

June 2025

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

**Caterpillars
to Butterflies**

**Butterfly
Bingo**

**Foraging
Juneberries**

**June Nature
Challenge**

**June Phenology
Wheel**

**What Happened
to All the Chestnut
Trees?**

**Plus seasonal
poems, activities,
nature journal pages
& more**



From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Welcome June!

What have you been busy with in nature lately? I just published a new book, *Wild Art*, that's full of ways to make things like paint, ink, paintbrushes and paper with wild and invasive plants and other nature materials. It was a lot of work to write but a lot of fun, too. I have been doing workshops around our area for the public this year to teach kids and grown ups how to do things like make ink from flower petals, so I have been really busy (*). It's been so much fun, though, especially as the things we find in nature are different every week so we have different colors and results every time!

I also have been helping our 22 year-old son, Jack, plant over a hundred little native perennial flowers! He got a grant from our state to install a pollinator garden to help nature, and I helped him pick out all the flowers and some elderberry shrubs. His new gardens look really nice and he's been working hard at keeping them watered until they are established. The nice thing about native gardens is that once they've gotten used to their new spot they mostly take care of themselves without needing extra water, fertilizer or special care.

He was really happy that the plants all look so cool and have fun names like Rattlesnake Master and Beardstongue, and he's excited that his yard will help nature, too.

In June, I'm really looking forward to taking some rests! I hope to just relax at the lake and do simple things like garden and watch the rain. What do you hope to do in nature this month?

Wherever you are, I hope you have a wonderful, wild month!

Alicia

(*This activity was funded in part with a grant from the Minnesota Arts Board made possible by the voters of Minnesota, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.)



Doing some wild art



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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Go Wild in June

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Ask a grown-up to download the free Seek app from iNaturalist to ID plants & animals in your neighborhood with you

Look for the moonrise in the daytime sky during the first and last week of June, rising later each day

Make a June nature display in your yard or balcony of one nature item you collect each day this month

Sit quietly outside for 5 or 15 minutes and see how many birds and animals come nearby

Look up your state or province's official animal, bird or flower and make a goal to spot them

Take part in the Great American Campout (wherever you are, even in your back yard) on June 28

Find an insect to observe outside -- name it & make up a story about its life

Go on a garden walk, looking at all the gardens growing in your neighborhood & pick your favorite

Safely & responsibly forage a wild edible plant that's new to you

Celebrate the summer solstice on June 21 -- the longest day and the first day of summer

Caterpillars to Butterflies

Can you tell what kind of butterfly a caterpillar will turn into when you see it?

Here are six common caterpillars and the moths and butterflies they become.

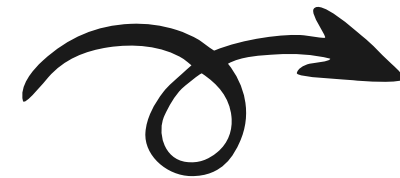
See if you can spot any of them this month – or any of the thousands of others!



Monarch
butterfly

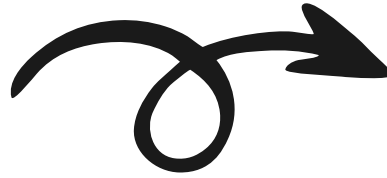


Cabbage
moth

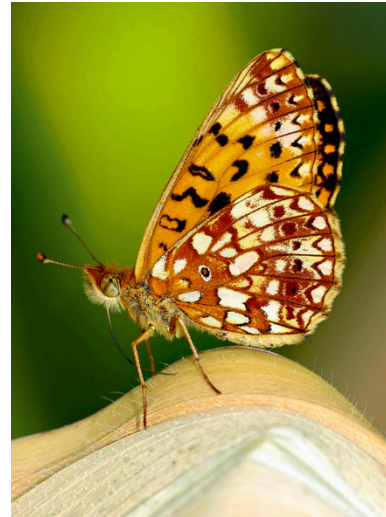


Swallowtail
butterfly





Fritillary
butterfly



Cecropia
moth



Buckeye
butterfly



Butterfly (and moth) Bingo!

How many can you find this month? Can you get a Bingo?



FREE



June Nature Challenge

How many can you find? See how many you can check off this month.
Make it a photo challenge if like photography, or draw them in a nature journal.
If some aren't in your area, look for something to substitute.



- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Squirrel | <input type="checkbox"/> Black and white rock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seagull or pigeon | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal den |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bone | <input type="checkbox"/> White flower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiderweb | <input type="checkbox"/> Feather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart shaped leaf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grasshopper | <input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deer | <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive plant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caterpillar | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterfly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robin | <input type="checkbox"/> Metallic bug |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frog or toad | <input type="checkbox"/> Native plant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ant | <input type="checkbox"/> Snake |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fossil | <input type="checkbox"/> Pine cone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dragonfly | <input type="checkbox"/> Ladybug |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fern | <input type="checkbox"/> Bird of prey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shell | <input type="checkbox"/> Spider |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mushroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Nest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal or bird tracks | <input type="checkbox"/> Worm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wild fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Bee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A really pretty or cool bug
(Draw it below) | <input type="checkbox"/> A really pretty or cool flower
(Draw it below) |



Readers' Art & Poetry

Thanks to Wild Kids Magazine readers Gage & Lincoln
for sending in their fantastic art and poetry!

Small Seed
by Gage Ritcher

Small seed, small seed
Shining bright in the darkness
Of the night: who could see
You sitting there like a
Hibernating bear?

I could see you in the night
Small seed, small seed,
Shining bright. I could see you sitting there
Like a hibernating bear.

Little Brown Seed
by Gage Ritcher

So much depends
upon a little brown seed
Deep in the dirt
Covered in brown soil

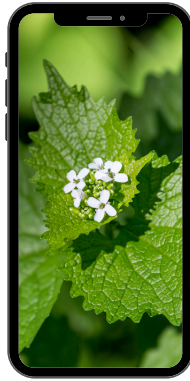


Lincoln Novack

JUNE

Nature Photo Challenge

Try to head outside and take a picture each day with that day's prompt as an inspiration!



1 Triangle

2 Sky

3 Round

4 Secret

5 Bud

6 Wet

7 Striped

8 Slimy

9 Pink

10 Soft

11 Hidden

12 Dark

13 Blue

14 Insect

15 Hole

16 Dirty

17 Native

18 Big

19 Gray

20 Wispy

21 Spiky

22 Invasive

23 Broken

24 Strong

25 Shadow

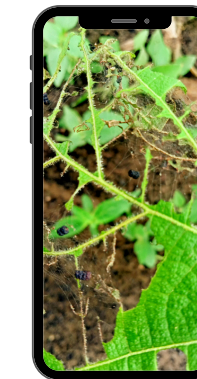
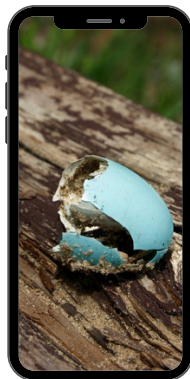
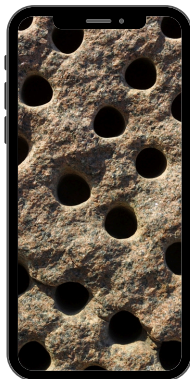
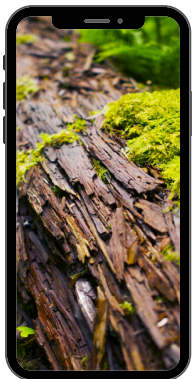
26 Rocky

27 Fragile

28 Eaten

29 Colorful

30 Tiny



What Happened to All the Chestnut Trees?

The American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) was a large deciduous tree that was once really common in the eastern United States, mostly in the Appalachian Mountain area.

It was estimated that nearly 1 in 4 trees in the Appalachians was a chestnut tree!

It was a very large tree that could grow over 100 feet tall and be over 10 feet wide.



There were once billions of them, used both for lumber and for their edible nuts, which you might have heard of in a Christmas carol (Chestnuts roasting on an open fire...).

Twice, though, chestnut trees were attacked badly by diseases. In the early 1800s, a form of root rot from Europe called "ink disease" killed most of the trees in the southern half of its range. Then in the early 1900s, a fungus from Asia called "chestnut blight" was brought over with imported Japanese chestnut trees and destroyed almost all of the rest. An estimated 3.5-4 billion trees were killed.



When diseases harm people, animals and plants, there are usually a few of them that can survive the disease and they can keep the species going and spread their immunity to the next generation. There were a few chestnut trees that seemed to be immune to the blight but the government ordered all the chestnut trees to be chopped down to try to stop the spread of the blight, so we accidentally got rid of the few chestnut trees that could have been used to start new forests.

