

April 2026

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS



Wild Kids
Track Tracker

Don't Touch
That Plant!
Wild Plants That
Cause Rashes

Nature Jokes!

April Wild
Inspiration

Nature Photo
Prompts for
April

Seasonal poems,
activities, nature
journal pages & more

From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Happy April!

I love April because we get to forage so many spring wild edibles this month! One of our favorites is stinging nettle, which is one of the plants we talk about in this issue of Wild Kids. Stinging nettles are called that for a reason – they sting when you touch them! They are so good for us and they're tasty in soups and casseroles too (they taste a little bit like spinach). When we forage them, we usually use scissors to snip the tender tops right into our foraging basket. You can see we sometimes use our Easter baskets for this like in the photo above. 😊



In the old days in places like Germany (but even going back to the ancient Greeks and Egyptians!), people used to use stinging nettle stings in the springtime because it would help their arthritis. Even though the stings hurt at first, people report that their pain is much better for a long time afterwards. This process is called urtication and people on every continent have used nettles for urtication for thousands of years. Scientists have done studies that show that it really does work, but not very many people use nettles this way anymore. People nowadays also just make tea from nettles and that helps too. Nettles are some of the healthiest plants for a whole lot of other things too.

Here in Minnesota, we forage a lot of other wild plants in April too. Ramps, wild mushrooms, violets, dandelion flowers, cattails and spruce tips are some of our favorites.

I also love the start of all of the flowers blooming in our gardens! Flowers are some of my favorite things, and they always help cheer me up. I don't think a person could ever have too many flowers in their gardens!

This month I hope we can do a lot of hiking, foraging, gardening, beach combing, bird watching, and just enjoying the springtime. We adopted a wetland many years ago where we gather trash every April too. I always love a nice thunderstorm or two to watch and some puddles to jump in afterwards, too!

I hope that wherever you are, you 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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Contact: alicia.bayer@gmail.com

Find us online at magicalchildhood.com/wildkids

Go Wild in April!

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH

Use chalk to write letters on smooth rocks and spell out messages with them

Look for the Lyrids meteor shower late at night on April 22-23

Use recycled pie tins, mud, flower petals, small rocks and other natural items to make fancy looking mudpies

Take a night walk or a picture of the full "pink" moon on April 1

Plant a tree on Arbor Day, April 17

Scatter some native wildflower seeds somewhere that needs some beauty

Try to find 1, 5, 10 and 100 of different natural items (to easily count 100 of something, make 10 rows of 10 of them)

Pick some wild greens like miner's lettuce, violet leaves, purple deadnettle or chickweed to put in your salad

Use our track tracker to look for and identify bird and animal tracks

Do something to help the Earth on Earth Day, April 22

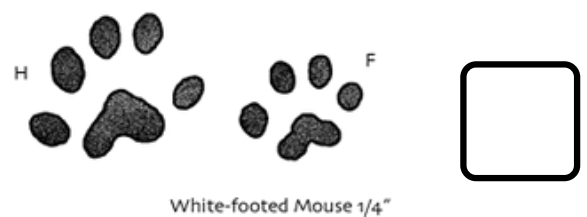
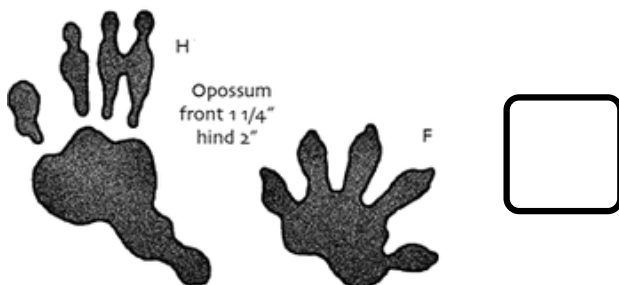
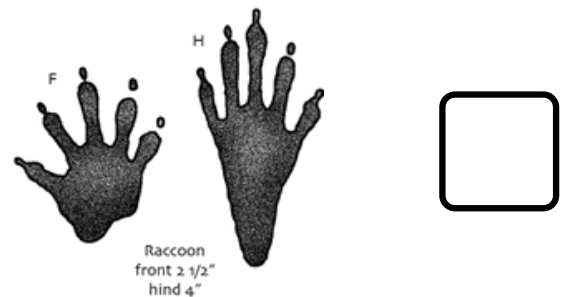
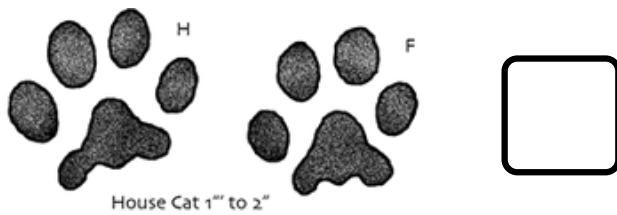
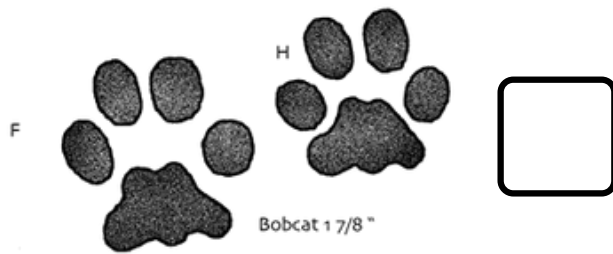
April Wild Inspiration!

