

August 2018

Volume 1, Issue 7

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Items for

Observing Wildflowers:

- Key Guide to Australian Wildflowers by Leonard Cronin
- Nature Journal
- Pencils/Paints
- Measuring Tool
- Magnifying glass
- Camera



Early Spring Watch

Don't be fooled by the frosty mornings and windy days. We are emerging into spring and the world around us is waking up. This is not the time to be sleepy, warm and cozy!

Many wildflowers are blooming, but we've seen nothing yet, as the bush and our yards are about to explode in blossoms. The first orchids of the season are emerging and orchid chasers are buzzing with excitement as are our bees, which are working hard already.

Our birds have begun their nesting practices of attracting partners by singing and dancing while others are carrying building materials for their nesting masterpieces. Have you ever wondered at the complex engineering skills birds possess to build their nests? It's amazing! You've got to get out and observe them.

Life in the ponds awaken with mosquito wrigglers, mating pond skaters, frogs and spawning Pigmy Perch. The Dusky Moorhens are breeding while the Ibis build their platform nests. Birds in the wetlands are hustling as they raise and care for their young, and migrating birds are returning.

The first of the spring butterflies will appear along with spider hatchlings on top of long grasses as King Crickets lay eggs in the Banksias.

Prepare yourself for the golden pollen clouds which will fall from the Pine trees this month and if you have a veggie patch, it's time to get stuck in and develop them for spring planting in September.

Be inspired! Get outdoors!

Wildflower Watch Links:

[Wildflowers of Western Australia | National Geographic](#)

[Australian Wildflowers | YouTube](#)

[How to Draw Plants | John Muir Laws](#)

[Chasing Orchids | Gardening Australia](#)

[Kids for Orchids | Duck Orchid Special | YouTube](#)

Pictures of the Month

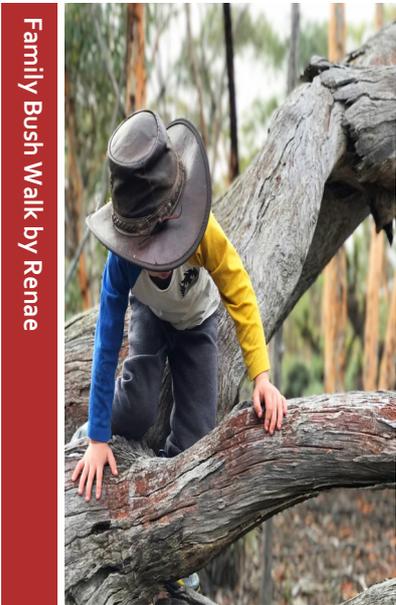


Blue Winged Kookaburra by Heather

Spiny Cheeked Honeyeater by Jacob



Kylie and family visited Tantanoola Caves at Mt Gambia, SA.



Family Bush Walk by Renae



Banksia Flower by Jo



Banksia Cone by Kylie



Amazing Fungi by Allie



Coral Fungi by Allie



Gaestrem triplex (Earth Star) by Allie

[Nature Science for Aussie families](#) is a F.B. Group where outdoor mamas share their adventures, explorations and activities to motivate, encourage and support one another. We'd love to have you **[come along side us](#)** and share in our joy or **[#naturestudyaustralia](#)** on Instagram.

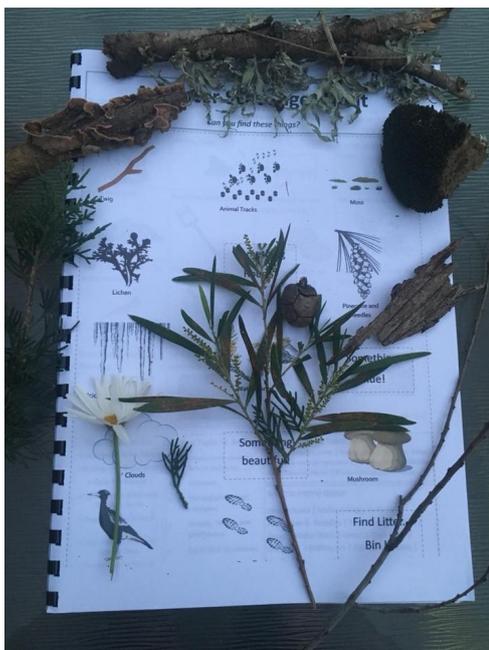
Show & Tell

Bee Hotel for the Megachile aurifrons (Resin Bee) by Tracey



The Brown Honeyeaters visited Anitra once again.

