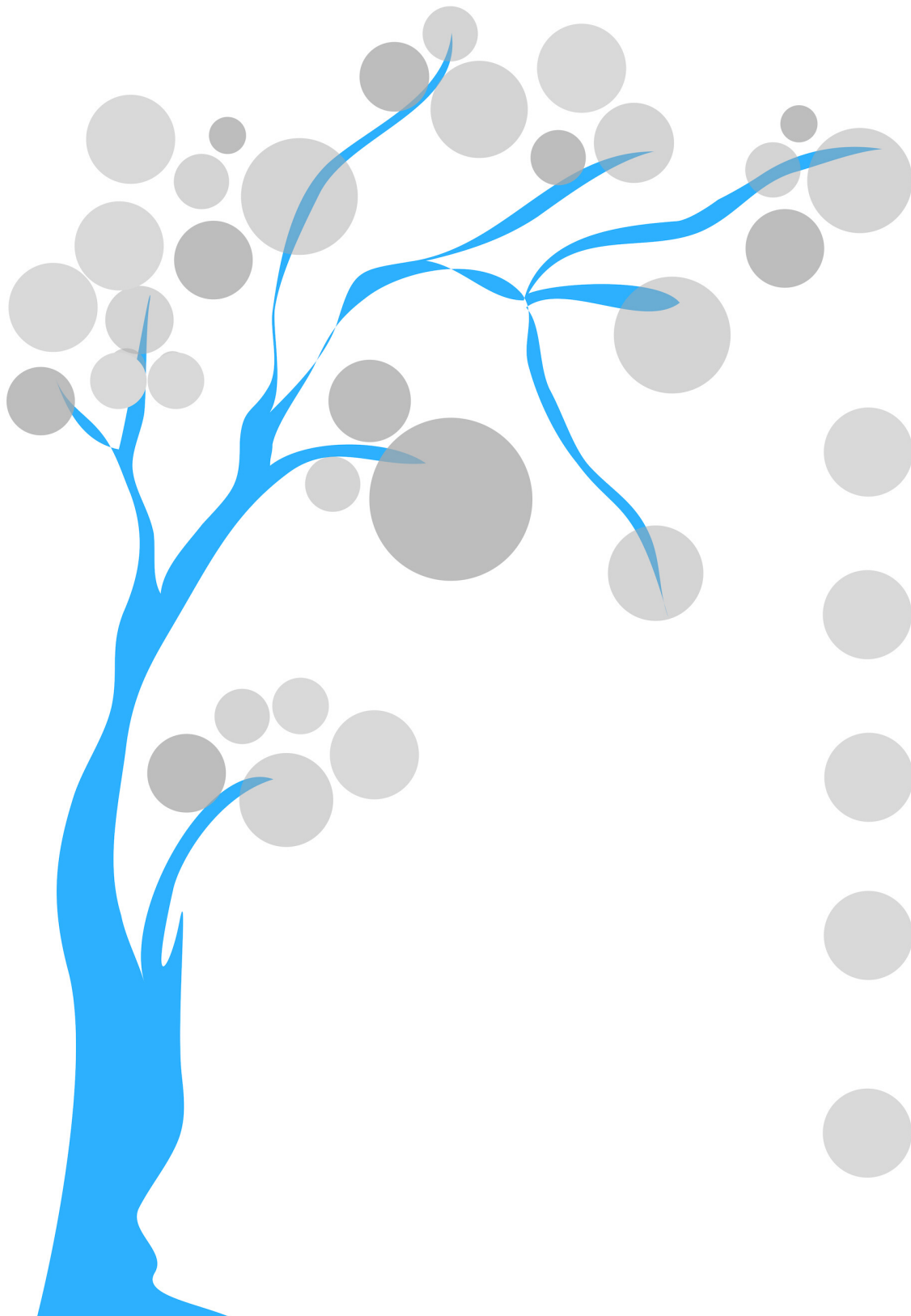
Birds spotted this month

March Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

March Weather

Directions: Designate one color for each type of weather.
Color a leaf with one or two colors each day to show that day's weather.



Key

- sunny
- cloudy
- rainy
- snowy
- windy/
stormy

March Nature Notes

Record any interesting discoveries here -- plants you identify, foods you forage, outdoor activities, cool nature projects, nature books read, or just notes about what it's like outside this week!