- 1 Take a silly photo outside
- 2 Climb something
- 3 Whistle with a blade of grass
- 4 Try to spot 5 kinds of birds
- 5 ID and sketch a weed
- 6 Find a feather
- 7 Collect cool rocks in 5 colors
- 8 Go for a walk for over a mile
- 9 Balance on something outside
- 10 Take a photo from up high
- 11 Find 3 edible plants in your neighborhood
- 12 Use rocks to mark how far you can jump
- 13 Make a design out of nature items
- 14 Find a walking stick & decorate it
- 15 Spin around 10 times & then try to walk a straight line
- 16 Go to a park
- 17 Do something really messy outside
- 18 Photograph 5 tiny things in nature
- 19 Take a photo in the reflection of water
- 20 Take apart a plant like a daffodil or mushroom
- 21 Pot up a young weed and try to keep it inside as a houseplant
- 22 Pick up litter
- 23 Run as fast as you can
- 24 Do art or play an instrument outside
- 25 Take a picture from really low
- 26 Lie down and look at the clouds
- 27 Plant some seeds (even from your groceries!)
- 28 Go on a walk in the evening
- 29 Use a stick to draw a picture in the sand or dirt
- 30 Forage something to eat in a sandwich or salad



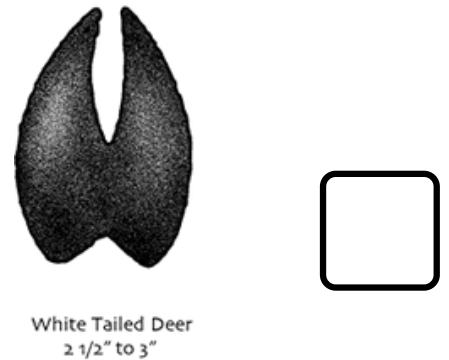
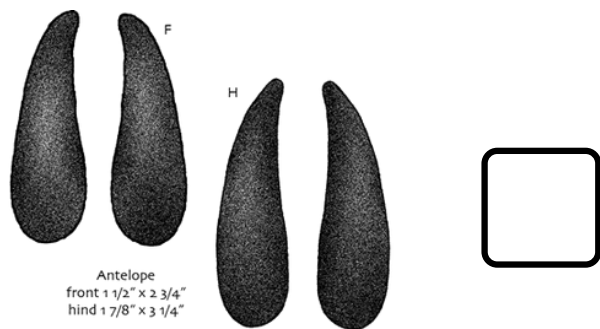
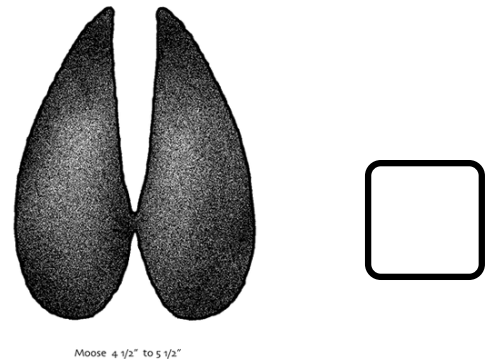
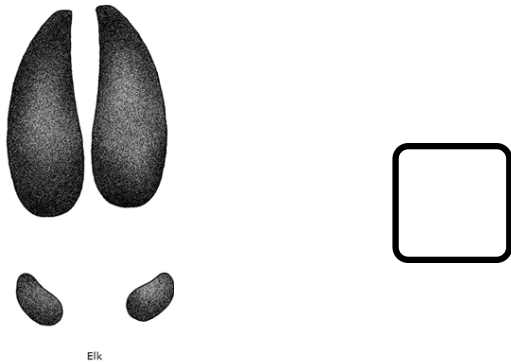
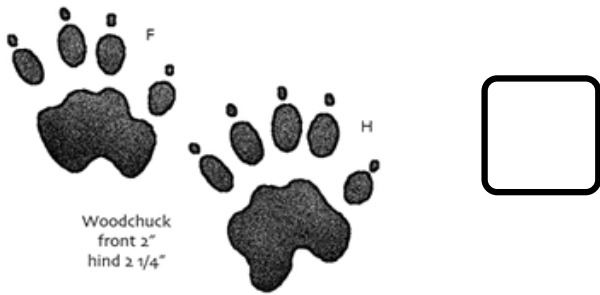
Track Tracker