Nature journaling while unwell... by Samantha



Allie's young man is observing the Lunar Eclipse.



Jamison makes connections with the buds of a Tuart Tree. "Frogs Hands."

Sally's family went on a Scavenger Hunt. It looks like they found everything.

Do you have an activity, story or adventure to share with us? You could ignite spark of inspiration for someone else! Together, we can encourage and support one another as we explore nature. Send your article and photographs to : marie@naturestudyaustralia.com.au.



Lacey and family set out for a bush walk.



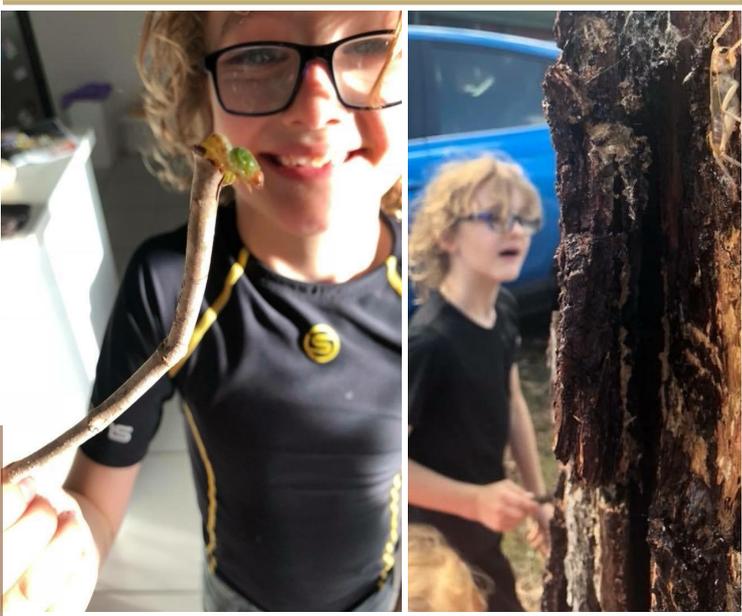
Nini's family visited 'sleeping oaks' and built tree swings.

Show & Tell



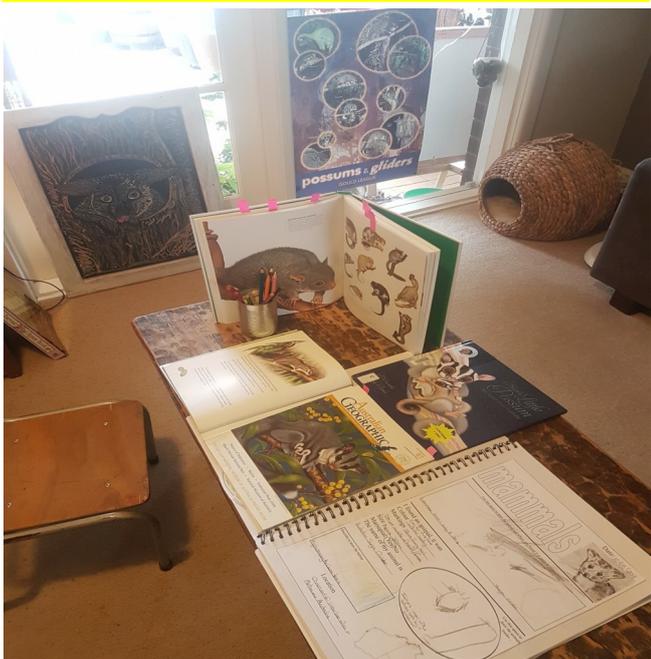
Joanna and family have visited a Native Botanical Garden and their collection of wildflowers is growing. They've also visited the Melbourne Museum which is so interesting little Lo would like to visit once a week.

Rachel shares, "William (8yrs) has been home schooling for 12 months. We started our nature journal last term and he has shown an amazing interest in all things nature! We have caught frogs, picked, measured and drawn mushrooms, found and researched crickets and caterpillars, rescued a sand monitor, watched a lyrebird in the wild and went fishing in the rain...just to name a few things." Go William!