Week 1 Sketches & Observations

Week 2 Sketches & Observations

Week 3 Sketches & Observations

Week 4 Sketches & Observations

MY FORAGING GUIDE FOR:

GENERAL SKETCH OF THE PLANT

CLOSE-UP SKETCHES OF PLANT PARTS

LATIN NAME _____

WHERE FOUND _____

PARTS USED _____

LOOKALIKES & HOW TO POSITIVELY ID:

WARNINGS: _____

FORAGING RECORD (DATES, WHERE FOUND, HOW IT WAS USED)

MY RATING FOR THIS PLANT

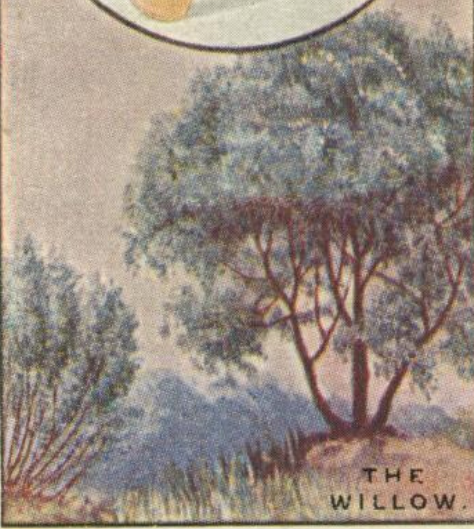




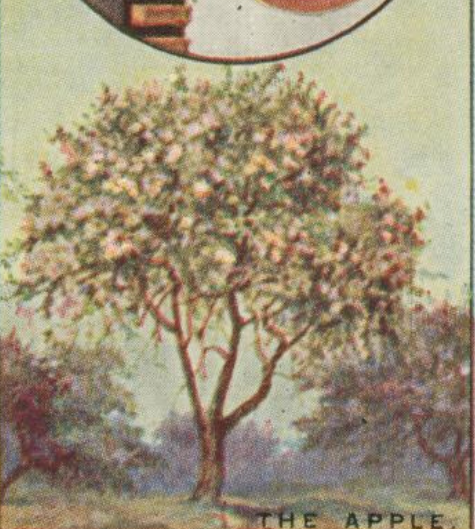
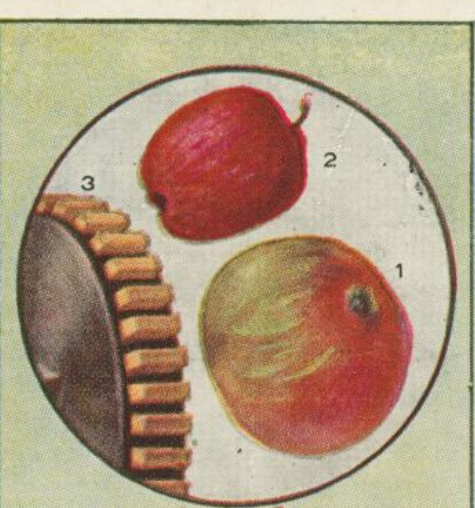
Want to see your stuff in Wild Kids?

We welcome articles, photos, artwork and other submissions from kids and their grown ups.

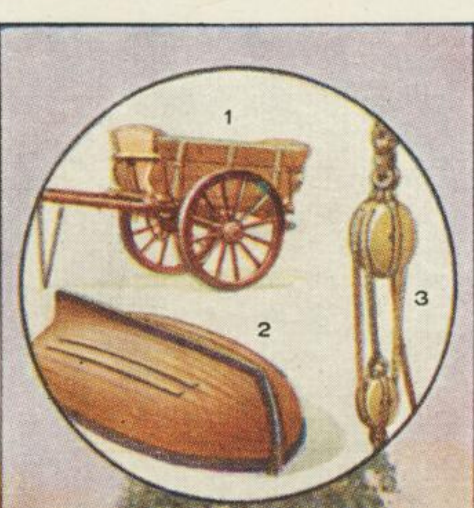
Visit magicalchildhood.com/wildkids to learn more.



