

December 2023

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

2023 Wild Memories

Identifying Owl Calls

Wild Mushroom Gift Tags

Rock ID Cards

Name That
Wild Mushroom

Ways to Play & Learn
in Nature This Month

Seasonal poems, activities,
nature journal pages and more!



From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Happy December!

What are you hoping to do in nature this month?

Here in Minnesota, we are mostly done with our foraging season, other than a few things we can forage all year like pine needles for tea and tinder polypore fungus for starting fires.

We still have lots of our foraged goodies in our home, though, and we'll enjoy them all winter. I drink a hot drink every morning that is a mix of all kinds of healthy ingredients and includes dried mushroom powder from mushrooms we foraged. Our kids eat canned pears and applesauce from fruits we picked. I season our dinners with seasonings like wild ramp salt, and use frozen foraged ingredients like wild asparagus in our stir fries. We have jars of dried herbs like elderflowers, chamomile, nettles, mint and lemon balm to make teas with. There is elderberry syrup in the fridge for in case we get sick, and tinctures of hawthorn, dandelion root and motherwort to keep us grown ups healthy, just to name a bit! I love using it all during the cold winter and it helps remember the fun times we had gathering them.

We'll probably do lots of sledding and ice skating soon, once the lakes freeze and we have enough snow. I'm also looking forward to hiking in the woods, feeding the birds, watching meteor showers with lots of blankets and hot drinks, and lots more.

How about you? What wild adventures are you hoping to take soon? I hope you have a wild and wonderful 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 past issues and more at www.magicalchildhood.com/wildkids.

Go Wild in December

10 Ways to Learn and Play with Nature this Month

Make up an outdoor workout with fun ways to jump, balance, move, and use your muscles

Take a picture at the same time at the same place outside each day and see how things change over the month

Make a list of all the fun things you did in nature over the past year & all the plants you grew or foraged (we have a sheet for it in this issue)

Take watercolor painting supplies outside with an index card or tiny paper & try to mix up the exact color of the sky & paint it

Go for a walk and pretend you're an explorer stranded here 100 years ago. How could you use nature around you?

Celebrate the winter solstice on the 21st, when the days start getting longer again (or the summer solstice in the Southern Hemisphere)

Forage for wild potpourri materials to simmer like sprigs of pine, cedar & spruce, juniper & hawthorn berries, & lemon balm

Stay up late to watch the Geminid meteor shower (peaking on the 14th)

Take our rock ID cards outside & see how many kinds you can collect

Gather wild materials like grapevines or pine boughs to make a wreath

OWL CALLS

Owls call to attract mates or claim territory.
Learn their calls and you'll know who's nearby!



**Too-too-
too-too**

Northern Saw-whet Owl

**Who cooks
for you? Who
cooks for
you all?**



Barred Owl

**Horse-like
whinny,
extended
trill**



Screech Owl



Great Horned Owl

**Hoo-huhoo-
hooo-
hooooooh**

**Horror
Movie
Scream**



Barn Owl

Remember that owls use lots of different calls for different purposes, so an owl's sounds will sound different if it is greeting another owl, claiming its territory, looking for a mate, or annoyed, for instance. These are the sounds that each type of owl is most known for though.

Rock ID Cards

Here are some printable cards showing what different rocks look like. You can use these cards lots of ways. Here are a few fun ways to use them...

Flash cards:

Print out the cards on card stock, printing on both sides of the paper if your printer allows it (otherwise just print one side, put them back in the printer, and print the backs on them) and cut them out. You can laminate them if you want so they'll last longer. Place them all picture side up or have someone hold them up for you to see, and see if you can name each one.

Matching cards:

Print out two sets of the picture cards on card stock, leaving the backs blank (you don't need to print out the name pages). Cut them out and laminate them if you like to make them last longer. Spread them out on a table with the blank side facing you. Take turns turning over two cards and try to find matches. If you like, write the name of each rock on the photo so you learn the names as you play.