Here's a fun way to log the bird and animal tracks you find in the wild!
Write the date & location of the first time you find each kind.
The actual size of each set of tracks is listed by the name.



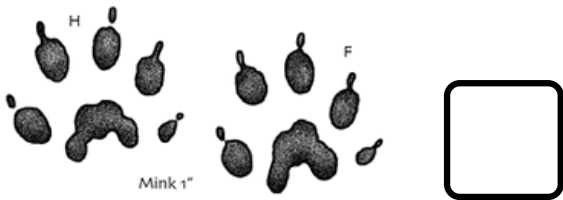
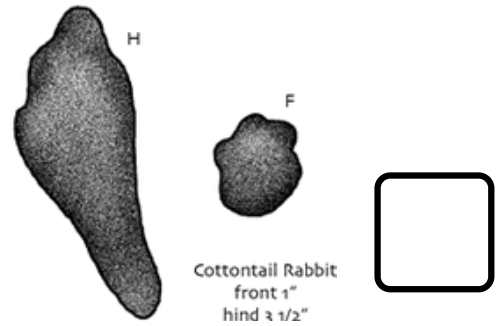
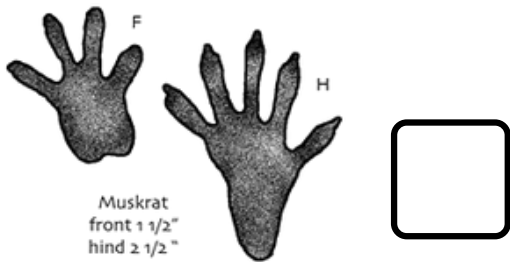
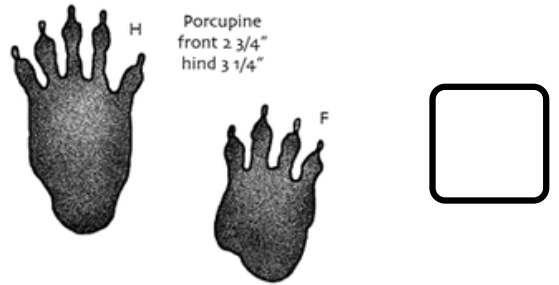
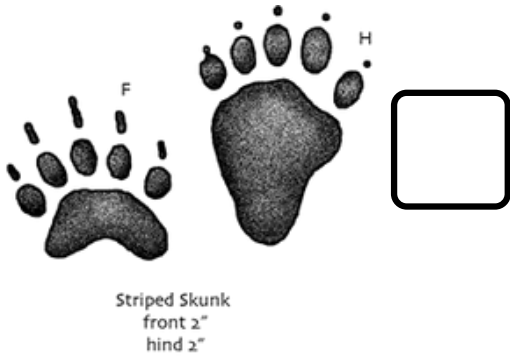
Some animal tracks look very similar! If you're not sure, look for other hints like scat, area and what animals are known in your area.

