

June 2026

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

Weather Lore

Phototoxic
Plants

Make Flower
Perfume Oil

June Flower Hunt,
Nature Photo Challenge &
Phenology Wheel

Plus seasonal
poems, activities,
nature journal pages
& more



From the editor

BY ALICIA BAYER

Welcome June!

I am so happy that it's June, because it's my favorite month of the year.

So many flowers are blooming in my gardens and the weather is warm and wonderful. Here in Minnesota, we have a lot of birds that migrate away in the winter, including pelicans, which are some of my favorite birds. Now that it's warm again, they've come back to our area. I love to watch them floating on our nearby lakes and "kettling" in the sky above us.

Pelicans and birds like hawks and vultures sometimes ride the winds called thermals in order to save energy and not have to flap their wings. The circling thermals looked like a kettle boiling to some people, so they started to call that way of flying or hovering "kettling." If you ever look up and see large birds gliding together on the winds way overhead, that's kettling.

This month, we'll be harvesting cherries from our cherry tree and foraging wonderful wild foods like mulberries, elderflowers, wild asparagus, gooseberries, lamsquarters, black raspberries, cattails, chicken of the woods mushrooms, and more. This is one of my favorite months for foraging too!

I'm hoping there will be a nice mix of rainy days and sunny days, to help the plants grow and to keep life interesting. What are you hoping for this month?

I hope 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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Go Wild in June

10 WAYS TO PLAY & LEARN WITH NATURE THIS MONTH



Find a white flower that is okay to pick and put it in a vase of water and food coloring to see if you can change its color

Celebrate the summer solstice (longest daylight of the year) on June 21

Find a weed in your yard or neighborhood and research what it is good for

Go camping in your back yard

Use a spare calendar page to color in what you think the weather will be like each day this month (rainy, sunny, gray...) and then mark the days you get right

Try to include a foraged ingredient in at least one meal each week, like lambs quarters, elderflowers or mulberries

Draw a picture in sidewalk chalk outside and see long it takes for weather to erase it

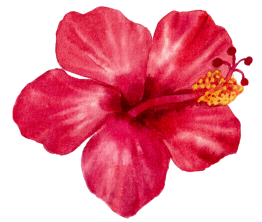
See how many different kinds of butterflies you can spot this month

Play nature memory -- gather about 10 natural items like a feather, flower and pine cone and lay them out, then close your eyes and have someone remove one item at a time. See how many you can remember.

Go on a hunt in your neighborhood for the bug you like best. Watch it and see what you think its life is like and what kind of personality you think it has. Name it if you like!

June flower Hunt!

How many can you find?



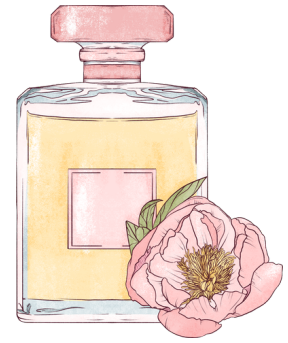
- Dandelion
- Rose
- Blossoming tree
- Flowering vine
- Orange flower
- Marigold
- Purple flower
- Double (ruffled) flower
- Single (flat) flower
- Flower bud
- Flowering weed
- Tiny flower
- Flowering herb
- Multicolored flower
- Geranium
- Spotted flower
- Clover flower
- Iris
- A really pretty flower

(Draw it below)

- Bigger than your fist
- Striped flower
- Flowering vegetable
- Petal on the ground
- Flower that starts with D
- Red flower
- Yellow flower
- Native flower
- Flower in a lawn
- Fragrant flower
- Lily
- Edible flower
- Poisonous flower
- White flower
- Insect on a flower
- Tall flower
- Groundcover flower
- Flower stamen
- Invent a flower!

(Draw it below)

Make Perfume Oil from Flowers



You can make your own perfume from flowers! Here's one easy way to do it.

Gather some fresh flowers that smell good, like roses, jasmine, lavender or gardenia. Make sure they have not been sprayed with pesticides. Try to pick them in the morning after the dew has dried, for the strongest scent. Put just the petals (not the leaves or stems) in a glass jar with a lid, like a mason jar or a cleaned glass jar from the recycling. Try to gently smash them a bit with something like the end of a wooden spoon. This is called bruising, and it helps the petals release their fragrance.

Cover the flowers with oil like jojoba oil, sweet almond oil or grapeseed oil. Any light smelling oil will do. Let the jar sit in a cool, dark place for anywhere from 2 days to 6 weeks. The longer you leave them, the stronger the scent will be. Check them every so often and gently shake them to be sure the petals are still under the oil.