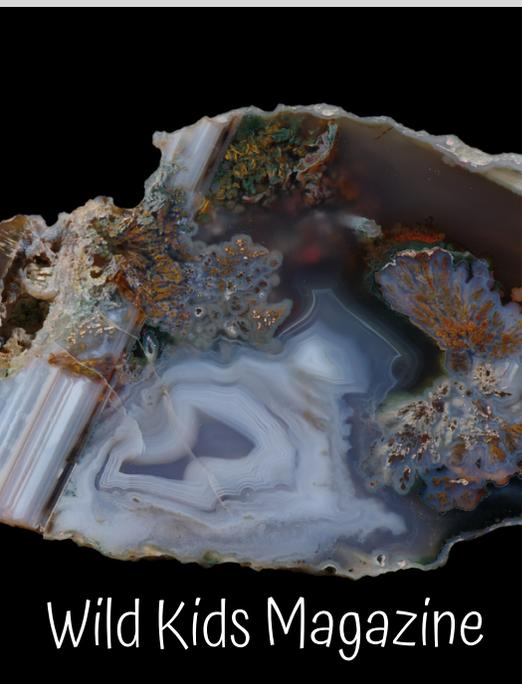
Field ID cards:

Print out the cards as you would for flash cards. Use a hole punch to punch a hole in the top left corner and put them on a key ring so you can take them with you outside and flip through them. If you like, make notes on the name side if you find that rock, noting things like where and when you found it.

Scavenger Hunt Cards:

Take your cards with you to a rocky place and try to find samples of as many of them as possible.

Head to geography.com to learn more about how to ID each type of rock!



pumice

obsidian

marble

anthracite
("hard coal")

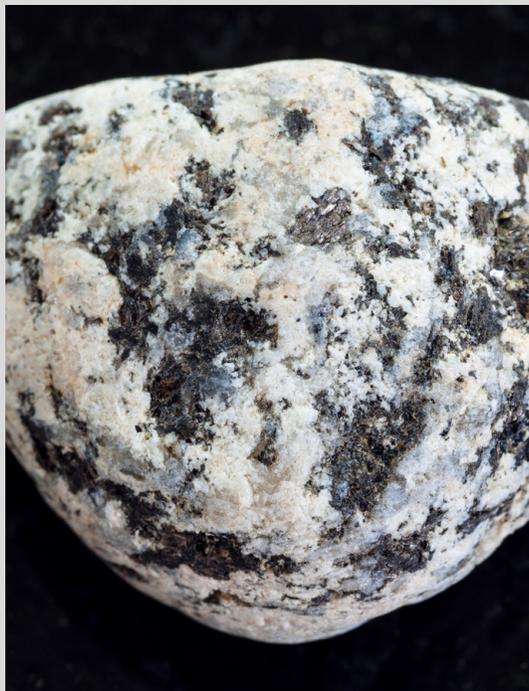
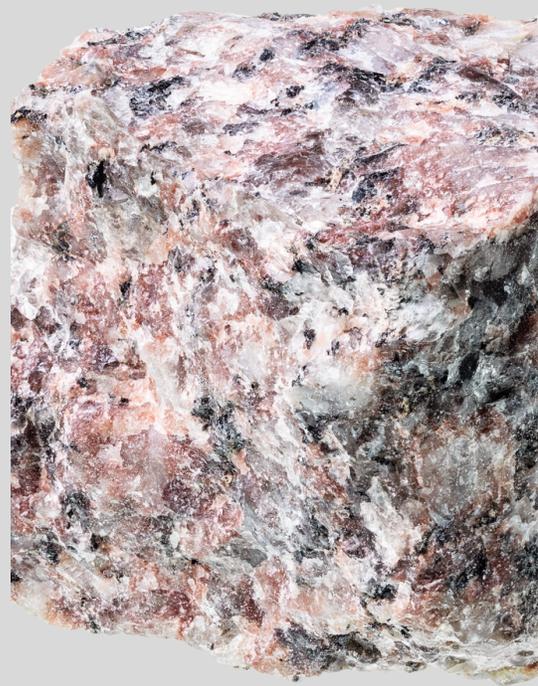
fossil