"Give you child a single valuable idea, and you have done more for his education than if you had laid upon his mind the burden of bushels of information."
 ~ Charlotte Mason

Show & Tell



Little Miss 4 has a keen eye for wildlife and spotting Wattle Trees.

Sarah's Little Miss 4 begins her write up of the Sugar Glider Possum. She likes that they 'fly' in giant leaps from tree to tree.



Indy is exploring and making her own tracks.



Who will find the worm first? She finds the first egg of the season!

Feeding the Magpies.



Chasing Orchids and Wildflowers

It's exciting to watch the bush explode with blossoms on wildflowers, eucalyptus trees, orchids and courting birds and insects. All the worlds abuzz with the promise of spring drawing near.

As we walked the Mount Monster Conservation Park, searching for winter buds, we were surprised to notice they were already bursting into blossoms. Impatient wattles were spilling their golden hue in bursts along the country side and bees were exploring new blossoms for nectar and pollen like there was no tomorrow.

Climbing Sundews were clambering over rocks while their parallel sisters littered the walk ways with their blushing, furry stars. It's hard to believe these delicate plants are carnivorous and will show no mercy for insects they lure and capture to digest.

As our eyes and minds adjusted and shifted into the mode of scouting and observing there was so much to see. Just as we'd bend down on to the bush floor to explore a moss species, straggling fungi or burnt orange lichens, we'd stumble upon the most delicate lilies like the Common Early Nancy. They were happily dancing on the forest floor as the winter breeze tickled them.

Our discovery of the Maroonhood orchids, one of the first species to greet the orchid season, was met with excited gasps. This heralds the start of Orchid Chasing for us!

Other orchids to surprise us at the start of the season are Nodding Greenhoods, Golden Moths and the Blunt Greenhood while Spider Orchids and Pink Fingers will follow in September. The Donkey Orchid, Leopard Orchid, Purple Beard Orchid and Sun Orchids end the season in October.

TIP: Begin a timeline for the wildflower and orchid season. It is a great way to record the flowering and seeding times of the plants you enjoy in your locality. I've created Wildflower and Orchid Timelines for you to print off at the back of this nature journal. You'll also find Wildflower and Orchid Notebook pages to journal your observations of the wildflowers you'll uncover on your nature explorations.

Wildflowers and Orchids will be discussed and studied in [the Winter/Spring Nature Guide](#). While observing the flowering season we'll also explore plant communities and how they thrive together. In the study of orchids, we'll learn that orchids need a symbiotic relationship with a mycorrhizal fungus to germinate and thrive. It's all very fascinating! I know you'll love exploring and discovering these gems with us.