Track Tracker



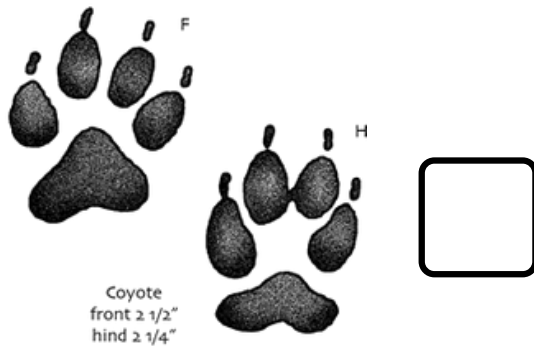
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Track Tracker



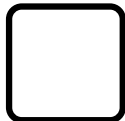
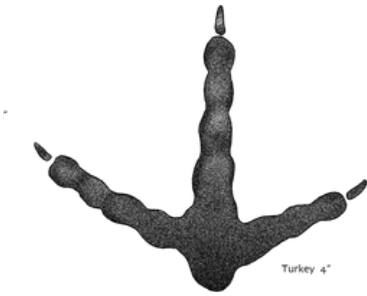
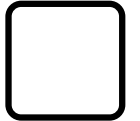
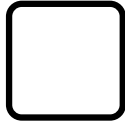
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Track Tracker

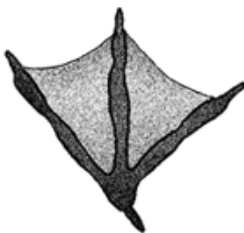
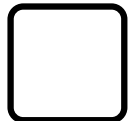


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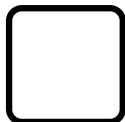
Track Tracker



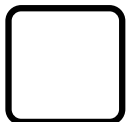
House Sparrow



Mallard



Grouse



Many bird tracks look very similar! If you're not sure, look for other hints like size, type of food sources nearby and what birds are known in your area.

Track Tracker

Draw and ID tracks you find here that aren't on our tracker.

Nature Jokes!

Q: Why are frogs so happy?
A: They eat whatever bugs them!

Q: How can you tell the ocean is friendly?
A: It waves

Q: What do you call the seagulls that live by the Bay?
A: Bagels

Q: What did the limestone say to the geologist?
A: Don't take me for granite

Q: How do trees access the internet?
A: They log in!

Q: Why do birds fly south in the winter?
A: Because it's too far to walk!

Q: How do you properly identify a dogwood tree?
A: By its bark.

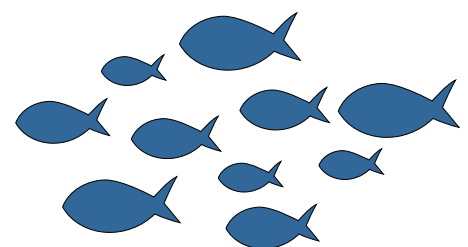
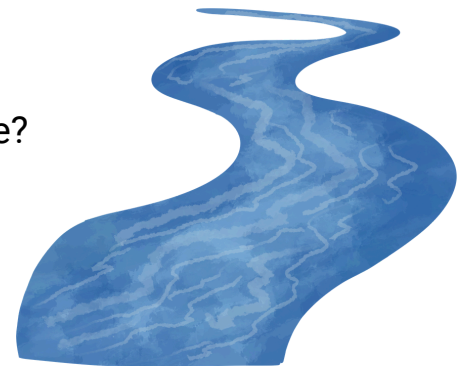
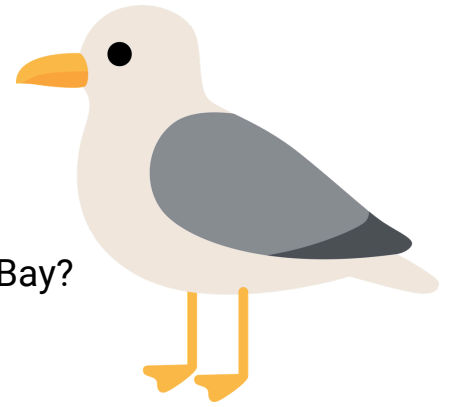
Q: What runs but never goes out of breath?
A: A river.

Q: What do you say when the beach asks you to walk on it?
A: Shore

Q: What did the ground say to the earthquake?
A: You crack me up.

Q: What kind of shorts do clouds wear?
A: Thunderwear.

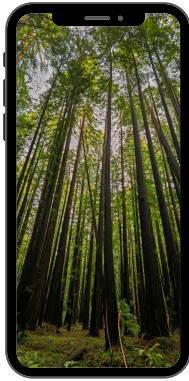
Q: What do you call a fish with no eyes?
A: Fsh!



