# The Field Journaling Notebook

for Nature Detectives

By Marie Viljoen

The Field Journaling Notebook for Nature Detectives © Marie Viljoen 2018



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#### **Get in Touch!**

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.

Become a part of our email community for additional support and free resources that'll enrich your nature study encounters by subscribing to our monthly Nature Study Journal <a href="here.">here.</a>

#### Pop in and visit me at:

Instagram: nature study australia

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Nature Study Australia Forum



If you've just joined us, and would like to explore the outdoors and you're unsure of where to start, then I invite you to take a look at the <u>Australian Nature Study Guides</u>, see <u>inside Volume 2</u> and give <u>the first lesson a go</u>.

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## The Art of Field Journaling

#### What is Field Journal?

A field journal is a scientific record of the observations made out on the field. Scientists who work outdoors collecting data, consider their field journals the most important tool in their scientific toolbox.



The field journal is used to record their observations, write down questions and information gathered on a place or topic of interest. It includes specific notes like measurements, counts, estimates, times and places.

Their field journals are not filled with pretty watercolour paintings.

Instead, you'll find quick sketches were made while they took notes of



The field journal becomes the evidence their work is based on and it's valued by museums who preserve their work so they may be used as references for further investigations.

#### How can I Start Field Journaling?

So, how can you start a field journal? A field journal or an observational notebook is used to make quick and simple drawings. It's not about how well one can draw but how well one can observe and see. If drawing is not your thing, then take photographs and write your observations in a notebook.

A Field Journal includes metadata. John Muir Laws says, "To make your observations valuable to science and help you keep track of your experiences, include where and when data on every page. It only takes a few seconds to do and converts any journal page from an anecdote to a scientific record." Make it a habit to write down the date, time, place and weather when you make an observational drawing in your notebook.

Fill the notebook with your questions. Asking questions like what, how, why and who will exercise your curiosity muscles or use the <a href="Curiosity Framework">Curiosity Framework</a> to get you thinking scientifically.

Add all your observations like colours, shapes, patterns, comparisons, counts, timings, measurements, estimates and seasonal changes into the field journal. Expand your observations with words in poems and writing down your feelings and thoughts. Include diagrams, maps and lists of birds, animals and insects.

Knowing your biometrics is one way to measure length and height. What is the length of your step? Find the length of your boot and arm span, and the height of your knee, navel and total height. Become accustomed to using this knowledge when you're out in the field measuring and recording your data.

Once you return home, find the answers to the questions by researching the topic you studied and add them to your work. That's it! You've begun the skill of field journaling.



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## **Field Journaling Tools**



# **My Biometrics** Measure in cm and or inches. Boot Length: Knee Height: One Step: Navel Height: Total Height: Arm Span: **Record Metadata** Date Time $\Rightarrow$ **Place** Weather Geographical features $\Rightarrow$ **Geographical Coordination** Direction

#### **Ask Interrogative Questions**

⇒ Who: Identity "Who's print?"

⇒ What: Description "How many claws?"

⇒ Where: Location "Where is it going?"

⇒ When: Timing "Is it the right time?"

⇒ How: Process "Two legs or four?"

⇒ Why: Reasoning "Why this way?"







#### **Be Curious**

- ⇒ Is it stable or changing?
- ⇒ Where and how is it connected to other things?
- ⇒ Can I see a pattern? Have I seen this pattern before?
- ⇒ What are the points of view concerning this? Do I agree?
- ⇒ What are my reflections?

Three Prompts for Deeper Nature Observation by John Muir Laws.

The Curiosity Framework by John Muir Laws.

A Naturalists Tool: A Journal Insert.

Nurturing the Skill of Curiosity with John Muir Laws





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#### **Field Journal Elements**

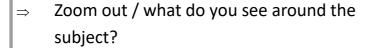
- ⇒ Species Study and Species List
- ⇒ Comparisons and changes over time
- ⇒ Maps: aerial, cross section and block landscape.
- ⇒ Sketches
- ⇒ Diagrams
- ⇒ Graphs
- ⇒ Surveys





#### Anatomy of a Field Sketch

- ⇒ Label the sketch.
- ⇒ Identify subject.
- ⇒ Point out observations.
- ⇒ Draw life size.



