

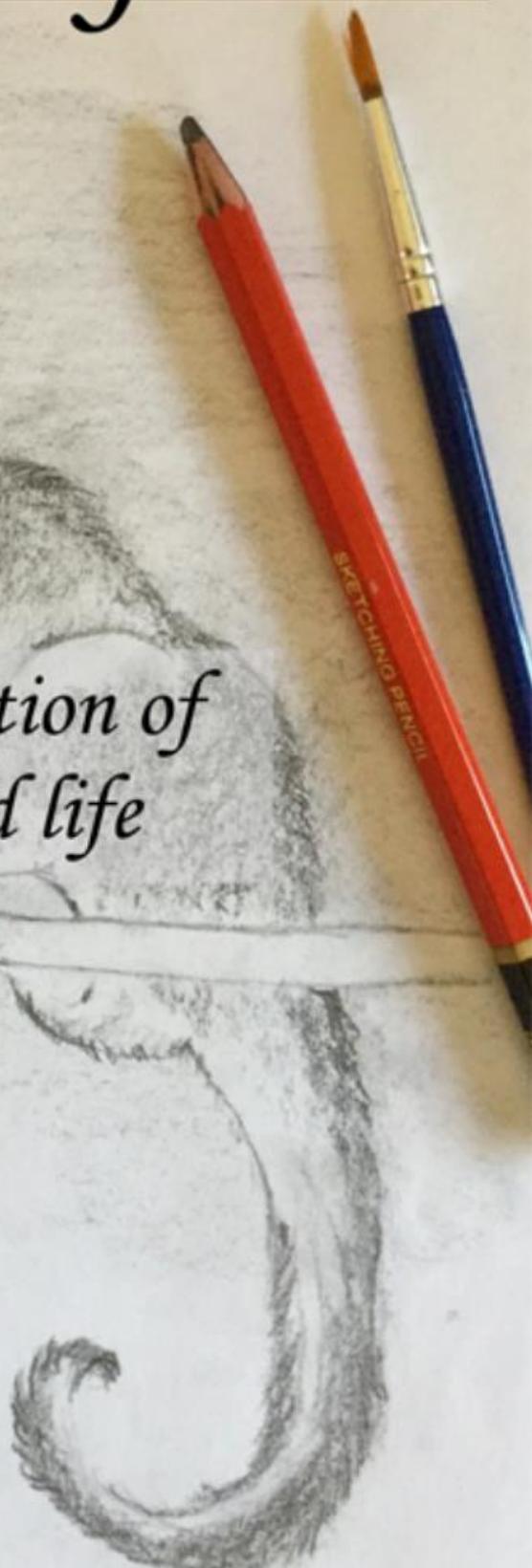
Australian

Volume 2

# Nature Study Guide



*A weekly observation of  
Australian Wild life*



*Autumn/  
Winter*



AUSTRALIAN  
NATURE STUDY  
**GUIDEBOOK**

*Autumn and Winter*

*Volume Two*

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[www.naturestudyaustralia.com.au](http://www.naturestudyaustralia.com.au)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements .....</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>Welcome.....</i>	8
<i>Starting Out.....</i>	10
<i>Taking the Plunge.....</i>	<b>17</b>
<i>Autumn.....</i>	17
<i>Nature Watch.....</i>	17
<i>Field Mushrooms .....</i>	22
<i>Autumn Tree Study .....</i>	28
<i>Eastern Long-necked Turtle .....</i>	33
<i>Earthworms.....</i>	39
<i>Winter .....</i>	44
<i>Superb Lyre Bird.....</i>	44
<i>Moss.....</i>	49
<i>Winter Solstice .....</i>	53
<i>Possums .....</i>	57
<i>Wattles.....</i>	62
<i>Additional Activities .....</i>	66
<i>Resource List .....</i>	68

# WELCOME!

A while ago, I was introduced to Charlotte Mason's educational philosophies and the study of nature. I was inspired by a friend and set out to find resources that would guide me through this new adventure, however I became disheartened rather quickly as I discovered there were few Australian materials to be found. I bought a few American based nature studies and realised it wasn't going to work for those of us in Australia. Our seasons were the opposite and our wildlife quite unique.

The ideal nature study guide for me would:

- Guide me through the seasons.
- Integrate subjects such as English, science, geography, history and art.
- Contain activities for multiple ages.
- Have the flexibility to grow into a unit study.
- Include note booking pages.
- Include information on a topic.
- Contain a list of helpful resources.
- Be adaptable.

The Australian Nature Study Guidebook: Weekly Observations of Australian Wildlife was born out of this need. I hope you'll be inspired to embark on adventures into the great outdoors, and enjoy making precious memories with your children, while seeking out the gems each season has to offer.

As a Christian, my writing will be flavoured with a Christian worldview and as home educators, we have the liberty to take what we need from a resource and leave what we don't, so you have the freedom to tailor this guide to your unique family and personal beliefs. We all have the same goal in mind: to give our children an exceptional education fashioned to their own capabilities and interests.

The information included in this guide can be used by all home educators regardless of your preferred learning style. It is flexible and easily tailored to your preference whether it be Charlotte Mason, Unit Studies, Unschooling, Project-Based, Classical or Traditional.