APRIL

Nature Photo Challenge

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



1 Funny

2 New

3 Black

4 Soft

5 Bud

6 Wet

7 North

8 Cute

9 Pink

10 Jagged

11 Three

12 Cozy

13 Gray

14 Low

15 Smooth

16 Old

17 Abandoned

18 Fuzzy

19 Big

20 Pattern

21 Shadow

22 Beginning

23 Cracked

24 Round

25 White

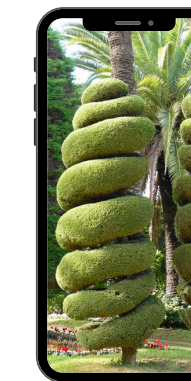
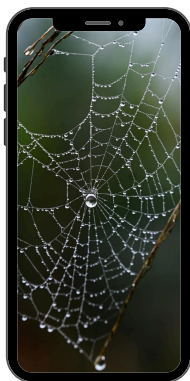
26 Track

27 Feather

28 Sky

29 Green

30 Light



Don't Touch That Plant!

There are some plants that can be harmful to even touch.

A lot of people know not to touch poison ivy or poison oak, but those are just some of the plants that can cause painful rashes if we touch them.

Here are some of the most common irritating plants.

Poison Ivy is famous for the saying, "Leaves of three, let it be." Be on the lookout for its three leaves. It is a native plant in North America and it's very helpful for nature. Only humans develop rashes from its oils. Not all people are sensitive to it, but the more you are exposed to it the more chances you have of developing an allergy to it. It causes painful rashes that can last for weeks.

Stinging nettle is a helpful and healthy plant once it's cooked, dried or crushed, but it has tiny hairs that sting so you have to be very careful about touching it! We wear gloves when we forage it, or we use scissors to snip the top parts right into our foraging baskets.

Poison oak is mostly found in the Western United States. Like poison ivy, its leaves are in groups of 3 and it has an oil (urushiol) that can cause a painful rash.

Giant hogweed is an invasive plant from Eastern Europe and Western Asia. It can grow up to 14 feet tall! Touching the plant can cause really painful rashes and blisters if there is any sunlight. It looks a little bit like a huge Queen Anne's Lace plant.

Wild parsnip is another invasive plant from Europe and Asia, and its another plant that will cause painful rashes and blisters if there is sunlight when you touch it. You can recognize it by its yellow flowers.

Cow parsnip looks like a smaller version of giant hogweed, with white flowers. It's native to the United States but also causes a painful rash if you touch it and are exposed to sunlight. It can grow up to 8 feet tall.

There are other plants that can cause rashes too, and some people get a rash from plants that don't bother other people, like a few people are sensitive to Virginia Creeper. There are lots of reasons not to bother plants until we know about them!





POISON IVY

(TOXICODENDRON RADICANS)





GIANT HOGWEED

(*HERACLEUM MANTEGAZZIANUM*)



Poems for April

The Wild Flowers
By Jessie Penniman

The violet blooms in a shady place
Where the sun comes peeping through;
The hare-bell grows on gray old rocks
And shows its robes of blue.

The May-flower grows on a wooded hill
At the foot of the green old pines,
Where the ferns and moss in clusters show
And the checker-berry twines.

These all grow in the fairest bowers;
There is no room for the daisy flowers.

So the daisy grows by the dusty road,
Sweet and sunny and shy,
Lifting its pretty, modest head
To nod to each passer-by.

"Why do you grow by the roadside, dear?
It is all dust and sand;
Come to the violet's shady nook,
Or join the Mayflower's band."

But the daisy said: "The violet's place
Is better for her, you see;
And the May-flower's place is better for her;
And mine is the best for me."



The Violet
By Jane Taylor

Down in a green and shady bed,
A modest violet grew,
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flower,
Its colours bright and fair;
It might have graced a rosy bower,
Instead of hiding there,

Yet there it was content to bloom,
In modest tints arrayed;
And there diffused its sweet perfume,
Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,
This pretty flower to see;
That I may also learn to grow
In sweet humility.

(Fun fact:
Jane Taylor and her sister Ann wrote
"Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star"!



My Nature Journal

April

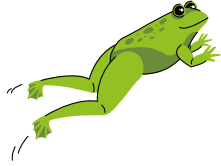


Phenology Calendar

Keep track of all of things you notice in nature this month!

Write in firsts like first robin seen, bluebells in bloom, nettles or ramps spotted, spring peepers (frogs) heard, heavy rains or windy days, and so on.