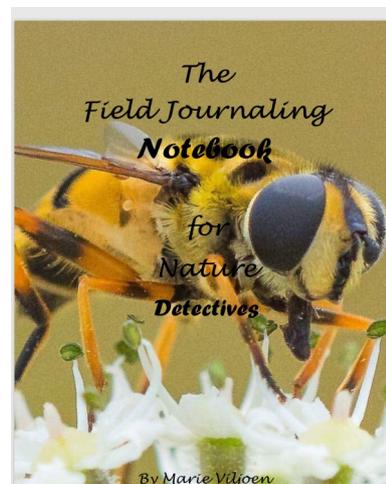


Spring Journaling Ideas



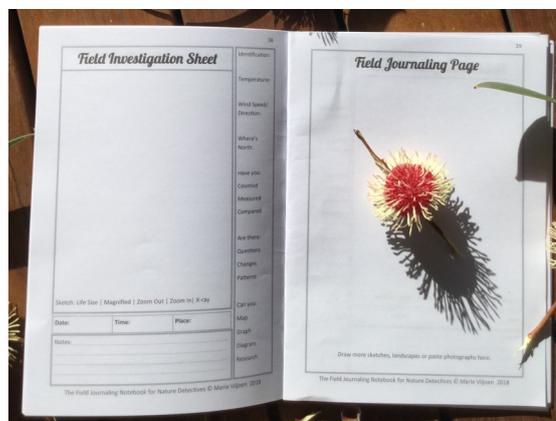
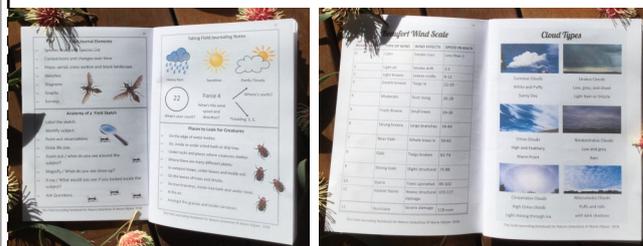
- Observe, draw and document the flowers in your yard as they begin to greet spring on a weekly basis.
- Draw and document the process of a bud to blossom to fruit and seed on a tree of your choice.
- Sketch and colour the new leaf growth on plants and trees. Compare them with older leaves and note the differences.
- Note, date and document the return of migrating birds in your locality. Do the males or females arrive first? What behaviours are the males demonstrating. Have they grown new, colourful plumage? Why?
- What weather changes are you noticing as the days become warmer? Begin a Weather Record Chart. You'll find one in the April Nature Journal.
- Have you marked the July Sunrise and Sunset times in your chart?
- Contemplate how spring makes you feel. What are your responses to new blossoms, warmer weather, emerging butterflies and spring showers?
- Practice drawing buds, flowers and leaves. John Muir Law helps you [here](#).
- Smell the flowers, breathe deep, immerse yourself into the season of renewal.

Introducing the Field Journaling Notebook for Nature Detectives



Did you download your free Field Journal Notebook for Nature Detectives? The Field Journal encourages you to think and sketch like a scientist while exploring nature as a Detective.

All your tools and notebooking pages are in one place and you don't have to juggle sheets of paper.



This is an On the Go Field Journal. Take it everywhere as opportunities to inspect nature often present themselves at the most peculiar times.

Download it today. [Here!](#) Have Fun! :))

Jacob's Adventures

We've just finished a caravanning holiday around parts of Australia. We had lots of great adventures, but the most fun that I had was running up and down sand dunes by the Darling river near Wilcannia, NSW. I tried to beat our dog both up the hill & down the hill, but he was too quick. He had a great time too.

I was also then lucky enough to find an old rusty ute nearby that had been dumped, which I got this great photograph of. There were lots of things that I came across that had been dumped that made good photograph material. It's really sad though, that these things are dumped because of the impact they have on our environment.



Jacob enjoys exploring outdoors, travelling, playing card games and photographing birds. Jacob is sharing his adventures and activities with us. He has taken amazing photographs of his recent travels through parts of Australia. Welcome home Jacob!



Identification Challenge

Can you find the identity of this flower?

Let me know by email at:

marie@naturestudyaustralia.com.au.

Who will be the first to guess and receive a nature guide by *Steve Parish*?

Australian Nature Study Guide

Winter/Spring

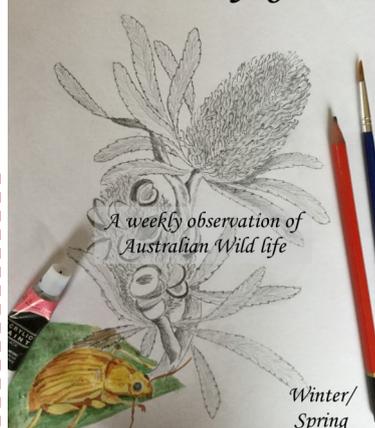
Come along, explore with us...

Banksia | Platypus | Orchids | Snails



Australian
Nature Study Guide

Volume 3



[Download Free Lesson Here!](#)

**NATURE COLOURING
PAGE**



[Download Colouring Page!](#)



Renae's Outdoor Snapshots!

My husband and I have always shared a love of the outdoors and in particular the beautifully diverse landscapes Australia has to offer. We're fortunate to live within walking distance of the beach and in a previous lifetime I had the added bonus of having a job where I worked in the incredibly bio diverse Jarrah forest of Western Australia's southwest. Camping and exploring have always been a big part of our relationship, most likely because it was all we could afford as uni students! We've travelled all over the state of Western Australia, and when our son was 1, moved to the Northern Territory for a year where our daughter was born. The adventuring we did whilst in the NT has just driven our passion for camping even further!

At the start of this year we spent two weeks out at Cape Arid (east of Esperance) and met a family who went camping every month. We thought that was an awesome commitment to make to us and our kids, and have managed to do that every month since, sometimes more than once a month. It's often only a weekend away somewhere, but we've found that time together as a family is such a valuable time to re-connect with one another and nature, away from the distractions of day to day life.