- ⇒ Magnify / What do you see close-up?
- ⇒ X-ray / What would you see if you looked inside the subject?
- ⇒ Ask Questions.







#### **Taking Field Journaling Notes**



Heavy Rain



Sunshine



Partly Cloudy

Vhere's north?



What's your count?

#### Force 4

What's the wind speed and direction?

Traveling S. E.

#### **Places to Look for Creatures**

- On the edge of water bodies.
- On, inside or under a bird bath or drip tray.  $\Rightarrow$
- Under rocks and places where creatures shelter.
- Where there are many different plants.
- In compost heaps, under leaves and inside soil.
- On the leaves of trees and shrubs.
- On tree branches, inside tree bark and under trees.
- In the air.  $\Rightarrow$
- Amongst the grasses and inside carcasses.







## **Beaufort Wind Scale**

BEAUFORT NO.	TYPE OF WIND	WIND EFFECTS	SPEED IN KM/H
0	Calm	Smoke rises	Less than 1
1	Light air	Smoke drift.	1-5
2	Light breeze	Leaves rustle.	6-11
3	Gentle breeze	Twigs in	12-19
4	Moderate	Dust rising.	20-28
5	Fresh Breeze	Small trees	29-38
6	Strong breeze	Large branches	39-49
7	Near Gale	Whole trees in	50-61
8	Gale	Twigs broken	62-74
9	Strong Gale	Slight structural	75-88
10	Storm	Trees uprooted.	89-102
11	Violent Storm	Heavy structural damage.	103-117
12	Hurricane	Severe damage	118-over

## **Cloud Types**



Cumulus Clouds
White and Puffy
Sunny Day



Stratus Clouds

Low, grey, and sheet

Light Rain or Drizzle



Cirrus Clouds

High and Feathery

Warm Front



Nimbostratus Clouds

Low and grey

Rain



Cirrostratus Clouds

High Cirrus clouds

Light shining through ice.



Altocumulus Clouds

Puffs and rolls

with dark shadows

Date	Time	Temp	Frost/ Dew	Wind Direc.	Wind Speed	Rain	Clouds
01/06/18	7am	7		SE	12km/h	2ml	Nimbos

Date	Time	Temp	Frost/	Wind	Wind	Rain	Clouds
			Dew	Direc.	Speed		

Date	Time	Temp	Frost/	Wind	Wind	Rain	Clouds
			Dew	Direc.	Speed		

Date	Time	Temp	Frost/	Wind	Wind	Rain	Clouds
			Dew	Direc.	Speed		

## **Sunrise & Sunset Chart**

TIME	JULY	OCTOBER	JANUARY	APRIL
9PM				
8				
7				
6				
5				
4				
3				
2				
1				
NOON				
11				
10				
9				
8				
7				
6				
5AM				

# **Chasing Daylight**

Date:	Sunrise:	Sunset:	Daylight Hrs:	Difference is:

# **Species Status Report**

Date:	Species:	Location:	Counts:	Habitat:	Threats:

# **Species Status Report**

Date:	Species:	Location:	Counts:	Habitat:	Threats:

# **Species List**

# **Species List**

# **Fishing Log**

Date:	Location:	Species:	Length:	Girth:	Weight:

# **Fishing Log**

Date:	Location:	Species:	Length:	Girth:	Weight:

Timeline for
--------------

Month	Species Name
January	First Wanderers seen at the park.

Time	line	for	

Month	Species Name

Timeline for
--------------

Month	Species Name

Time	line	for	

Month	Species Name

## **Bird Census**

Date:	Time:	Place:	Bird:	Tallies:

## **Bird Census**

Date:	Time:	Place:	Bird:	Tallies:

Date:	Time:		Place:
Common Name:	Scientific Name:		Count:
Native/Introduced:	Migratory/Adaptable		Small/Medium/Large
Colours of feathers:		Beak shape and colour:	
Behaviour: resting/preening/fighting?		Eating habits: scratches/probes?	
Habitat: wetlands/backyard?		What do the calls sound like and at what time does it sing?	
How does it walk? Hop/Run/Waddle?		Flight Habits:	: Glide/Flap/Hover?