petrified wood

gneiss

pink quartzite

agate



granite

shale

flint

hornfels

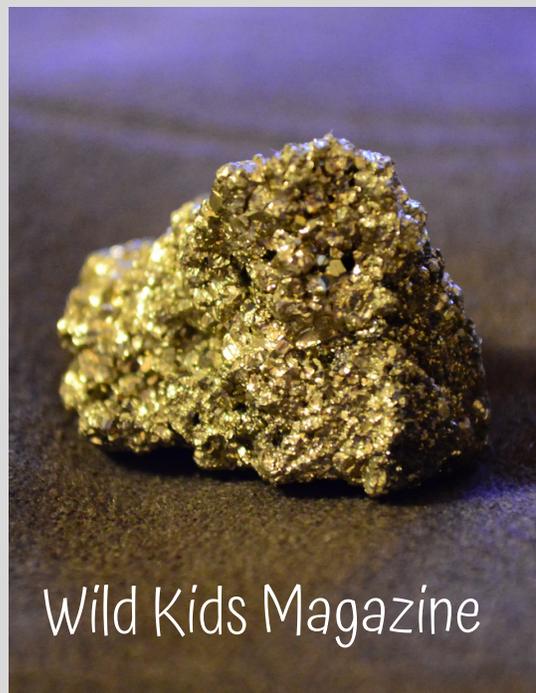
lapis lazuli

scoria

slate

diorite

basalt



coquina

siltstone

soapstone

chert

chalk
(limestone)

geode

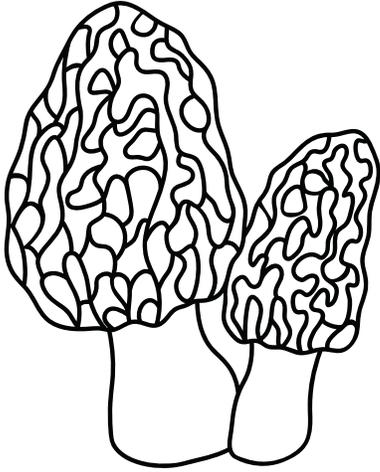
“fool’s gold”
(pyrite)

sandstone

hematite
(iron ore)

Wild Mushroom Gift Tags

Color these gift tags with watercolor paint or colored pencils to personalize your gifts



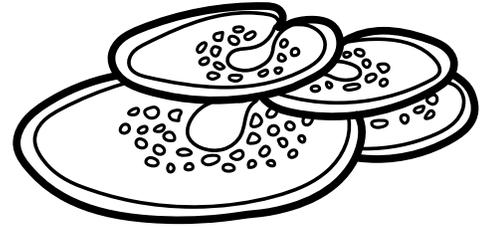
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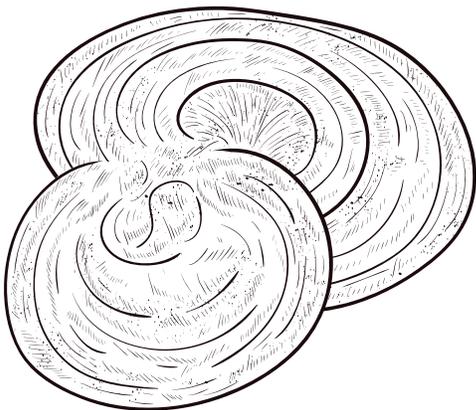
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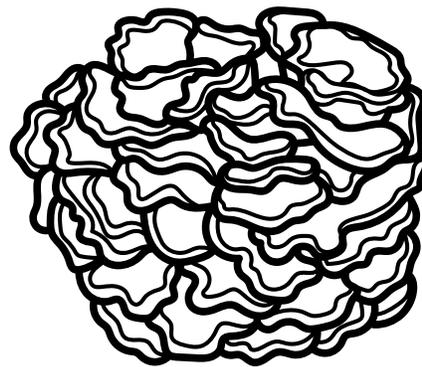
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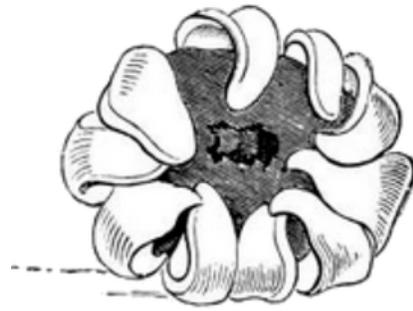
Wild Mushroom Gift Tags

Color these gift tags with watercolor paint or colored pencils to personalize your gifts