I'm in the fortunate position of being able to choose to be a stay at home mum to our 1 and 3 year old (by the time this goes to print our third child will likely have arrived), and my love of the outdoors and nature comes through a lot in the experiences and play I embrace with our children.

One question I often get asked by friends, is how to get their kids interested in outdoor play, and how to incorporate outdoor exploration into their everyday lives.

Now I have zero experience in early childhood development or education, and my perspective is purely that from observing my own two children, but for me, **I find that by encouraging my children to have inquisitive minds, they're in turn, are far more open to seeing the wonder, potential and possibility in the outdoors and value the things that they observe.** And for me, a lot of that comes back to getting my kids outside, in their backyard, in their community and really paying attention to the world around them.

This doesn't mean having to plan long camping trips, or visits to nature reserves some distance away. **It can be as simple as taking a walk to your local park, oval, beach, bushland, estuary or lake, or even just your backyard. Take your children into these outdoor spaces – and ask them to tap into their senses, what do they see, hear, smell, feel?**

Building a Nature Boat.



Building Boats with Flotsam.



Flower Foraging at the Neighbours.

My kids have little mesh 'treasure bags' but these could just as easily be any bag or container, and they collect things along our walks that they consider treasures – sometimes these might be natural items such as leaves or nuts that are interesting to them, sometimes they are man made.

We discuss their finds when we get home and sometimes incorporate these into their play. **I find that discussing their treasures not only reinforces to my kids that I VALUE what they have found, but it often opens up the most amazing insight into their minds.** Finding

out why a particular item was interesting to them is often a really valuable learning experience for me as a parent. Accordingly, we now have a massive nut and seed pod collection, in addition to our ever growing stick collection (my son is obsessed with stick play)!!

We bring back things to paint with, or paint on, the kids notice which houses in our neighbourhood have kids, special flowers and nuts, barking dogs, chickens – they chat with the people we see on our walks and develop social skills, they question the amounts of rubbish we see on our beaches and play spaces and pick it up to take home and put in our bin.

All of these experiences not only contribute to opening their eyes up to the world around them, it gives them a sense of belonging within their community, and we've actually formed some beautiful relationships with some elderly residents that we previously didn't know at all just by knocking on their door and asking if we could pick a flower from their garden.

When at home we look at what activities we can take outside. Can we have breakfast or morning tea outside? Can we do our painting outside (this is always a preference for us as it minimizes the mess inside). Rather than playing with blocks inside, we'll take a picnic rug outside and put the blocks or Duplo on there. Even the rainy days can be fun opportunities to chuck on some gum boots, a rain jacket and go stomping in muddy puddles or explore the flotsam that gets washed up on our beach after a storm surge. Kids tend to be happier outside, I find my kids behavior is likewise more regulated outside – we get fewer 'big' emotions; and removed from four walls and a room with a TV, all of us are less likely to rely on said TV. My kids LOVE 'treasure hunts' at the moment, so I'll often take a cuppa and a chair outside, relax and call out things for my kids to find – "find me something that:"

Renae's Treasure Hunt:

Find me something that:

- ~is red
- ~smells interesting
- ~moves
- ~is rough to touch
- ~is smooth
- ~is smaller than your thumb
- ~you can scrunch up in your hands
- ~is soft



- ~is soft
- ~makes a noise
- ~is bumpy
- ~is wet
- ~is long and skinny
- ~rolls
- ~you had to reach up high to find



Collecting Treasures

Making Patterns



Embracing the Rain



Making Connections
"Frogs hands."



Beachcombing After a Storm

All of the above ideas get my kids to notice the world around them, and open up their imaginations, and none of it is complicated or difficult. **It also promotes independent play and allows them to negotiate risk within their own defined 'safe' boundaries.** When these things start working together I find my kids are less prone to saying "I'm bored," but rather start creating their own games and ideas to keep themselves amused. Kids don't need to be 'entertained' all day, dealing with boredom is actually really important and often when they'll come up with their best self directed play ideas; and when they see possibility and potential in the everyday world and items around them, this becomes easier and easier for them to do.

Sifting Leaf Litter



Searching for Invertebrates



Finding Tiny Pseudoscorpions!



Renaë Kaciuba is a mum of two, soon to be three! Enjoying the adventure of moving interstate and exploring the beauty of this great land she calls home, Australia.