# TAKING THE PLUNGE

## Autumn

*"There are two books laid before us to study, to prevent our falling into error. First, the volume of the Scriptures, which reveal the will of God; then the volume of creation, which expresses His power."* ~ Francis Bacon

## Nature Watch

### Let's Get Started

Nature Watch is an activity which will encourage connection with God through paying deliberate attention to His creation. It's an interesting experience which is inspiring while creating a sense of wonder and awe for all we notice and learn.

A great deal can be learned from nature if we slow down to sit and watch the events of the bush and engage all our senses by listening with our eyes closed, or smelling, touching and admiring the work of the Master Artist.

Watching birds, insects or animals in their natural habitat requires persistence, patience and the skill of observation; this is foundational to the study of science as it fosters a scientific questioning mind. It engages our brains to wonder, ask questions and find answers and solutions.

John Muir Laws encourages naturalists to use the Production Effect which engages our brains in what we're observing. The first prompt is to narrate aloud the things you notice about the subject you're investigating as you're more likely to remember what you see. "I notice..."

The observations you make through noticing will stimulate curiosity and you'll wonder about the subject. The second prompt is, "I wonder..."

Finally, speculate about what the subject reminds you of. This exercise will create personal meaning as you externalize your thinking. "It reminds me of..."



Observing Nature

Nature Watch is an interesting activity which can be repeated often as nature changes from one season to another and there is so much to see and wonder about.

### **Further Exploring**

[The Australian Backyard Naturalist](#)

by Peter Macinnis.

*"We cannot create observers by saying, 'observe,' but by giving them the power and the means for this observation, and those means are procured through the education of the senses."*

*~ Maria Montessori,*

### **Related Internet Links**

[Three Prompts for Deeper Nature Observation](#)

[A Curiosity Framework by John Muir Laws](#)

[Sesame Street: Nature Walk](#)

### **Nature Ramble**

Walk into nature to watch, observe, listen, smell and investigate. On the first nature watch activity, form a broad mental picture of all the things you notice in the area. Collect samples of things which interest you. Observe, probe, analyse and sort through the items for further study and preservation. Practice using the nature prompts, 'I notice..., I wonder..., It reminds me of...'

### **Literature Jaunt**

[With Nan](#) by Tania Cox and Karen Blair

[Out of School and into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story](#) by Suzanne Slade

[Girls Who Looked Under Rocks](#) by Jeannine Atkins

[Freckles](#) by Gene Stratton Porter

### **Poetry Picnic**

[Leisure](#) by William Henry Davies

## **A Scripture:**

“And he said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.’”  
Mark 6:31

## **A Hymn:**

I Come to the Garden Alone by C. Austin Miles [Lyrics](#) and [music](#).

[God of Creation](#)

## **Picture Study**

[A Girl Observing a Spider by Jessie Willcox Smith](#)

## **Digging Deeper**

Young Students:

- Stand still in your nature spot. Close your eyes and listen. Hold up one finger for every sound you hear.
- Take deep breathes. Can you smell something? Can you find where the smell is coming from? What does it remind you of?
- Collect treasures like feathers, bones, twigs, rocks, cones and seeds and sort them into groups.
- Choose an item you found on your walk to observe. What do you notice? What does it make you wonder? Does it remind you of something you've seen before?

Older Students:

- Use the Nature Watch Notebook Page to present your observations.
- Create a Nature Treasure Map by moving slowly along a nature trail looking for interesting sightings as you go along. When you find one, sketch it on your trail map and invent a name for the place. Continue adding your discoveries and the sounds you hear along the way.
- Collect treasures like feathers, bones, twigs, rocks, cones and seeds and sort them into groups. Preserve your discoveries in a box or use jars.
- Choose an item you found on your walk to observe. What do you notice? What does it make you wonder? Does it remind you of something you've seen before?
- Make a sketch of the item you chose to examine. Write down the things you notice and wonder.

- Stand still in your nature spot. Close your eyes and listen. Hold up one finger for every sound you hear.

### Oldest Students:

- Use the Nature Watch Notebook Page to present your observations.
- Investigate your nature spot with these questions in mind:
  - What animals have you seen in the area? What insects, mammals, reptiles and birds did you notice? What were they doing? How many of each kind were there?
  - What types of plants grow here? Name the trees, shrubs, flowers, herbs and creepers. Which plants are the most common? How do the plants grow? In patches, solitary or clumps?
  - Where is your nature spot, what does it look like and what is near it or around it? Is it in a meadow, swamp, conservation park or field? How wet or dry is the land? How open or covered with vegetation is it? How sunny, shady and windy does it become?
  - Are there any special features like hills, rocks, ponds, rivers or lakes?
- Draw a map and use Google Maps to get a general idea of the outside shape and size of features and their locations of the nature spot you'll be visiting. Have your skeleton map prepared for your nature watch activity. Once there, you'll look around for the five most common plant types in the area. Draw a key for each plant type.