If you want stronger perfume oil, you can add new flowers every week or so (and mix and match kinds of scents!). If you do this, you can remove the old petals (gently squeeze their oil back into your jar) and put the new ones in. You can even add other sweet smelling plant parts, like a bit of cinnamon bark or vanilla pod. The more times you do this, the stronger the perfume oil will be!

After about 6 weeks, strain the oil through cheesecloth or a fine mesh strainer and put it in a small jar. A dark colored jar is best, to help protect it from sunlight that can weaken or change your oil.



Note: Always do a patch test on a small area of your skin first to make sure you don't have an allergic reaction to any of the ingredients.

Weather Lore



People have made up all kinds of ways to predict the weather over the years. Some of them are really silly, but some of them actually kind of work!

There are reasons that some sayings about weather are somewhat true.

For instance, in the old days they would say that if your drawers stuck, it meant that it was going to rain soon. The reason drawers might stick more than usual is because the air is very humid that day (full of moisture, or tiny bits of water). If there's a lot of moisture in the air, then it's likely to build up so much that it starts to rain.

That's the same reason that people say that if pine cones close up, it might rain. Pine cones are designed to stay closed when the air is wet and to open when the air is dry, so they release their seeds on dry days when the wind can carry them away from the parent tree. They stay tightly closed in damp, wet weather when they are more likely to rot. Hair reacts to moisture too, which is why some people's hair is more curly or droopy when it's humid and likely to rain.



Another old saying is, "When sounds travel far and wide, a stormy day will betide." This works because sound travels faster through moist air than dry.

In our family, we used to teach our kids the helpful weather sayings and the silly ones just for fun. We found out that people used to say that cows would lie down it was going to rain, and when we passed a field where a lot of cows were lying down we'd count them. We would figure out the average number of cows who were lying down and joke that that was the chance of rain. If half the cows were lying down, then we'd joke that there was a 50% chance of rain! It was a fun way to play with math.



(This "fact" isn't actually true – they lie down when they're digesting food.)

Here are some famous weather sayings that are often true, for different scientific reasons. See if any of these work for you to tell the weather this month. You can also make up your own!

Which ones work for you?

When the dew is on the grass,
Rain will never come to pass.
When grass is dry at morning light,
Look for rain before the night.



Pale moon rains; Red moon blows.

Red Sky at night, shepherds delight
red sky in the morning, shepherds warning



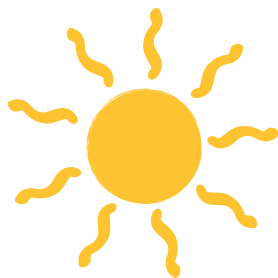
The louder the frog, the more the rain.

Rain before seven,
Clear before eleven.



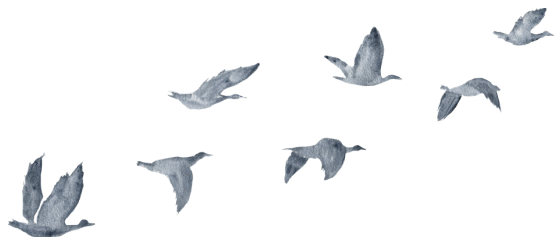
Flies bite more before a rain.

The higher the clouds, the better the weather



The first three days of any season
rule the weather of that season.

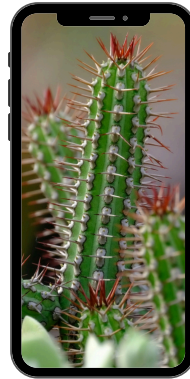
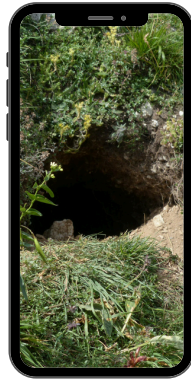
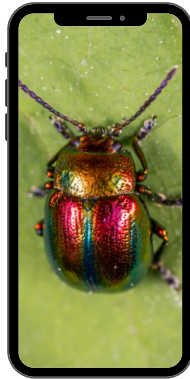
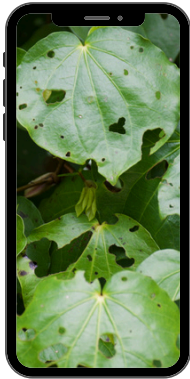
If the birds be silent, expect thunder.