Reach out to Renaë at [bluebeatnik](https://www.instagram.com/bluebeatnik) on Instagram.

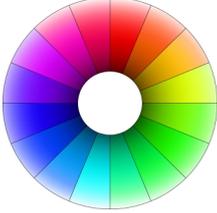
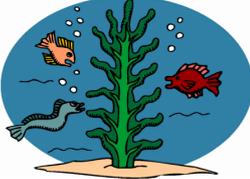
Since writing this article, Renaë and her precious family welcomed Evelyn Mae into the world. Mum and bub are doing well.

*Congratulations
Renaë!*

"Our aim in education is to give a full life. We owe it to them to initiate an immense number of interests. Life should be all living, and not merely a tedious passing of time; not all doing or all feeling or all thinking—the strain would be too great—but, all living; that is to say, we should be in touch wherever we go, whatever we hear, whatever we see, with some manner of vital interest." ~ Charlotte Mason

August Nature Watch Chart

Use the simple ideas in this chart to encourage outdoor explorations.

<p>Can you find courting birds?</p> 	<p>Listen to the sounds outdoors. What is different?</p> 	<p>What colours do you notice the Most?</p> 	<p>Continue to Search for Blooming Wildflowers In your area.</p> 
<p>Can you find working bees?</p> 	<p>Can you spot a butterfly?</p> 	<p>Discuss the difference in seasons in Australia. Compare the North to the South and the East to the West. Are there any similarities?</p>	<p>Search for nesting birds. Observe them.</p> 
<p>Explore pond life!</p> 	<p>Go rock pooling!</p> 	<p>Go for a bush walk.</p> 	<p>Visit the wetlands and count the ducks and ducklings.</p> 
<p>Start a vegetable garden.</p> 	<p>Read a Spring Book.</p> 	<p>Search for patterns in Nature.</p> 	<p>Search for spider webs.</p> 

Keep an eye out for:

- Blossoms
- Orchids
- Butterflies
- King Crickets
- Pond Life
- Rockpool Life
- Nesting Birds
- Spider Hatchlings
- Wetland Birds

Journal Topics to Explore:

- **Begin a wildflower and orchid Timeline**
- **Start a Butterfly Timeline**
- **Spring Courtship**
- **Life in Ponds and Rockpools**
- **Compare Northern Spring to Spring in the South.**

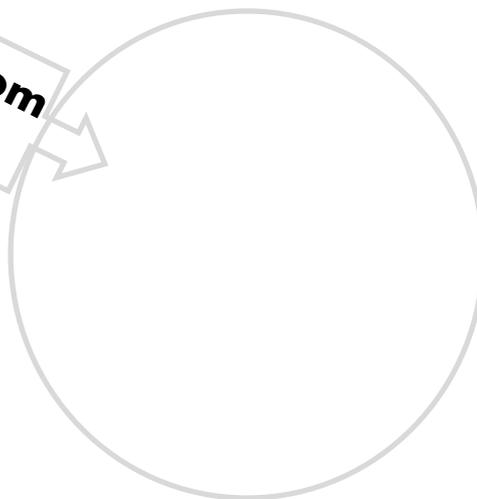
WINTER NATURE TABLE IDEAS: Jonquils | Daffodils | Spring Books | Timelines | Blossoms | Snail Jar | Worm Jar | Create a Butterfly Tree Centre Piece | Playdough Nature Nests | Eggs |

Photography Ideas: Rainbows | Nature Patterns Wildflowers | Orchids | Fern Fronds | Courting Birds | Nesting Birds | Spider Webs | Ducklings | Red | Caterpillars | Honeyeaters | Circles

My Wildflower Journal



**Zoom
In**



Identification:

Temperature:

Wind Speed and
Direction:

The colours are:

It smells like:

The shape is:

The texture is:

The count is:

The measurements
are:

Length:

Width:

Blossoms:

Leaves:

Soil type:

Pollinating insects:

Growing in:

Shade/Sun/Both

Draw your field sketches and write your observations here.

**Zoom
Out**

Date:

Time:

Place:

My Observations:-



My Wildflower Journal

Identification:

Draw your field sketches and write your observations here.

Weather:

The soil type is:

It's growing in shade, sun or both?

The colours are:

The shape is:

It smells like:

It feels like:

My count is:

Pollinating Insects are:

Date:

Time:

Place:

