

The Quiet Schooling of Nature

"Our hearts are inclined to love and worship; and we become prepared by the quiet schooling of Nature to walk softly and do our duty towards man and towards God."

Nature Study

Getting Started

- Get
- Go
- Consider
- Record

What If . . . ?

I don't know what that bird/insect/plant/animal/rock is?

"Until we get as much as a nodding and naming acquaintance with the things of Nature, they are a cause rather of irritation and depression than of joy."

My child doesn't like to—or can't—draw or write?

Nature Notebook Tips

- Keep a family nature diary first.
- Wait until your child is old enough to want his own.
- Personalize it!
- Keep a nature notebook yourself.
- Point out possibilities but not requirements.
- Encourage!
- Embellish your notebook with poetry or hymn lyrics or quotes.
- Take the notebooks along when traveling.
- Use colored pencils, watercolor paints, or watercolor pencils.
- Keep all the notebooks, pencils, and a few field guides in a bag to grab.

Nature Projects

- Ant farm
- Caterpillar to butterfly
- Tadpole to frog
- Home Science Tools (homesciencetools.com)
- Nature's Workshop Plus (workshopplus.com)

Winter Nature Study Ideas

- A bird list near a bird feeder outside your window
- Constellations
- Snowflakes
- Adopt a tree through the seasons
- Pinecones
- Animal tracks

"Let each of us undertake the patient, unflagging, day-by-day observation of the behaviour of sparrow, spider, teazel, of clouds or winds, recording what we ourselves have seen, correcting our records as we learn to be more accurate, and being very chary of conclusions. All we find out may be old knowledge, and is most likely already recorded in books; but, for us, it is new, our own discovery, our personal knowledge, a little bit of the world's real work which we have attempted and done. However little work we do in this kind, we gain by it some of the power to appreciate, not merely beauty, but fitness, adaptation, processes. Reverence and awe grow upon us, and we are brought into a truer relation with the Almighty Worker."

Even then . . .

"How small a whisper do we hear of Him!" (Job 26).

Living Nature Study Books

Preschool through 3rd Grade

- *Outdoor Secrets*, Margaret Boyle (SimplyCharlotteMason.com)
- Thornton Burgess books
- Clara Dillingham Pierson's *Among the ____ People* series
- Arthur Scott Bailey's *The Tale of ____* series
- Arthur Ransome's series: *The Child's Book of the Seasons; Pond and Stream; Things In Our Garden* (out of print but available online)
- *James Herriot's Treasury for Children*
- *By Pond and River*, Arabella Buckley

4th Grade and Up

- *Jack's Insects*, Edmund Selous (SimplyCharlotteMason.com)
- *Owls in the Family*, Farley Mowat
- *The Children's Life of the Bee*, Maurice Maeterlinck
- *Shark Lady: True Adventures of Eugenie Clark*, Ann McGovern
- *Gentle Ben*, Walt Morey
- *A Dolphin Named Bob*, Twig C. George
- *Venus Among the Fishes*, Scott O'Dell
- *The Marsh Lions: The Story of an African Pride*, Brian Jackman (out of print)
- Jean Craighead George books
- *Rascal*, Sterling North (read aloud and edit)
- *Paddy: A Naturalist's Story of an Orphan Beaver*, R. D. Lawrence

Nature Study Resources

- *Keeping a Nature Journal*, Leslie and Roth (Amazon.com)
- HandbookofNatureStudy.blogspot.com
- *The Outdoor Secrets Companion* (SimplyCharlotteMason.com)
- *Hours in the Out-of-Doors: A Charlotte Mason Nature Study Handbook* (SimplyCharlotteMason.com)