Today, the American Chestnut is considered "functionally extinct". While it can regrow from the roots and stumps of older trees in its native range, they never reach maturity and can't form new seeds.

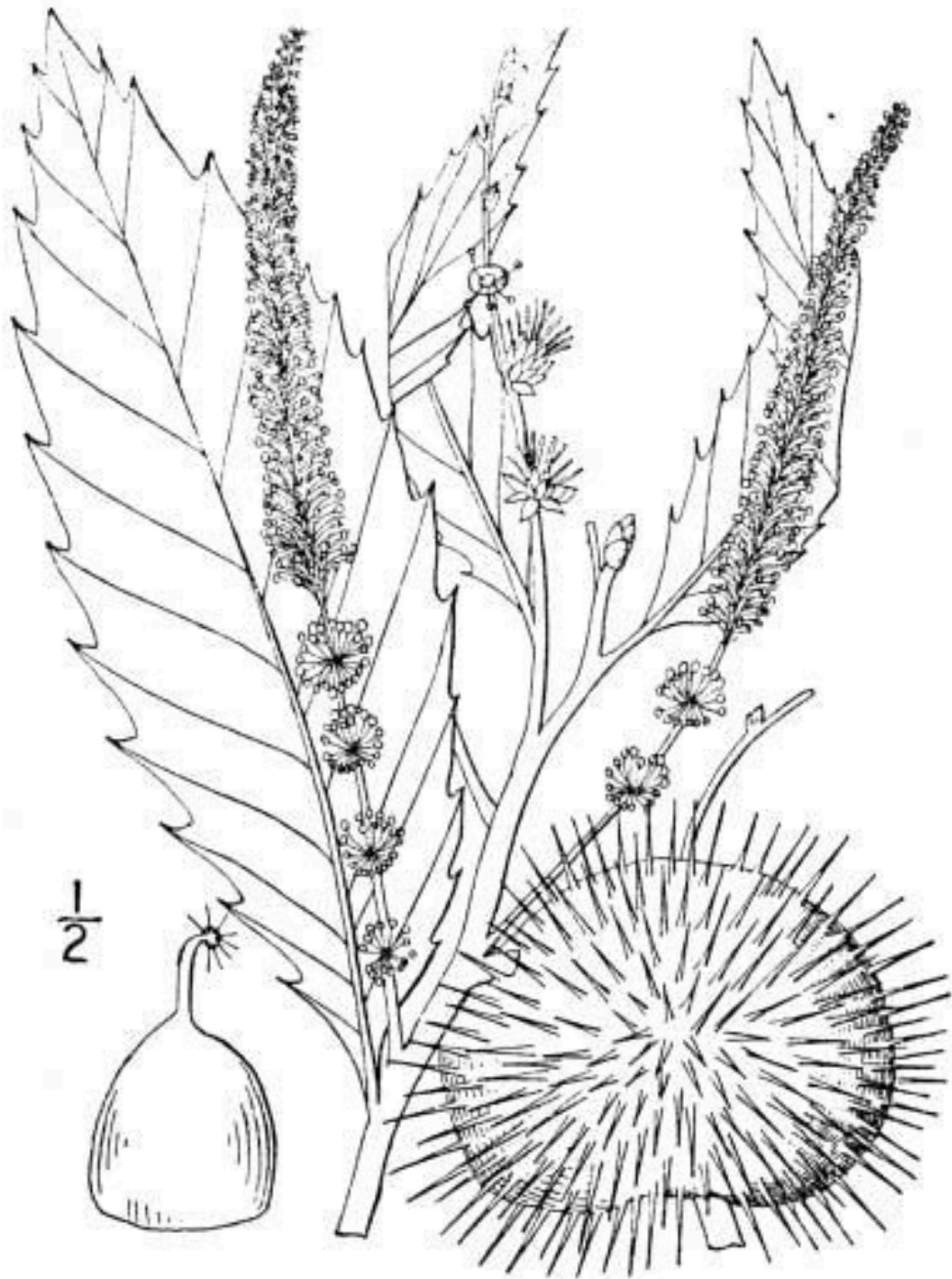
Some people have horse chestnut trees (*Aesculus*) in their yards, but they are not related and their nuts aren't edible.



There are a few areas that still have some chestnut trees, including northern Michigan where an estimated 600 to 800 trees survive. Scientists are working on developing new strains of the tree by crossing other species with American chestnuts to try to create ones that can resist chestnut blight.