Draw a picture if you like.



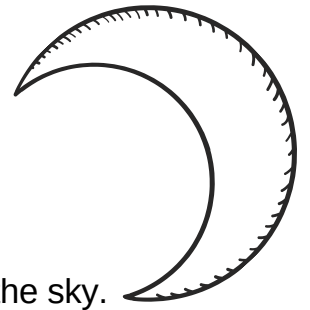
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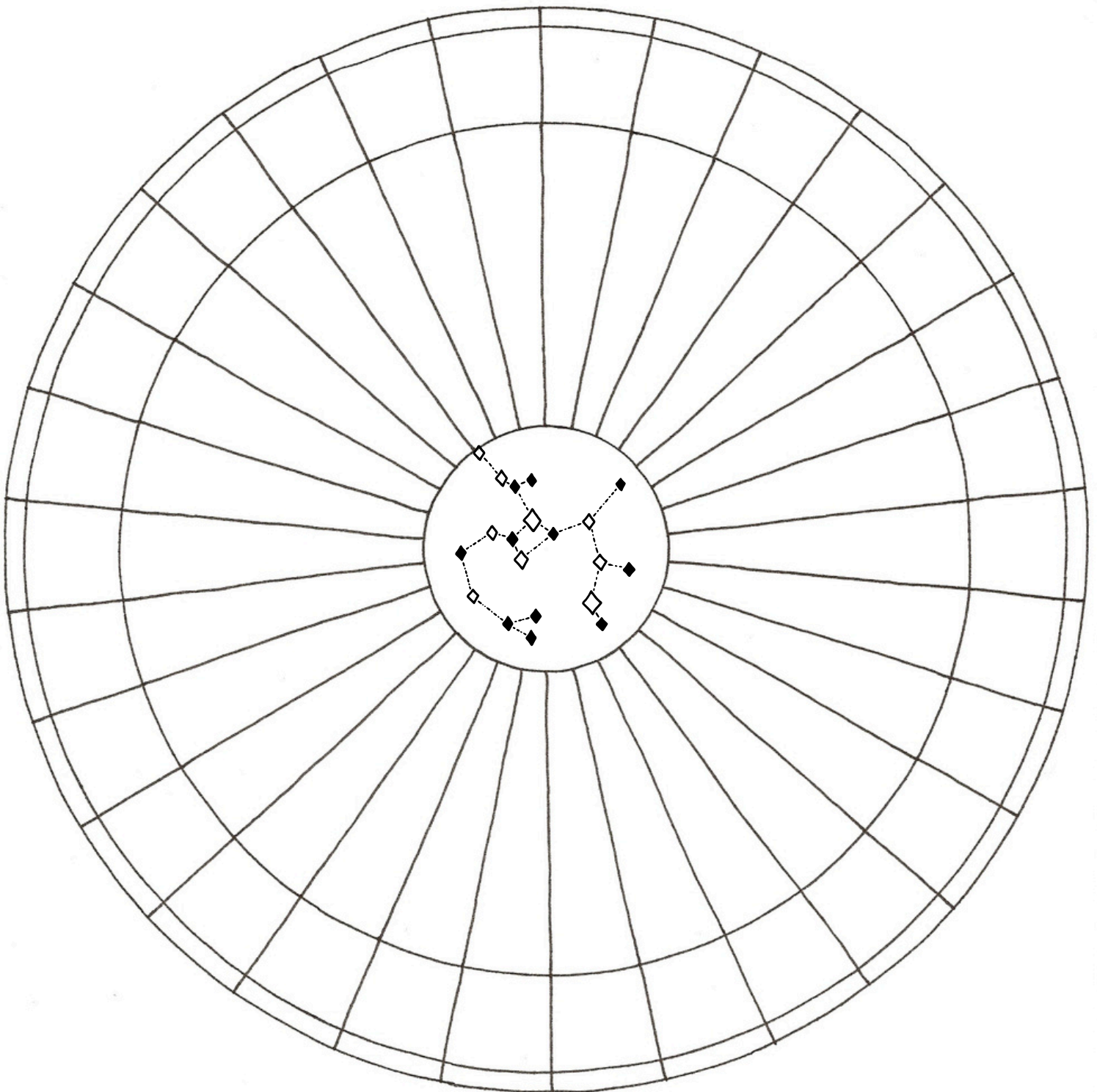
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

