

# Nature Journaling

**IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**, if we see someone poaching or polluting we are encouraged to call the ORR hotline: Observe, Record, Report. But what about when we see something breathtaking? King Solomon “spoke about plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also spoke about animals and birds, reptiles and fish” (1 Kings 4:33). King Solomon observed, recorded, and reported what he saw in creation. One of my favorite ways to do this is through nature journaling.

## What Is Nature Journaling?

In the foreword to the book *How to Teach Nature Journaling*, by John Muir Laws and Emily Lygren, Amy Tan writes that she wanted “to be intensely curious, to wonder aloud, to see the story in front of (her) and try to capture an interesting aspect of it in a drawing.” This is what nature journaling is about: observing some part of creation and recording it through words, pictures, and numbers. For me,

it is also a way of reflecting on and sharing in the Creator’s delight in all that God created and called very good.

So pull out some paper and some pencils, crayons, or paint and join me on a journey through the world of nature journaling. You don’t have to be an amazing artist or a brilliant writer. It’s more about the process of noticing than about producing a masterpiece.

## Noticing and Wondering

First, find something from creation in or near your home. Ask yourself: What do I notice? Then, using words, numbers, and pictures, record that on your paper.

When you think you are done, add more detail. Ask yourself: What color(s) is it? What about shapes? Patterns? Spots? Broken parts? Record those.

Once you’ve recorded everything, ask, “What do I wonder?” Maybe you wonder why an object is shaped a certain way, or why a part is broken, or what purpose God has for it. You don’t need to know the answers. You don’t even need to find the answers. Just wonder.

Then record what the object reminds you of. Connect it with something you already know, and record what comes to mind.

Finally, record what comes to mind when you ask, “What does God want to tell me about myself, God, or creation?”

Seeing creation in a more intimate way through nature journaling allows us to better understand how God creates, sustains, and redeems the world. It also helps us understand the parables of Jesus, who lived much closer to the land than modern humans do. And you just might find yourself joining the Creator in delighting in and wanting to better care for God’s good creation. **B**



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