Date:	Time:		Place:
Common Name:	Scientific Name:		Count:
Native/Introduced:	Migratory/Adaptable		Small/Medium/Large
Colours of feathers:		Beak shape and colour:	
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Date:	Time:		Place:
Common Name:	Scientific Name:		Count:
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Colours of feathers:		Beak shape and colour:	
Behaviour: resting/preening/fighting?		Eating habits: scratches/probes?	
Habitat: wetlands/backyard?		What do the calls sound like and at what time does it sing?	
How does it walk? Hop/Run/Waddle?		Flight Habits	: Glide/Flap/Hover?

#### **Bird Profile**

Date:	Time:		Place:
Common Name:	Scientific Name:		Count:
Native/Introduced:	Migratory/Adaptable		Small/Medium/Large
Colours of feathers:		Beak shape and colour:	
Behaviour: resting/preening/fighting?		Eating habits:	scratches/probes?
Habitat: wetlands/backyard?		What do the what time do	calls sound like and at es it sing?
How does it walk? Hop/Run/Waddle?		Flight Habits:	: Glide/Flap/Hover?

Astro Study	Study of:
	Place:
	Sunrise:
	Sunset:
	Time of Moon Rising:
	Moon Phase:
	Direction of South Celestial Pole:
Sketch: Life Size   Magnified   Zoom Out   Zoom In  X-ray	The Sky is:
Date: Time:	Weather:
Notes:	
	Season:

PI	Place:
Su	Sunrise:
Su	Sunset:
1	Time of Moon
M	Moon Phase:
Sc	Direction of South Celestial Pole:
Sketch: Life Size   Magnified   Zoom Out   Zoom In  X-ray	he Sky is:
Date: Time:	Weather:
Notes:	24.4.4
Se	Season:

Astro Study	Study of:
	Place:
	Sunrise:
	Sunset:
	Time of Moon Rising:
	Moon Phase:
	Direction of South Celestial Pole:
Sketch: Life Size   Magnified   Zoom Out   Zoom In  X-ray	The Sky is:
Date: Time:	Weather:
Notes:	
	Season:

Astro Study	Study of:
	Place:
	Sunrise:
	Sunset:
	Time of Moon Rising:
	Moon Phase:
	Direction of South Celestial Pole:
Sketch: Life Size   Magnified   Zoom Out   Zoom In  X-ray	The Sky is:
Date: Time:	Weather
Notes:	Weather:
	Season:



Date:	Location:	Moon Phase:	Rising Time:	Setting Time:



Date:	Location:	Moon Phase:	Rising Time:	Setting Time:



#### **Moon Journal**

Date:	Location:	Moon Phase:	Rising Time:	Setting Time:



Date:	Location:	Moon Phase:	Rising Time:	Setting Time:

Field Investi	gation Sheet	Identification:
Place:		Temperature:
		Wind Speed/ Direction:
		Where's North:
		Have you:
		Counted
		Measured
		Compared
		Are there:
		Questions
		Changes
		Patterns
Sketch: Life Size   Magnified	Zoom Out   Zoom In  X-ray	
	· · · · ·	Can you:
Date:	Time:	Мар
Notes:		Graph
		Diagram
		Research

Field Investi	gation Sheet	Identification:
Place:		Temperature:
		Wind Speed/ Direction:
		Where's North:
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Date:	Time:	Мар
Notes:		Graph
		Diagram
		Research

Notes:

Notes:	

# The Field Journaling **Notebook**

Is an important tool for Nature Detectives or aspiring Scientists to record their observations of creation while they're outdoors exploring, detecting and observing the world God created.

Learn the art of field journaling by counting, measuring and comparing subjects. Find patterns, ask questions, look for changes and map, graph or sketch diagrams.

Field journaling is drawing what you see, wondering about the world you live in and realizing the connections of the natural world.

This tool was created by <u>Nature Study Australia</u> for families who are inspired to discover the wonders of nature science while exploring the outdoors in all seasons.

Be Inspired! Get Outdoors!