AMERICAN CHESTNUT

(*Castanea dentata*)



Juneberry/Serviceberry Trees

(Amelanchier sp)

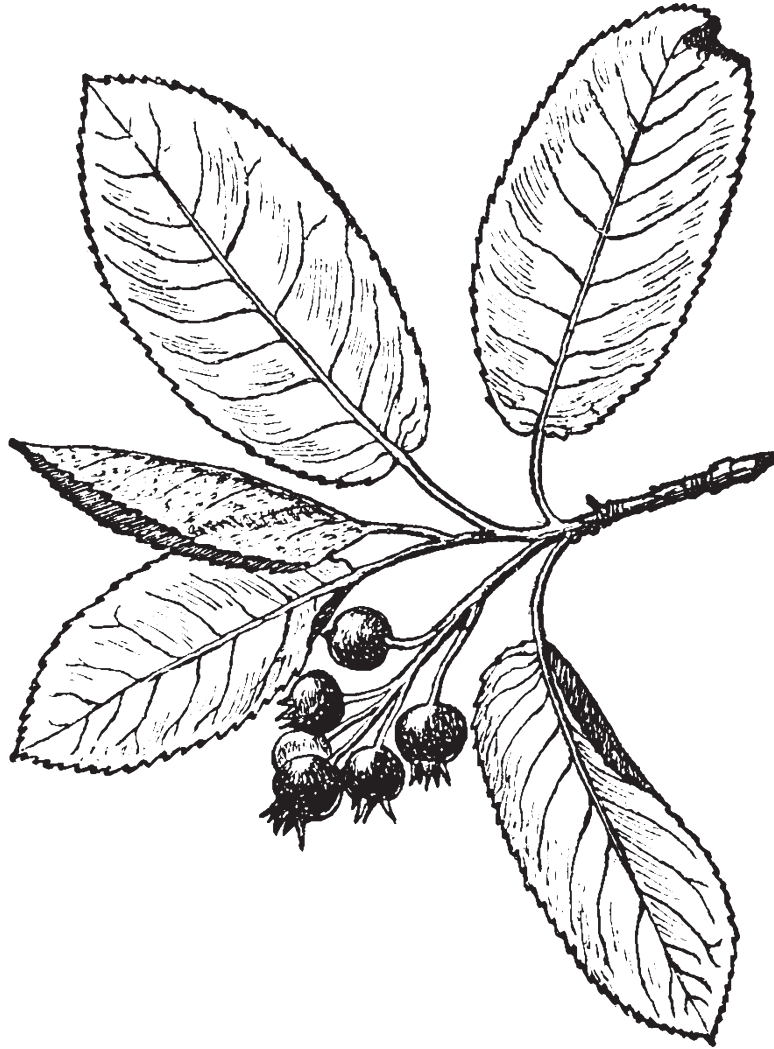
Juneberries (also known as serviceberries) are delicious berries that grow on trees and shrubs. They are native to North America and can be found in a lot of Canada and the Eastern and Midwestern United States, mostly in forests, fields and along streams. Juneberries bloom with white flowers that turn into red berries that turn blue or purple when ripe.

You can probably figure out that Juneberries are called that because they usually ripen in June! There are a lot of stories about why some people called them serviceberries, but all of them so far have turned out to be myths, so we really don't know for sure. In some places, they are also known as Saskatoon berries or shadbush berries.

You can eat Juneberries fresh right off the bush or use them in recipes like pies, jams, and pancakes. They taste a little bit like blueberries, cherries and raisins. They're much easier to grow than blueberries and other fruits, so a lot of people have started planting them in their gardens and some farmers have started growing them for sale.



JUNEBERRY / SERVICEBERRY
(*Amelanchier* sp.)

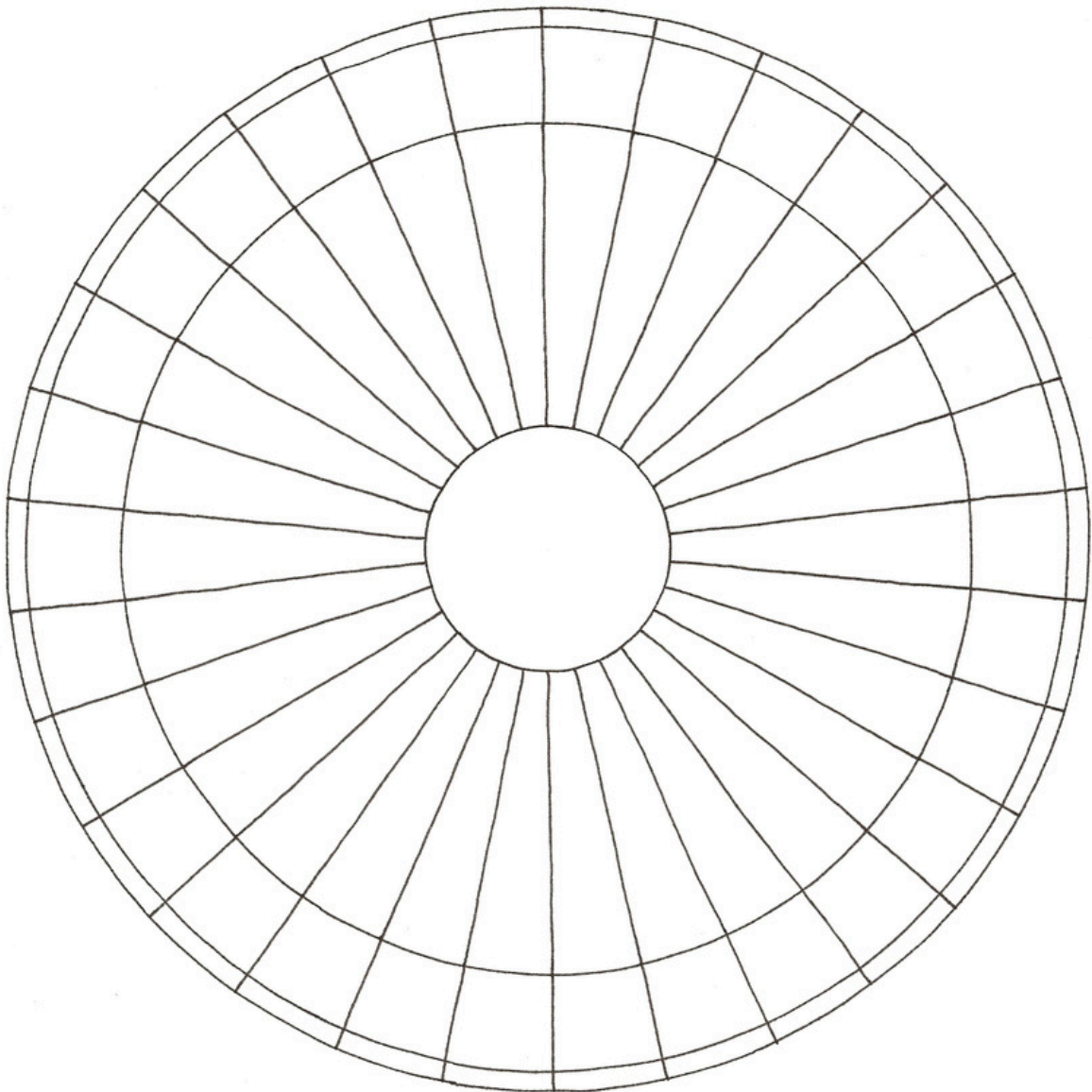


JUNE PHENOLOGY

Make a picture record of your observations in nature this month!

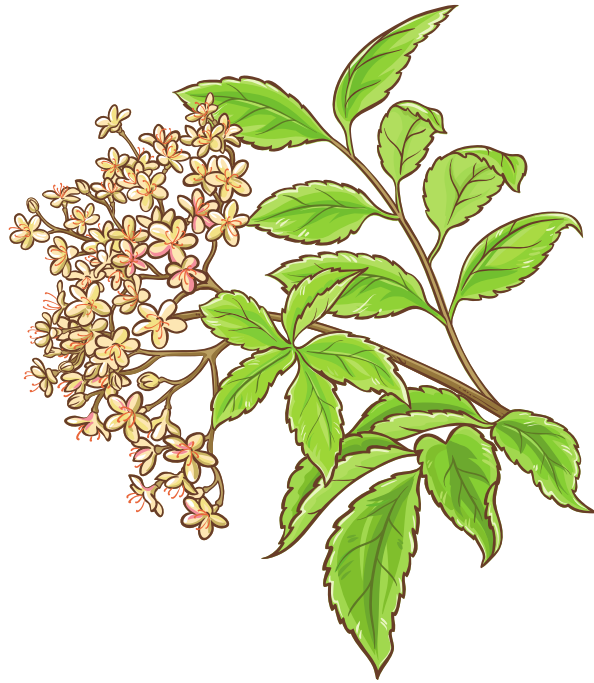
Draw, paint or color things you notice in nature each day --

Flowers blooming, butterflies spotted, thunderstorms, garden seedlings poking up...
Start with day 1 in the first wedge and go all around the wheel with your observations.

