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40 Ways to Connect with Nature in Your Backyard

Prescription: Vitamin N

Here are 40 nature activities you can do in your yard today - from GRCA Nature Centre staff - for the young and the young at heart.

1. Use a magnifying glass to explore your yard.
2. Watch the changing colour of the tree buds.
3. Build a fairy house.
4. Watch for the first wildflower.
5. Listen to the dawn chorus of neighbourhood birds singing.
6. Find and decorate a walking stick or a 'magic wand'.
7. Build your own bird's nest.
8. Keep a nature journal.
9. Look for insects.
10. Find a feather.
11. Make a mud pie.
12. Find a cloud shaped like a turtle.
13. Paint rocks to look like favourite plants or animals.
14. Build a cover board for snakes and other small creatures to hide under.
15. Watch a squirrel.
16. Lay outside at night and look at the stars.
17. Make your own nature 'perfume': fill a cup with things that smell good.
18. Find animal tracks or other clues left behind by animals.
19. Create nature art using leaves and other natural materials.
20. Find a quiet spot to sit. Listen and watch for animals that visit.
21. Use markers to draw designs on leaves.
22. Make a trail out of natural or other materials and follow it.
23. Lay out at night and make up new names for the constellations.
24. Count the number of birds visiting your yard.
25. Sing and dance in the rain.
26. Discover all the early spring plants that are emerging.
27. Sketch and colour a map of all the natural features in your yard (trees, nests, flowers, rocks...).
28. Watch for signs of animals like skunks and chipmunks visiting your yard.
29. Built a shelter or fort.
30. Explore your yard at dusk.
31. Do a litter clean-up.
32. Watch for migrating birds flying overhead.
33. Use sidewalk chalk to draw your favourite animals.
34. Find something you've never seen before.

35. Find a feather.
36. Watch for bees around early spring flowers.
37. Use hole punches to make confetti from leaves.
38. Create a nature table to display your nature treasures.
39. Use binoculars to observe birds' nests.
40. With your family, make a plan to add wildlife-friendly features to your yard.