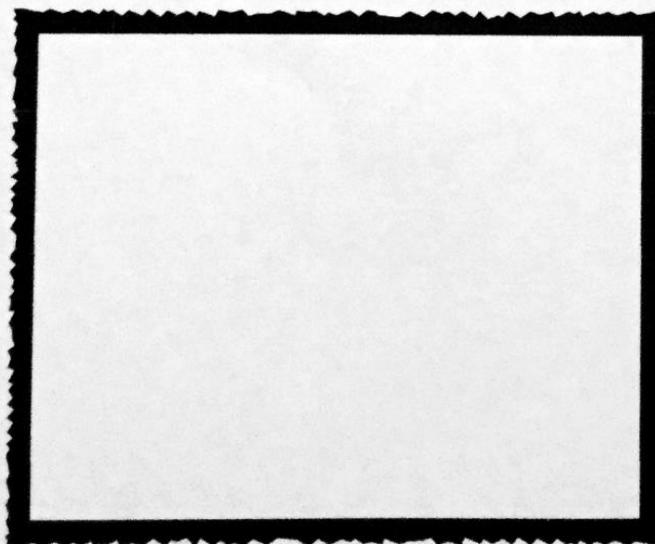
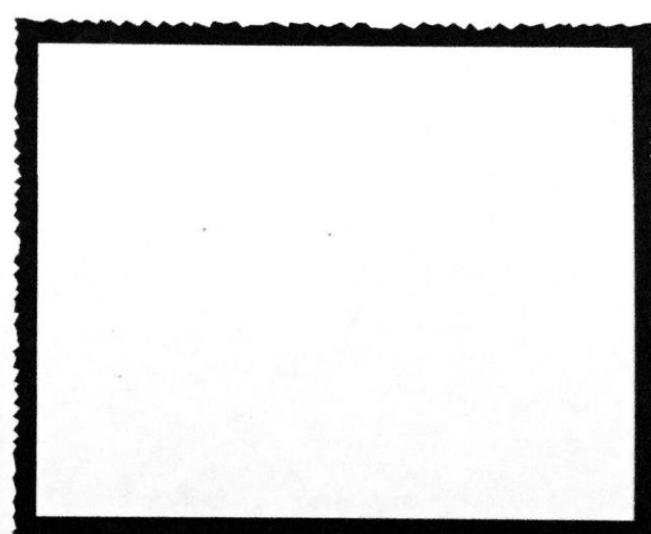
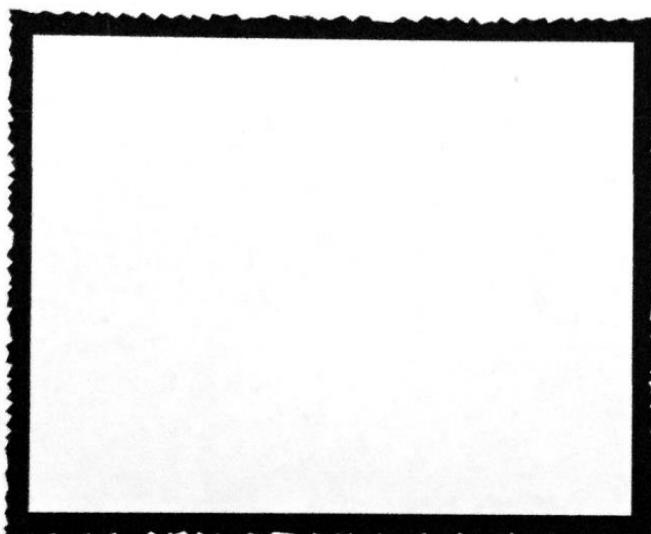
Then add a scale to the map by marking the point you are standing at and pacing off to a nearby landmark. Perhaps the scale will be 1 inch to 20 steps. Add compass points.

Now map in the plant types by using your key and scale. Add in any special features and animals you might notice. Do you notice a pattern of growth? What may be enhancing or impeding the plant growth?

- Choose an item you found on your walk to observe. What do you notice? What does it make you wonder? Does it remind you of something you've seen before? Make a sketch of the item you chose to examine. Write down the things you notice and wonder.

# NATURE

## WATCH



birds leaves clouds trees flies grass  
bushes weeds sticks animals wind  
leaves clouds trees flies grass  
weeds sticks animals wind insects  
clouds trees flies grass hills flowers  
sticks animals wind insects water sand  
trees flies grass hills flowers butterflies  
animals wind insects water sand

# nature watch

Date:	Weather:	Time Spent Watching
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Draw a picture of the spot you watched from

# Nature Watch Notebook Page

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Weather:</u>	<u>Time started</u>
<u>Place:</u>	Habitat: <input type="checkbox"/> Grassland <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland <input type="checkbox"/> Rainforest <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal <input type="checkbox"/> Lake or Creek <input type="checkbox"/> Dam or man-made waterway <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<u>Time finished</u>

Use the boxes below to record what you see.

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles
Fish/Water life	Insects	Crustacean /Molluscs
Other invertebrates	Plants/Flowers	fungi

Use these lines to write down any observation of animal behaviour (nesting, feeding, resting...)

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location

**Did you enjoy your free lesson?**

**The Australian Nature Study Guide | Volume 2 can be accessed here.**