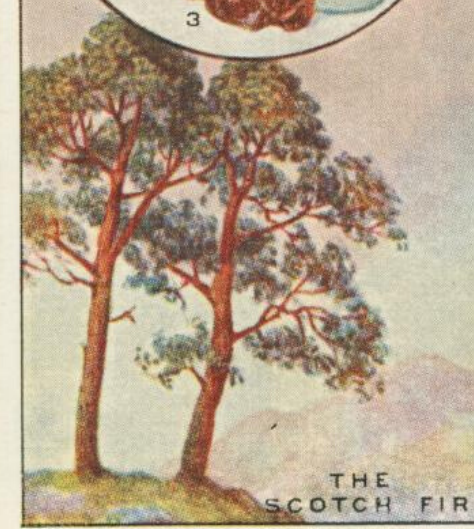
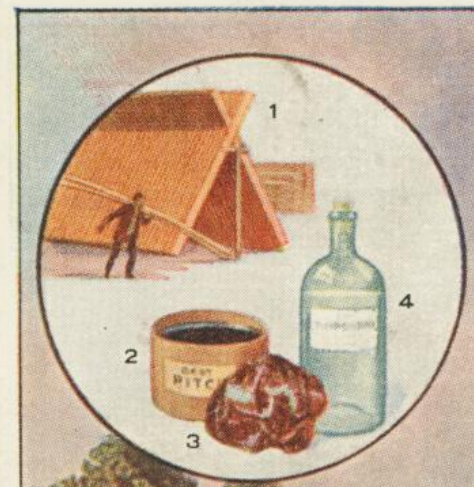
THE WILLOW.



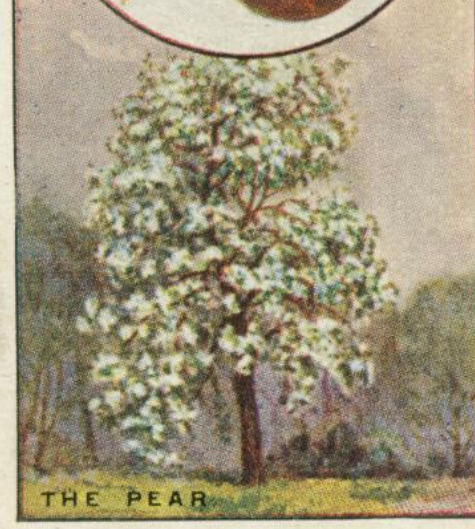
THE APPLE.



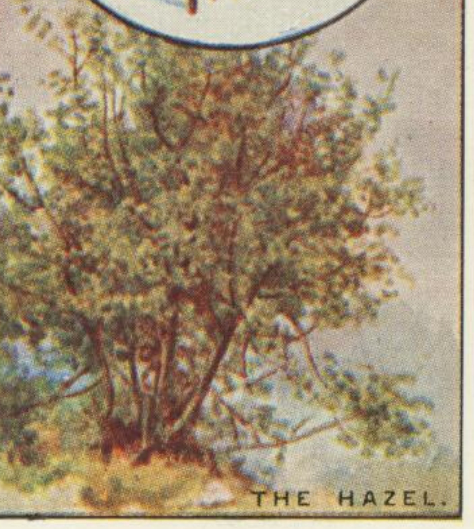
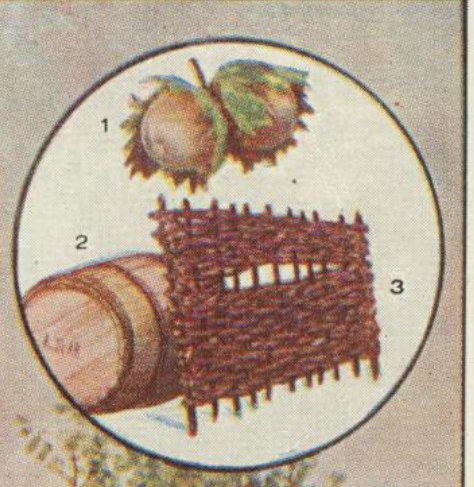
THE ELM.



THE SCOTCH FIR



THE PEAR



THE HAZEL.



10
The Elm.

(*Ulmus campestris*.)

A tree of the hedgerows and woods, less common in Scotland than in England. Its average height is 70-80ft., though under favourable conditions Elms sometimes attain 130ft. or even more. The small flowers appear in March and April before the leaves, and are succeeded by winged seeds. Elms are usually propagated by root-suckers or by layering. The close-grained brown wood was formerly in demand for water-pipes and for piles for bridges (e.g., Old London Bridge). It is used for keels (2) and other timbers of boats and ships, blocks for rigging (3), coffins, wheels, and cart-planking (1).



2
The Apple.

(*Pyrus malus*.)