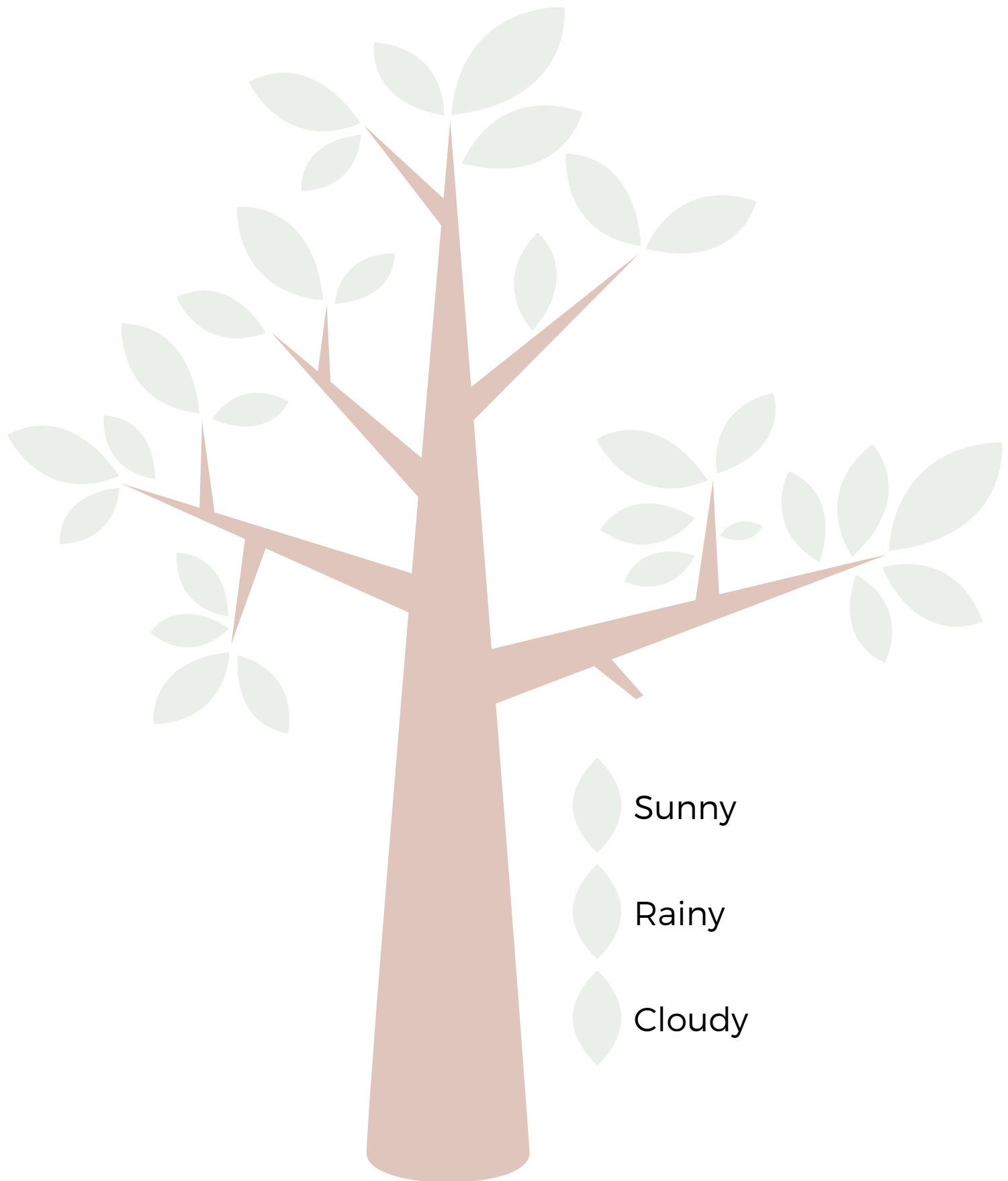


My Nature Journal

June



June Weather Tree



June Bird List

Birds spotted this month

June Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

JUNE 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





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

or email photographs, artwork, letters or other submissions to alicia.bayer@gmail.com