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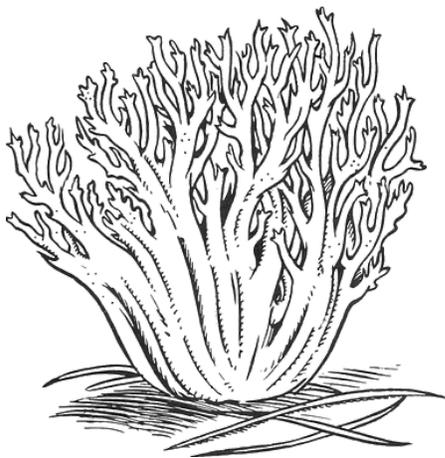
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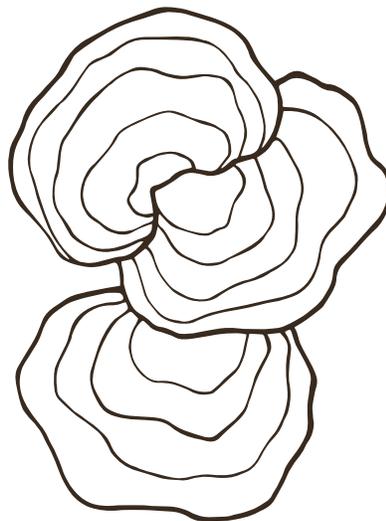
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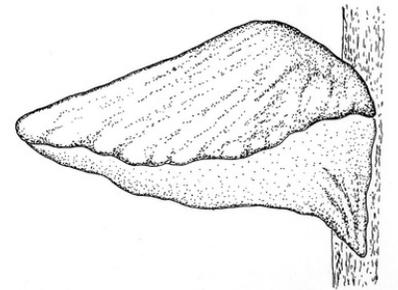
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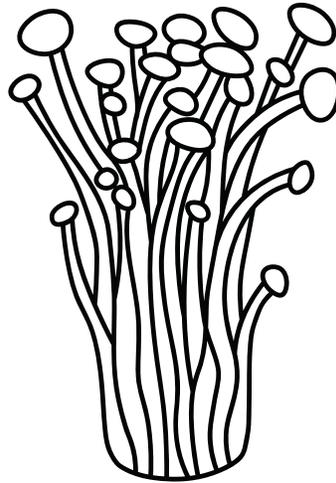
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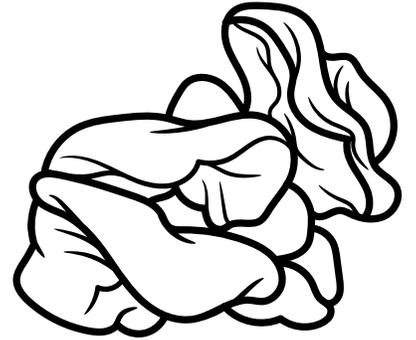
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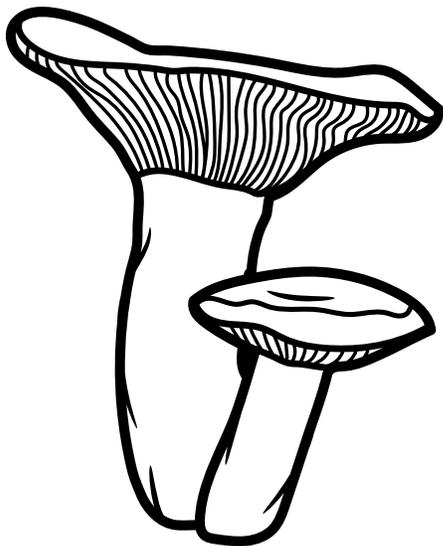
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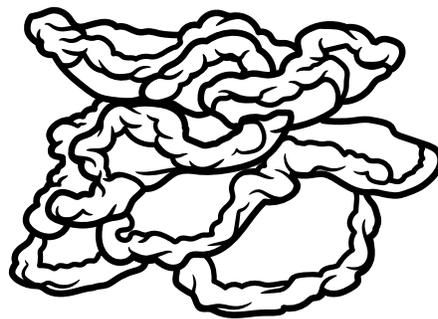
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NAME THAT WILD MUSHROOM

Here are photos of all of the wild mushrooms we learned about in Wild Kids Magazine this year. How many can you identify?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| A Earth star | I Chanterelle | P Bird's Nest |
| B Beefsteak | J Shaggy mane | Q Hen of the woods |
| C Lobster | K Wild enoki | R Old man of the woods |
| D Black trumpet | L Oyster | S Chicken of the woods |
| E Crown tip coral | M Giant puffball | T Fishy milkcap |
| F Bolete | N Wood ear | U Lion's mane |
| G Morel | O Artist Conk | V Turkey tail |
| H Pheasant back/
dryad's saddle | | |































(Answers on the back page.)