The Wild Apple tree, though often attaining a height of 20 to 30 feet, is sometimes little larger than a good-sized bush. In May its crooked spreading branches bear an abundance of fragrant blossoms, replaced in autumn by miniature apples of yellow and red. Cider and jelly are made from these, also a vinegar known as *verjuice*. Cultivated apples are of three classes: dessert (1), culinary, and cider apples (2). Herefordshire and Devonshire are centres of cultivation, where cider manufacture is an important industry. Apple wood, which is reddish-brown in colour, is used for cog-wheels (3) and turnery.



24
The Willow.

(Genus: *Salix*.)

Botanists distinguish over 100 species of Willow, nearly 20 being British. Only four are valued as timber trees, the Sallow, White, Bedford, and Crack Willows. The light, tough wood of straight-boled Willows is most valuable for the blades of cricket bats (1), and for artificial limbs, shoemakers' lasts, brake-blocks, lining for carts and barrows, etc. Willows are frequently pollarded, but this admits moisture at the top and spoils the timber of the bole. Many Osiers, or Willows of shrubby habit, are grown for the long pliant shoots used for wicker and basket work (2) and crab-pots.



13
The Hazel.

(*Corylus Avellana*.)

Usually a shrub of woods and hedgerows, about 12ft. high, the Hazel when left alone develops into a small tree some 30ft. in height. The yellow catkins appear in February and March, before the leaves. These are of a purplish tint at first, becoming greener in summer and changing in autumn to brown and rich yellow. The pliant branches provide hoops for barrels and crates (2); walking sticks, and hurdles (3). The larger wood is a source of charcoal, and the roots yield veneers for cabinet-work. Cob-nuts, Filberts and Barcelona nuts are well-known varieties of the Hazel.



19
The Pear.

(*Pyrus communis*.)

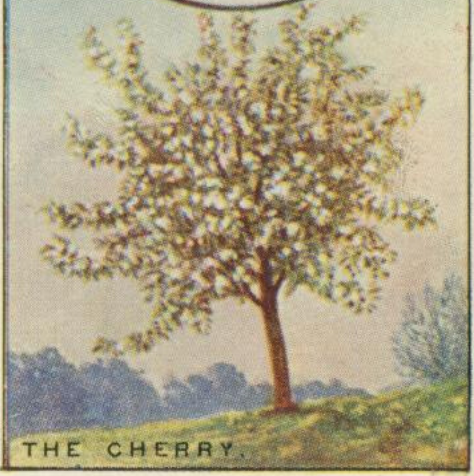
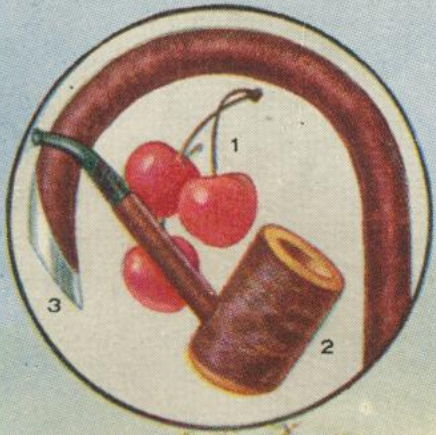
A quickly-growing tree, 20-50ft. high, the Pear has been cultivated since the time of the Greeks. Its clusters of pure white bloom appear in April and May and are succeeded by the familiar fruit. The cultivated varieties are numerous, the fruit (1) being highly esteemed for dessert and culinary purposes, and as a source of perry. A pear tree at Holme Lacy by the rooting of its branches covered more than an acre, and yielded in one year 14 hogsheads of perry. The reddish-brown wood, compact and fine-grained, is extensively used by carvers and makers of mathematical instruments (2).



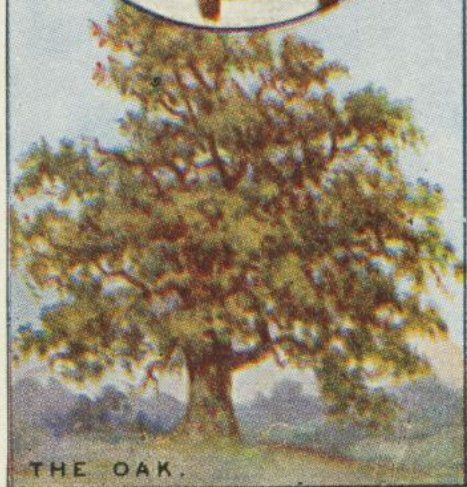
11
The Scotch Fir.

(*Pinus sylvestris*.)

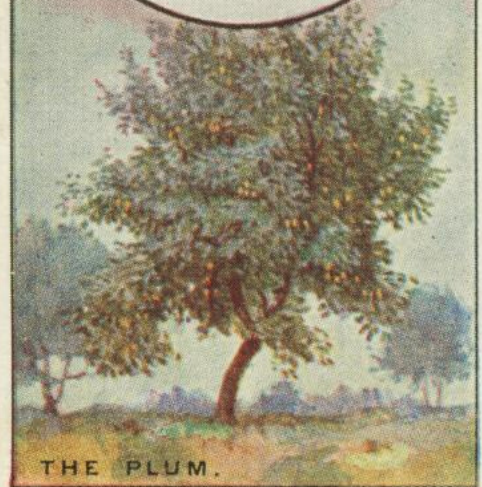
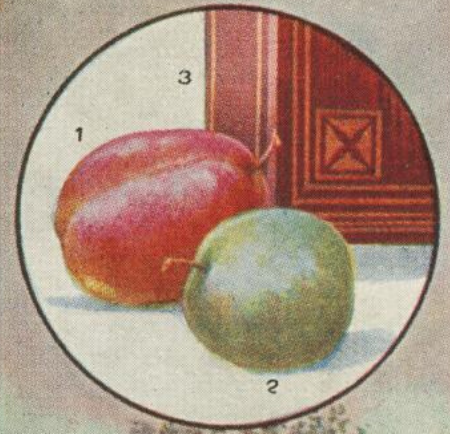
The Scots Pine (usually but incorrectly termed Scotch Fir), one of our most picturesque trees, attains a height of 70-120ft. The needle-like leaves remain for over two years. One of the most familiar and useful of timbers, even and straight grained, tough and durable, it is widely used for joists, roof timbers and general joinery, railway sleepers, mining timber, etc., and as a source of pitch (2), resin (3), and turpentine (4). Imported logs are known as *fir timber*; imported boards and planks as *yellow deal* in London, *red deal* in the provinces, and *redwood* abroad.



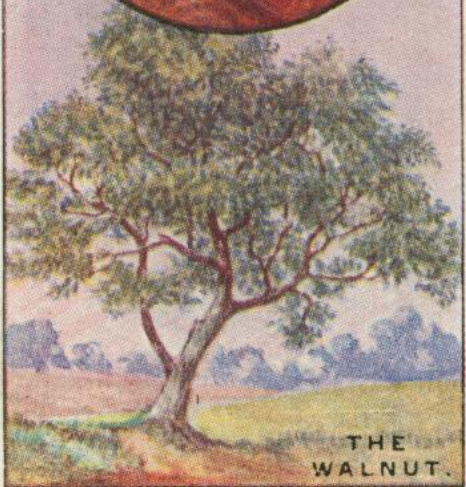
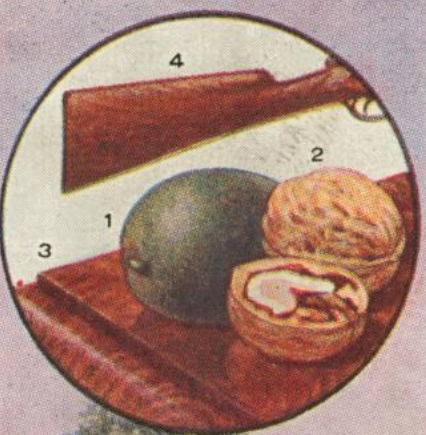
THE CHERRY.



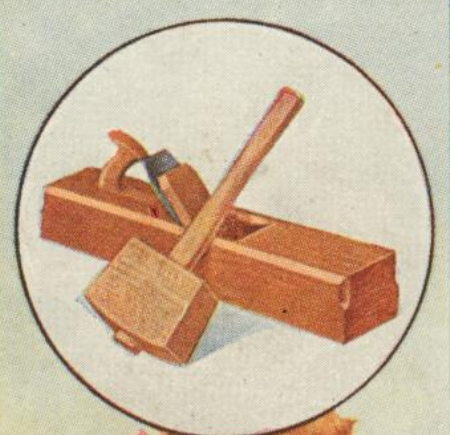
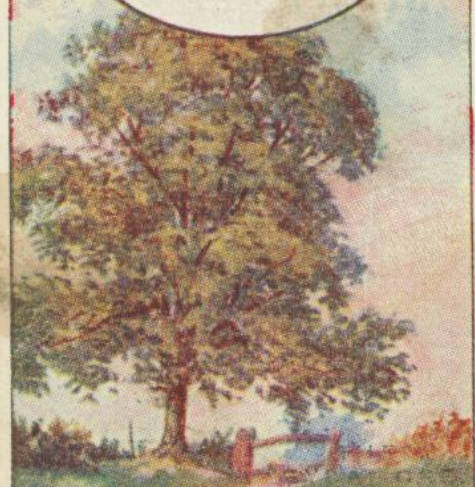
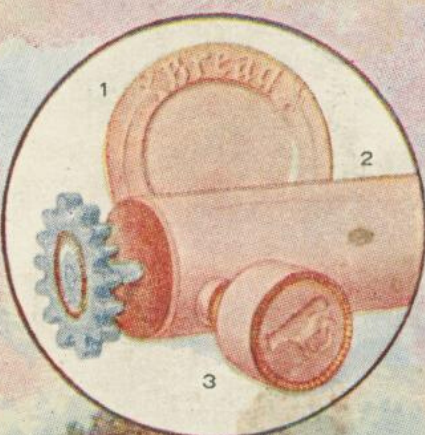
THE OAK.



THE PLUM.



THE WALNUT.



THE BEECH.



20
The Plum.

(*Prunus domestica*.)

A native of W. Asia, the Plum has long been naturalised in Europe, where botanists distinguish three principal species: *P. domestica*, the Wild Plum, a small tree 5-10ft. high; *P. iristitia*, the Damson or Bullace; and *P. spinosa*, the Blackthorne or Sloe, usually more of a shrub than a tree. The first two are probably ancestors of the many types of Plum now cultivated (1 and 2). Greengages, Damsons, and Egg Plums are well known and valuable varieties, prunes and French plums having been dried in the sun. The close-grained, brown-red wood is used for inlaying (3), cabinet-work and turnery.



18
The Oak.

(*Quercus robur*.)

The British Oak varies in height from 60-130ft. according to situation. When grown in the open it sometimes develops a huge bole, and the spreading branches become crooked, producing naturally curved timber valuable for ship building. The familiar acorns form useful food for pigs. From the slow-growing wood, pre-eminent for strength and durability, were built the old "wooden walls" of England as well as much of the timber work at Westminster Hall and Abbey and elsewhere. Oak is largely used for furniture, panelling, carving, veneer, and by carpenters and builders.



7
The Cherry.

(*Prunus avium*.)

The three native British Cherties are the Gean (*P. avium*), a tree about 30ft. high; the Dwarf Cherry (*P. cerasus*), which is more of a bush than a tree; and the Bird Cherry (*P. padus*), a northern species 10-20ft. high. Cherries are cultivated as ornamental trees, but principally on account of their fruit (1), special varieties of which are used for dessert, preserves, pies, etc., and for making cherry brandy and liqueurs. The handsome wood of the Cherry, which is pale reddish-brown in colour, is used for cabinet and chair making, pipes (2), walking sticks (3), the backs of brushes, etc.



4
The Beech.

(*Fagus sylvatica*.)

One of the largest and stateliest of our forest trees, the Beech attains a height of about 100ft. Its purplish-brown tassels of bloom appear in May and are succeeded by the "mast"—three-sided chestnut-brown fruits enclosed in bristly cups. Beech mast was formerly of great importance as food for pigs, and is still used for this purpose as well as for pheasants and deer. Beech wood, which is light reddish-brown, is strong and elastic, capable of a good polish, and readily bent after steaming. It is used for furniture, especially chairs, brushes, planes, and other tools, trays, shovels, lasts, and toys.



22
The Sycamore.

(*Acer pseudo-platanus*.)

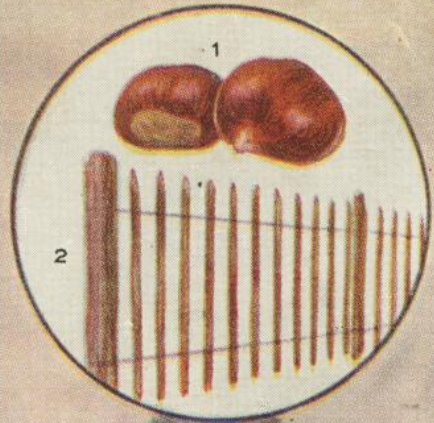
Unlike the Common Maple, the Sycamore or Great Maple is not a native, having been introduced from the Continent about the 15th century. It is a handsome tree growing to 60-80ft., and bearing long clusters of bloom succeeded by bunches of red-brown "keys" winged fruits about 1½ins. long. The close, tough wood is used by turners for bowls, cups, pattern-blocks, rollers of mangles and washing machines (2), moulds (3), and platters (1). Makers of furniture employ it in its natural state, and also stained to a beautiful silver-grey when it is termed "Artificial Harewood."