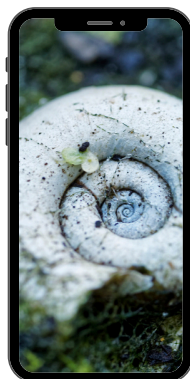
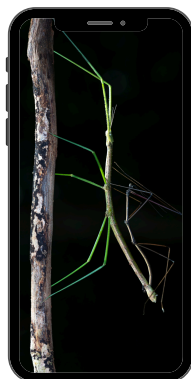
JUNE

Nature Photo Challenge

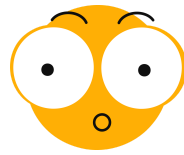
Head outside and take a picture each day with that day's prompt as an inspiration!



- | | | | | | |
|----|----------|----|-------------|----|----------|
| 1 | Single | 11 | Hidden | 21 | Shiny |
| 2 | Sky | 12 | Dark | 22 | Invasive |
| 3 | Round | 13 | Blue | 23 | Broken |
| 4 | Flat | 14 | Insect | 24 | Y shaped |
| 5 | Bud | 15 | Holes | 25 | Shadow |
| 6 | Sharp | 16 | Dirty | 26 | Rocky |
| 7 | Striped | 17 | Beautiful | 27 | Fragile |
| 8 | Parallel | 18 | Giant | 28 | Eaten |
| 9 | Pink | 19 | Red | 29 | Colorful |
| 10 | Soft | 20 | Symmetrical | 30 | Smashed |



**Don't Touch
if the sun is shining!**



Phototoxic Plants



Phototoxic plants cause something called Phytophotodermatitis. This is a big word but it's a Latin word and that means you can decipher it like a secret code! Each part of it has a meaning we can figure out. In this case, it means plant (phyto) light (photo) skin (derma) swelling reaction (itis). And phototoxic means "toxic in the presence of light."

All you really need to know about these plants is that if you touch them when the sun is shining, they can give you a painful rash. Some of them are common garden plants that give us food we eat, like carrot leaves and dill. They don't cause any reaction at all inside or without sunlight.

Some farm workers have to wear long sleeves and gloves when harvesting crops like parsley and limes in the sun because otherwise they can get painful rashes. In fact, PPD is so common in bartenders and vacationers who squeeze limes in the sun that it's nicknamed "margarita dermatitis."

Luckily, most of these plants are perfectly safe as long as you don't get the plant sap on your skin while you're in the sunlight.

To get PPD you have to touch sap or juice from a plant that causes it and also be exposed to sunlight. The rash comes at least a day later.

The most dangerous phototoxic plant is giant hogweed. We talked about it and parsnips in the April issue. A lot of these plants are related to each other – they are all in the Apiaceae (carrot) family, including parsley, carrots, fennel, parsnips, anise, rue and Queen Anne's lace.

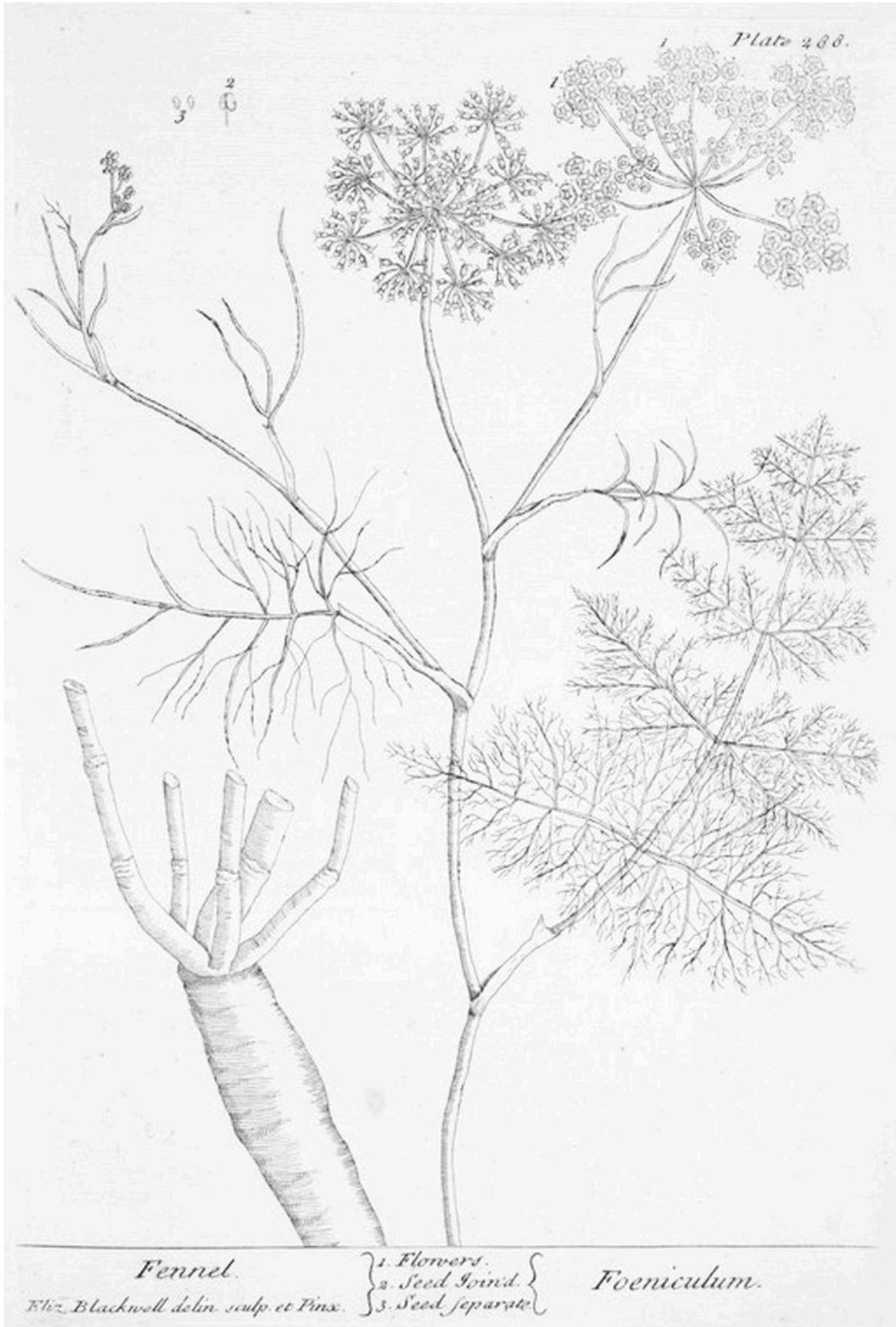
Plants that can cause PPD

- Celery
- Anise
- Bergamot
- Dill
- Fennel
- Fig trees (especially the sap)
- Giant hogweed
- Chrysanthemums
- Rue
- Russian sage
- St. John's wort
- Skimmia
- Buttercups
- Limes and other citrus fruits
- Parsley
- Gasplant
- Queen Anne's lace (wild carrot)
- Parsnips
- Carrots



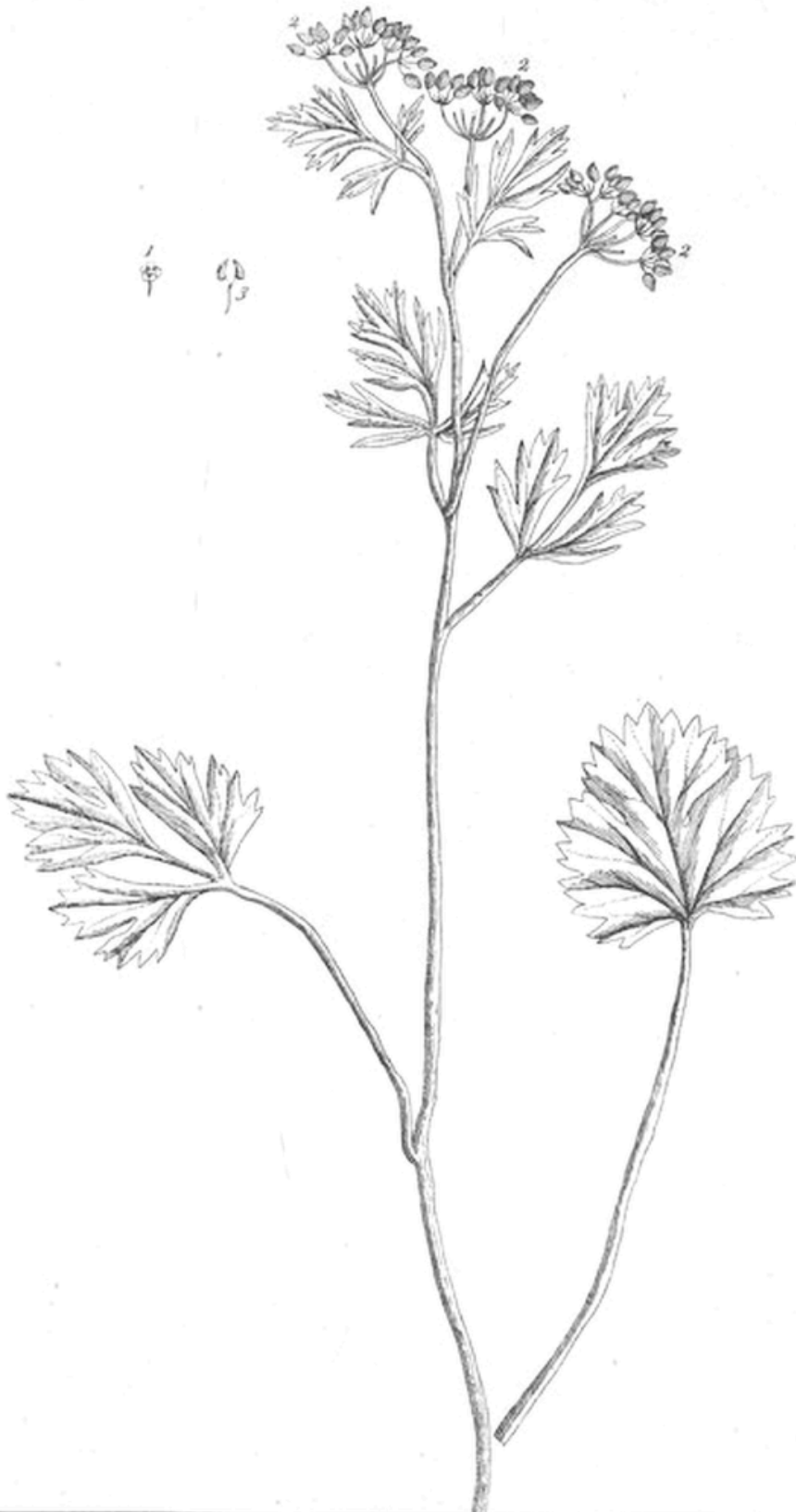
FENNEL

(*Foeniculum vulgare*)



ANISE
(*Pimpinella anisum*)

Plate 374.



Anise.
Eliiz. Blackwell delin. sculp. et Pinx.

{ 1. Flower.
2. Seed.
3. Seed separate. }

Anisum.

Poems for June



The Brook by Ellen Carhart

From a fountain
In a mountain,
Drops of water ran,
Trickling through the grasses
So our brook began.

Slow it started;
Soon it darted,
Cool and clear and free,
Rippling over pebbles,
Hurrying to the sea.

Children straying
Came a-playing
On its pretty banks:
Glad, our little brooklet
Sparkled up its thanks.

Blossoms floating,
Mimic boating,
Fishes darting past,—
Swift and strong and happy,
Widening very fast,

Bubbling, singing,
Rushing, ringing,
Flecked with shade and sun,
Soon our pretty brooklet
To the sea has run.

The Wind in the Grass by Ralph W. Emerson

The green grasses bowing,
The morning wind is in it,
'Tis a tune worth thy knowing
Though it change every minute.



Little Wind by Kate Greenaway

Little wind, blow on the hill-top,
Little wind, blow down the plain;
Little wind, blow up the sunshine,
Little wind, blow off the rain.



