

Winter Activity Guide

The world may seem quieter during wintertime, but so much is happening as the temperature drops. Here are some wonderful ways kids of all ages can explore nature right from their own backyard, block or front window!



Search for the Stars

Cold, clear winter nights are perfect for star gazing. Find out which constellations, comets or other astrological events will be on display near you. Then, fill a thermos with hot chocolate, put on your warmest winter gear and head out to the darkest spot you can think of to take in the night sky.



While you're watching for the stars to appear, listen closely. What do you hear happening in the night—the rustle of leaves, the call of an owl?



Make Migration Meals

As winter weather heads your way, so too are migratory birds. With a few simple ingredients, you can turn your backyard, back porch or windowsill into an important "rest and refueling" spot to help them on their journeys.

Try rolling pinecones in nut butter and sprinkling them with birdseed, or scoop out the inside of an orange and fill it with birdseed. Then, hang these tasty treats from a window so you can keep track of what birds come to visit you!



Start a bird journal and draw pictures of the feathered friends that stop for a snack at your feeder!



Play "The Three Little Twigs"

Gather twigs from three (or more!) trees outdoors. Take a second to see how they look and feel. Are they shiny or hairy? Thin or stout? Do they hold leaves or berries? Then, go on a treasure hunt to see if you can find the tree that matches each twig!



Start a tree journal by taping each twig to a piece of paper and then writing the name of the tree it belongs to.



Try Your Hand at Track and Field

After the next new snowfall or heavy rain, head outside and look for fresh animal tracks in the snow or mud. Can you see where squirrels, mice, rabbits, birds or other animals have been on the move? Follow the tracks to see where they go. You can also watch for animal burrows. Ask yourself: Who made this burrow and why? How deep do you think it goes?



For an extra challenge, take a notebook and pencil with you and sketch the tracks you find. Spend some time analyzing them. Can you tell a story to describe what happened?



Create Your Own Winter Scene

If it's too cold and stormy to go outside, you can still enjoy nature where it's warm and cozy. Find an old shoebox and some natural materials, such as twigs, straw, dried flowers, leaves, grass, feathers, bark or pine needles. Then, think about what kind of animals you see in your neighborhood. Can you build them a nest or a den where they can find shelter and safe places to raise their young?



Draw pictures of the wildlife you see near you, cut them out, and add them to your winter scene!