23
The Walnut.

(*Juglans regia*.)

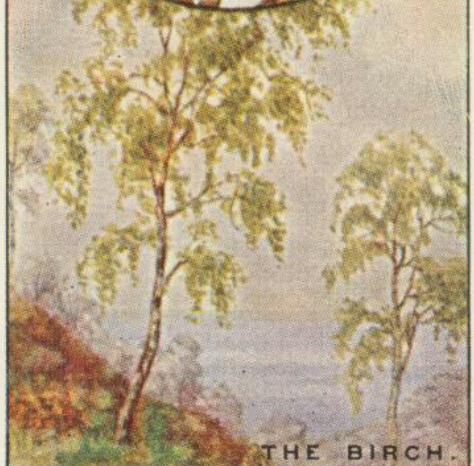
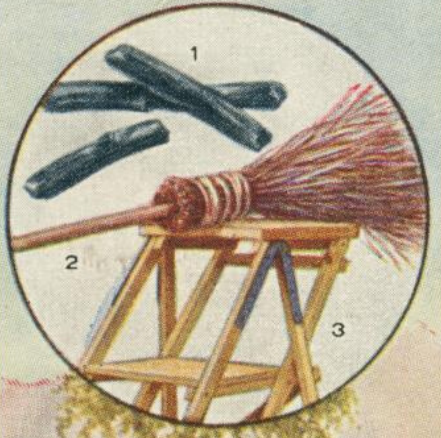
A native of the Himalayas and of Asia Minor and Greece, the Walnut has been cultivated in Britain since the 15th century. It is a handsome tree, some 40-60 feet high, with a bole 20ft. in circumference, and bearing a profusion of large, fragrant leaves. In the familiar plum-like fruit the green flesh becomes brown and splits revealing the "stone" or Walnut. When young the fruits are used for pickling, while the ripe Walnuts are much appreciated for dessert (1 and 2). The tough, finely-figured wood, easily worked and capable of a beautiful polish, is used for furniture (3) and gun stocks (4).



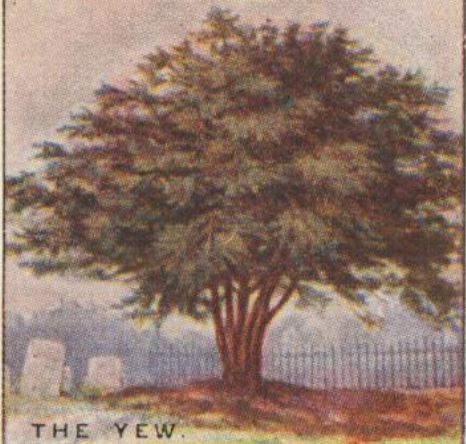
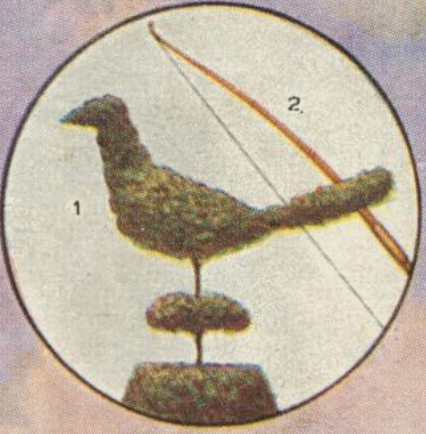
THE SWEET CHESTNUT