The Four Winds by Unknown Author

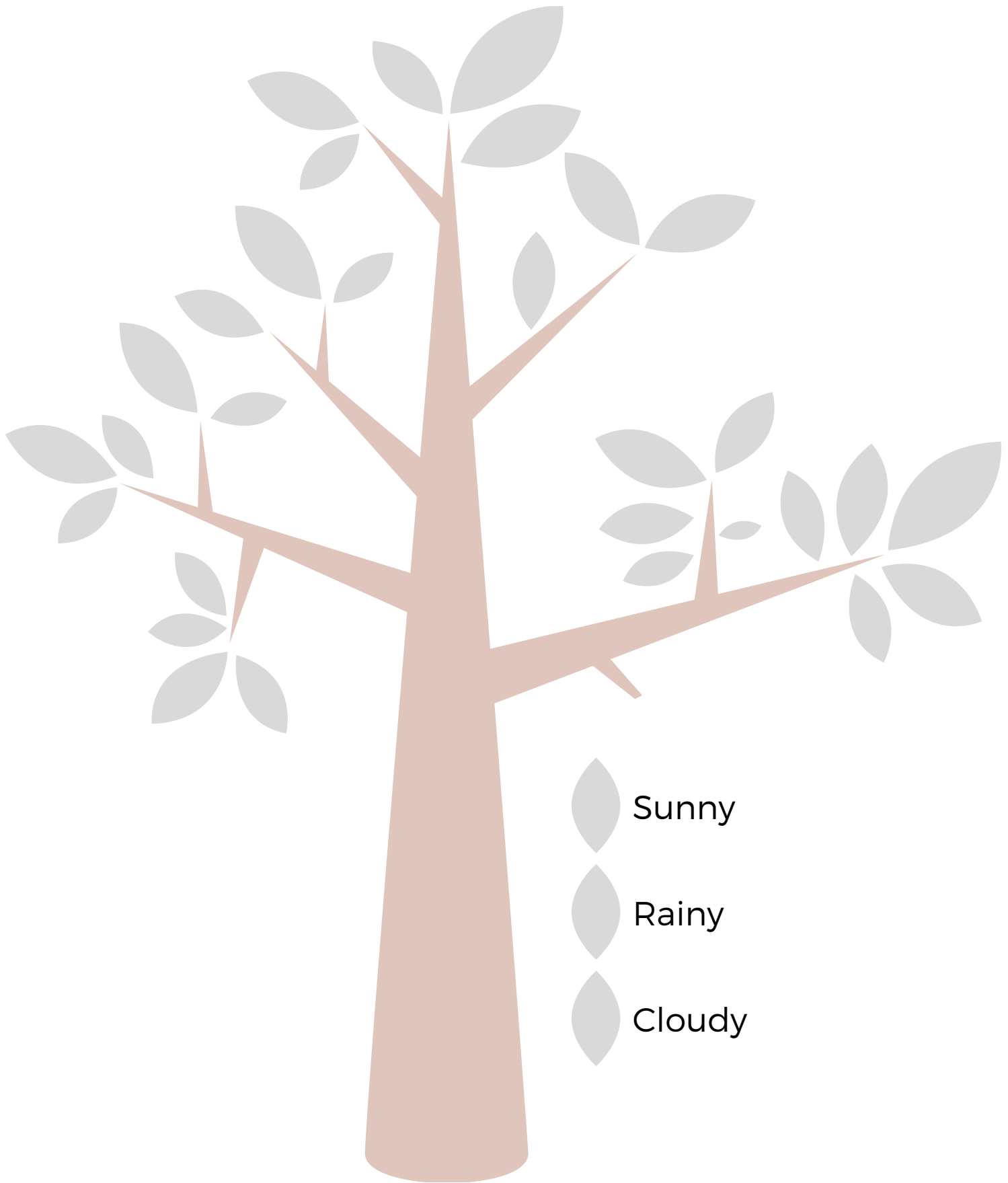
The South wind brings wet weather,
The North wind wet and cold together;
The West wind always brings us rain,
The East wind blows it back again.