April

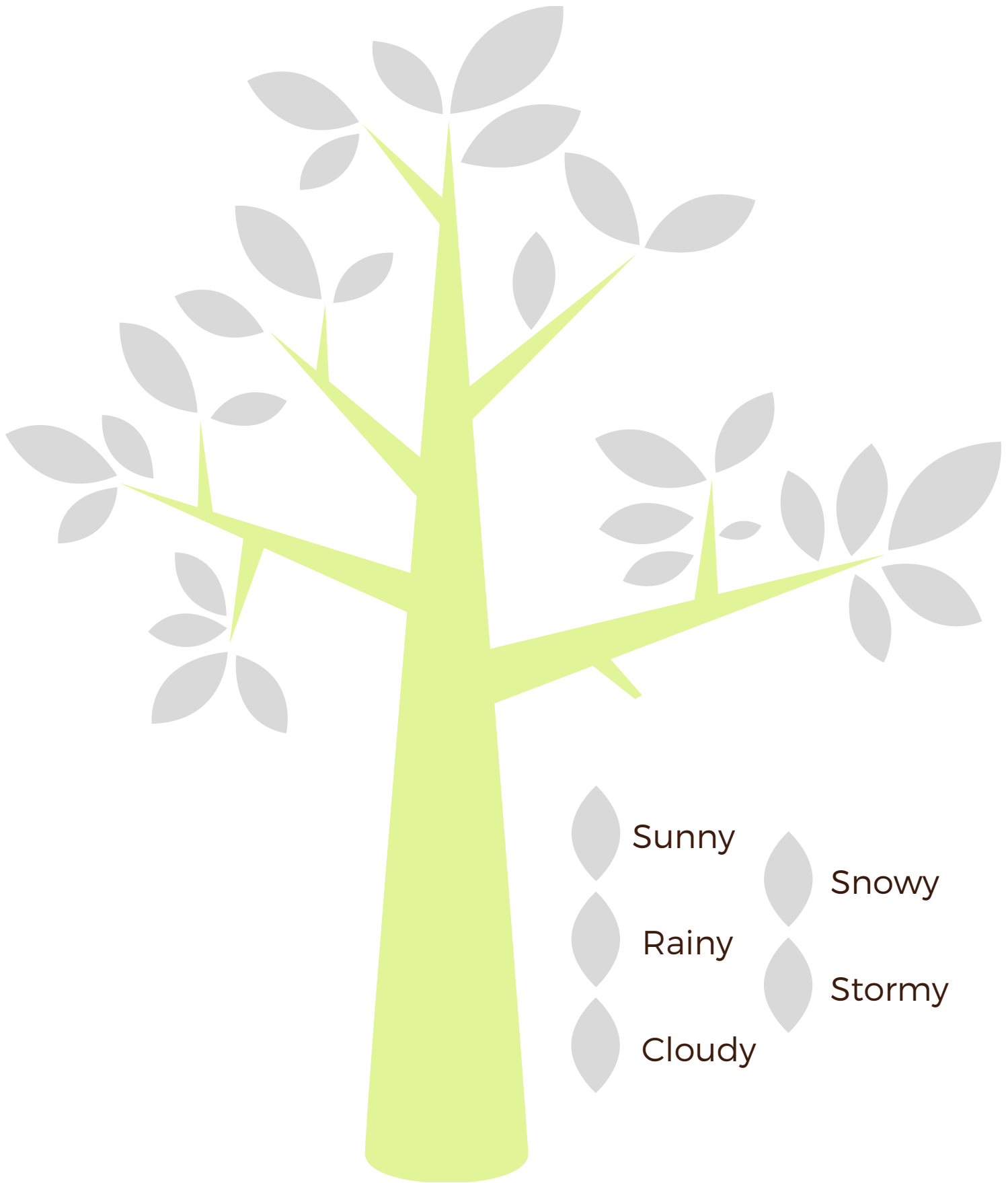
Night Skies



Each night this month, look out the window or head outside and look at the sky. Then draw or color a square on the wheel to show what it looked like. Was there a full moon or a crescent? Could you see stars? Or was it all dark from cloud cover? At the end of the month you'll have a visual memory of the whole month's nights!



April Weather Tree



April Bird List

Birds spotted this month

April Animal List

Mammals, reptiles & other wildlife spotted this month

APRIL 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