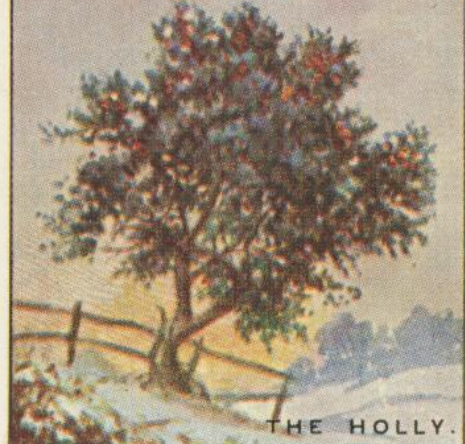
THE HORSE CHESTNUT



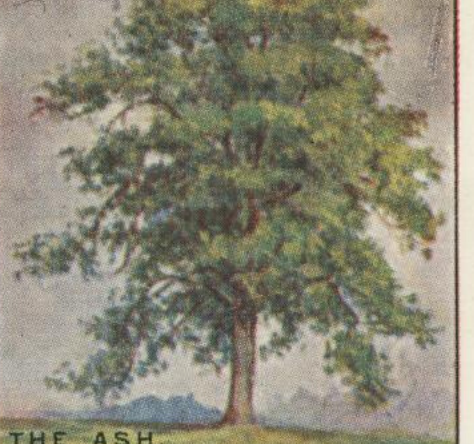
THE BIRCH



THE YEWE



THE HOLLY



THE ASH



5
The Birch.

(*Betula alba.*)

The most graceful and hardy of our forest trees attains a height of some 50-60ft. The fruits are tiny winged nuts readily scattered by the wind. The silvery-white bark, harder and more durable than the wood itself, is used in N. Europe for roofing, tanning, etc. Birch wood, which is close, tough, and easily worked, but not very durable, is used for cheap furniture, step-boards (3) carts, and vans, agricultural implements, hand-rails, and charcoal (1). The flexible twigs are made into brooms (2), and were at one time in demand for the "birchies" dreaded by schoolboys of past generations.



8
The Horse Chestnut.

(*Aesculus Hippocastanum.*)

A native of Greece, Persia, and N. India, introduced into Britain about 1550. The name is said by early writers to have been given because of its efficacy in curing horses broken-winded and other cattle of coughs. One of the noblest of our flowering trees, 80 or 100ft. high, with a massive pyramid of handsome foliage and beautiful blooms. The glossy seeds (1), the *Konkers* (i.e., Conquerors) of the schoolboy, are sometimes given to cattle, sheep, and deer. The soft, fine-grained but perishable wood is used for turnery (2), charcoal for gunpowder (3), and for indoor wood-work.



9
The Sweet Chestnut.

(*Castanea sativa.*)

A native of Asia Minor and Greece, this tree was probably introduced here by the Romans. A stately and magnificent tree, with an average age of some 500 years. The yellowish hanging catkins appear in early summer, and are succeeded by the tough prickly case containing the familiar nuts (1) which are eaten roasted or boiled. The timber bears some resemblance to Oak, and has been used in combination with it. It is, however, more valuable while young than old. Young trees are extensively used for hop-poles and gate-posts, and split laths for fencing (2).



3
The Ash.

(*Fraxinus excelsior.*)

This handsome and graceful tree attains a height of 50-80 feet. The reddish flowers appear in March and April before the leaves, and are succeeded by winged fruits ("keys"). Among British trees the Ash ranks next to the Oak in importance, its strong tough wood being easily bent after steaming. It is much used by wheelwrights, coachbuilders, cabinetmakers, and turners. Agricultural implements, barrel hoops, wheels, tennis rackets (1), hockey sticks (2) and oars (3) are made from ash, which is also used for motor carriage bodies and in aircraft construction.



14
The Holly.

(*Ilex Aquifolium.*)

The Holly is usually seen as a small tree in hedgerows and forest glades, though under favourable conditions it sometimes attains 50-70ft. in height. Its ancient name *Holm* appears in Holmsdale, Holmwood, and Holmbury, Surrey, where Hollies still flourish. The spiny, glossy evergreen leaves and brilliant scarlet berries (3) are well known. Birdlime is prepared from the smooth, pale-grey bark. The hard, fine-grained wood is valued for inlaid work (2), turnery, musical instruments, teapot handles (1), etc. It takes stain well, and when dyed black forms a useful substitute for ebony.



25
The Yew.

(*Taxus baccata.*)

The Yew is found wild in Britain, especially on the chalk downs of the south and in the Lake District. A statute of Edward I states that Yews were often planted in churchyards as a protection from high winds, and many of these venerable trees still survive; that at Ankerwyke, near Staines, has a bole over 30ft. in circumference, and is probably more than a thousand years old. Yew leaves are poisonous to horses and to human beings. For centuries yew wood was used for bows (2), chairs, axle-trees, etc., and since the 17th century pruned Yews have been employed in topiary work (1).