My Nature Journal

June



June Weather Tree

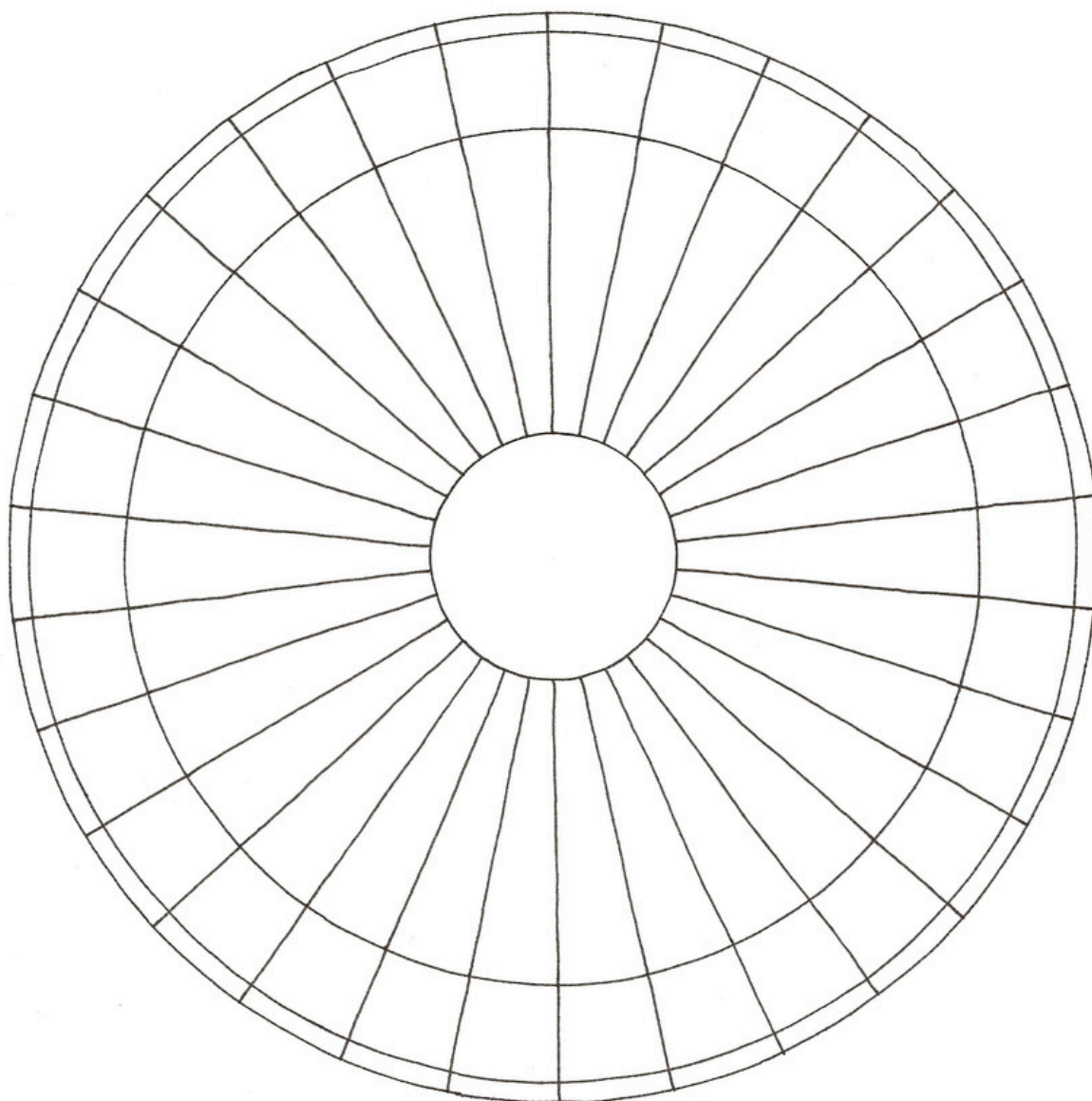


JUNE PHENOLOGY

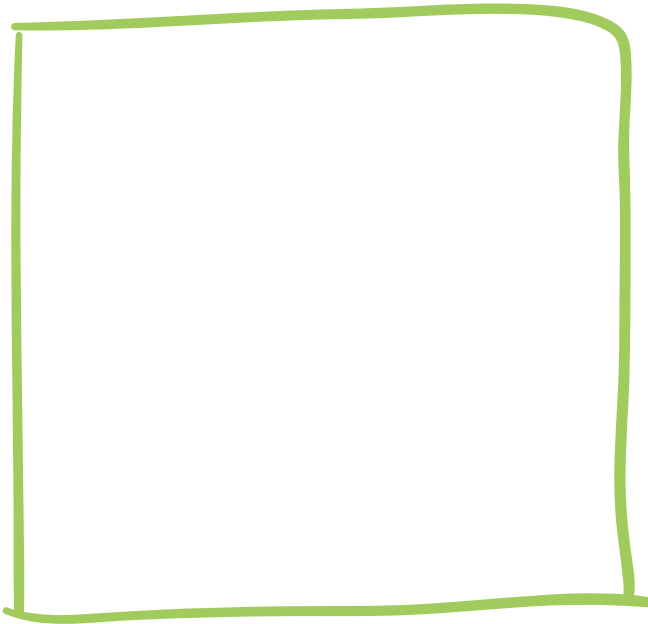
Make a picture record of your observations in nature this month!

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

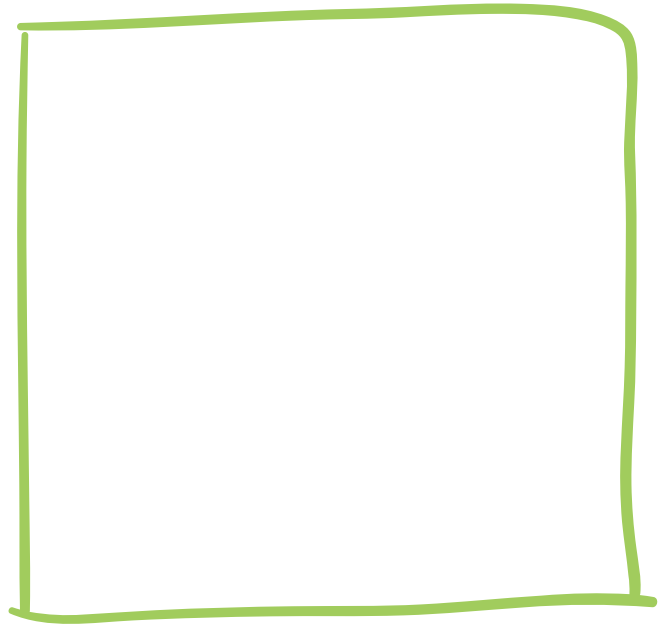
Flowers blooming, butterflies spotted, thunderstorms, garden seedlings poking up...
Start with day 1 in the first wedge and go all around the wheel with your observations.