2023 Wild Memories

Favorite things I did in nature

Wild places I went





2023 Wild Memories

Birds & Animals I saw

A large rectangular box with a dashed border, intended for writing notes about birds and animals seen.

Plants I grew or foraged

A large rectangular box with a dashed border, intended for writing notes about plants grown or foraged.

A Few Little Mushroom Poems

Variety



blewitt, gray knight, portobello
yellowfoot, lion's mane, cardoncello

giant puffball, false morel
penny bun, song rong, chanterelle

hedgehog, reishi, slippery jack
beefsteak, oyster, pheasant's back



pom pom, paddy straw, Fungo Porcino
thousands of species to get to know

Some are slimy, some delicious
some will make you sleep with the fishes.

8 Things to Do with a Mushroom

Draw it
Dry it
Take it home

Slice it
Study it
Leave it alone

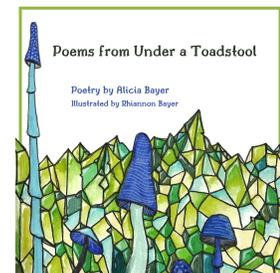
Take a spore print
Make it a poem



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.



Poems by Alicia Bayer,
Poems from Under a Toadstool
Art by Rhiannon Bayer



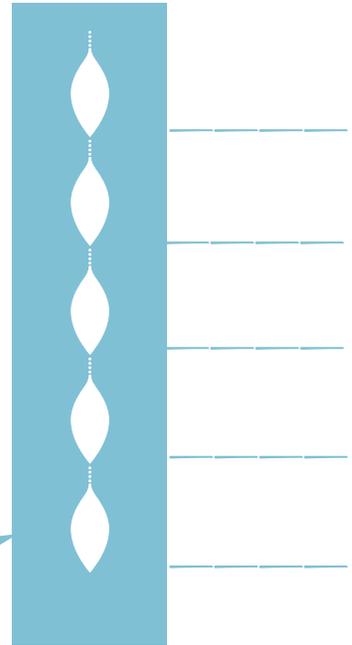
December



December Weather Tree



Key



December Bird List

Birds spotted this month

December Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

December 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 Observations

Week 2 Observations

Week 3 Observations

Week 4 Observations

MY FORAGING GUIDE FOR:

GENERAL SKETCH OF THE PLANT

CLOSE-UP SKETCHES OF PLANT PARTS

LATIN NAME _____

WHERE FOUND _____

PARTS USED _____

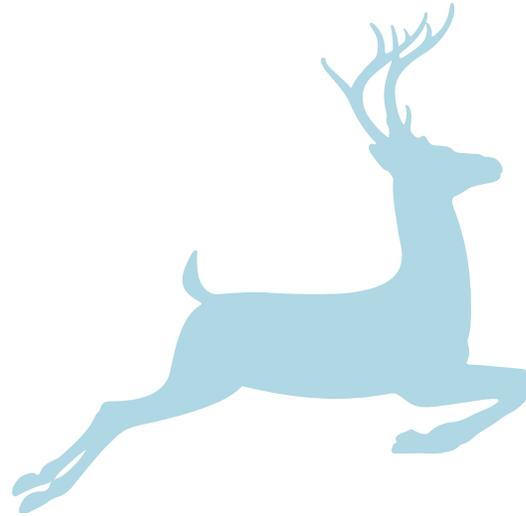
LOOKALIKES & HOW TO POSITIVELY ID:

WARNINGS: _____

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

MY RATING FOR THIS PLANT





Wild Mushroom ID Answers:

P O U S

Q V M H

A F D C

G B T R

E K J L

N I

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.