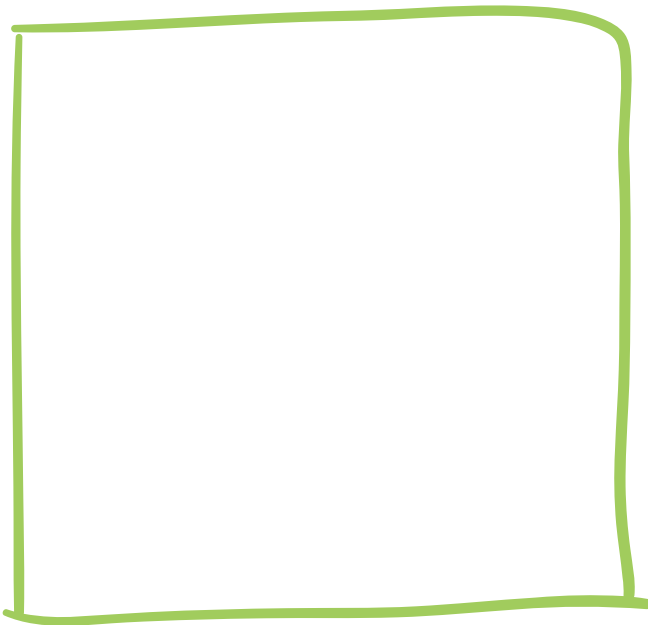
June Nature Sketches



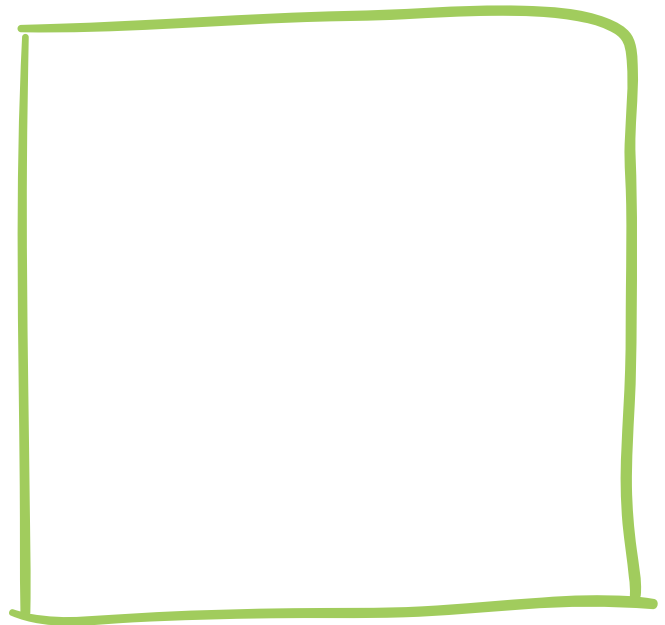
Insect spotted



Flower spotted



Wild food spotted



Animal spotted

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 _____

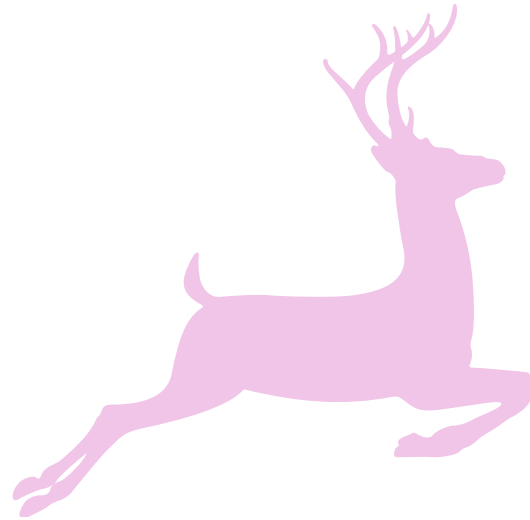
LOOKALIKES & HOW TO POSITIVELY ID:

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