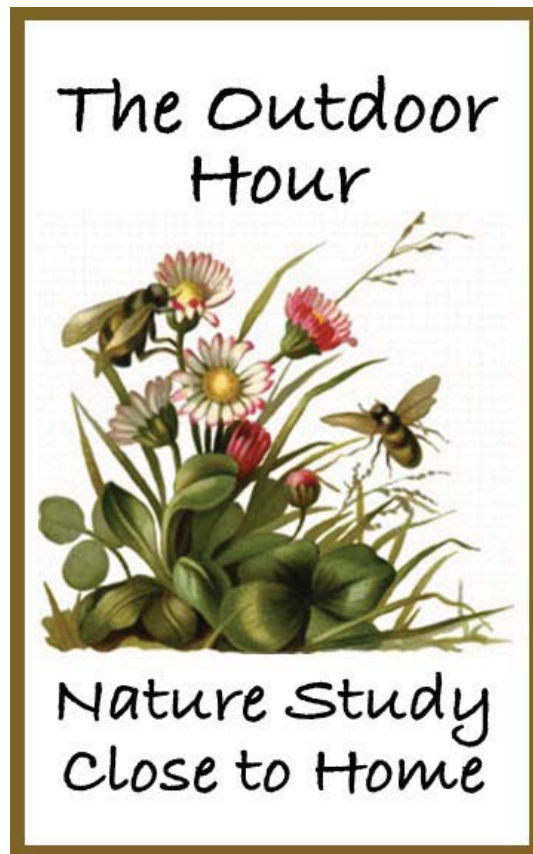


# Outdoor Hour Challenges Nature Study Close to Home

## Getting Started with Challenges 1-10



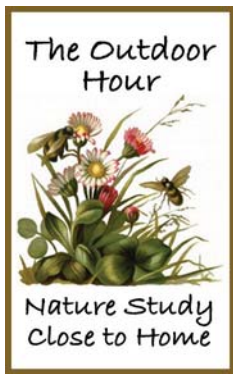
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## Let's Get Started-Challenge Number 1

*"In nature-study the work begins with any plant or creature which chances to interest the pupil."*

*Handbook of Nature Study*

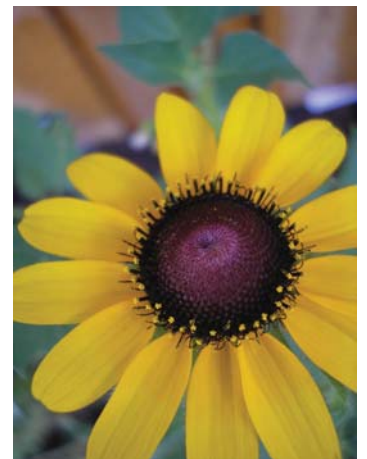
Somehow in our modern life we have forgotten the simple pleasures of outdoor time. For this challenge, just go for a walk. Don't worry about taking any tools or supplies with you. Enjoy the outdoors and your children and then spend some time talking about your experiences together.

1. Read pages 1-8 of the *Handbook of Nature Study*. Highlight or underline anything that you as the nature study teacher find will help you in guiding your children. If you read a sentence that you agree with, mark it so you will remember to come back to it when you need some encouragement.

2. Spend 10-15 minutes outdoors with your children. Take a walk around your yard or down your street. Just enjoy being outdoors. After you come inside, sit the children down and ask them one at a time to tell you something that they saw on their walk. Ask them what was interesting to them. Maybe they picked up a leaf or a stick and brought it back indoors and now they can really take a look at it.

3. After your discussion, come up with two things to investigate further. For instance, if they saw a bird on their walk and they came inside and talked about it, ask them if they want to know more about that bird. Maybe they found an acorn or a berry on a bush that they were interested in learning more about and that could become your focus for the week. You have a whole week to spend some time looking it up if you need more information.

4. After your nature study time with the children, pull out your *Handbook of Nature Study* and see if the item the child is interested in is listed in the index. If it is, look up the information for yourself and then relate interesting facts to the children sometime during the next week.





## Examples of nature study from Outdoor Hour Challenge #1 Let's Get Started

<http://handbookofnaturestudy.blogspot.com/2008/02/green-hour-challenge-1-lets-get-started.html>  
(See links at bottom of the blog entry for examples of how other families completed this challenge.)

**“Nature-study cultivates in the child a love of the beautiful; it brings to him early a perception of color, form, and music. He sees whatever there is in his environment, whether it be the thunder-head pile up in the western sky, or the golden flash of the oriole in the elm; whether it be the purple of the shadows on the snow, or the azure glint on the wing of the little butterfly....he notes and loves and becomes enriched thereby.”**

*Handbook of Nature Study, page 1-2*

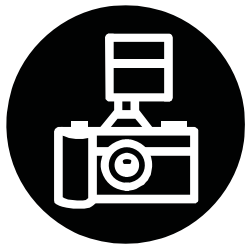


## Tips for Getting Started With the Handbook of Nature Study

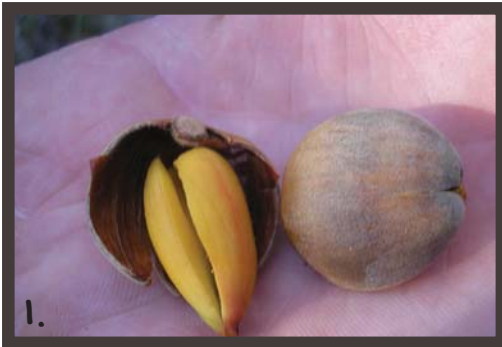
Here are some thoughts that I have now that I took the plunge and started using this wonderful book:

1. Read the pages at the beginning of the book that talk generally about nature study.
2. Pick a topic to focus on and read the introductory pages for that section only. You could change your focus each season if you wish.
3. Take time after your nature walk to look up things that you observed that you are interested in learning more about. I turn to the table of contents and scan down the list and see if I can find what I want to research. For instance, you might have seen a honeybee and it is very easy to skim down and find the listing for a honeybee and turn right to those few pages.
4. Read the small section (usually 1 or 2 pages) that pertain to that object or creature.
5. Write in the book.....gasp. Yes, write in the book as you go along to highlight the little bits of information that you want to share with your children.
6. If you don't have time after your nature walk to look something up and share it right then, research it in the Handbook before your next nature study session.
7. Realize that nature study is a lifelong project, or at least I think it should be. You don't need to cover every aspect of everything you find.





## How We Accomplished this Challenge in the Harmony Art Family Challenge #1 Let's Get Started



We decided to take a nature walk just a short distance from our home. I love that Anna Comstock encourages families to know what is just outside their own doors.

So many times I have driven past this particular place and not taken the time to stop and enjoy its beauty. Well, challenge number one gave me the push to not prolong this hike any more. Here are a few things we enjoyed seeing on our hike.

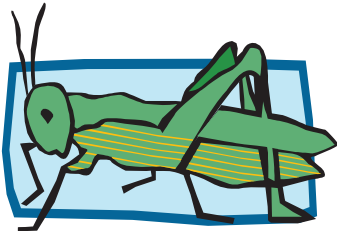
1. acorn
2. serpentine rock



We also enjoyed great conversation as we hiked along together as a family. I know that these outdoor times have brought us closer together as a family and given us lots of memories to share as the days go by.



As usual, something unexpected happened to make this nature time special. A lone dog came out of the woods to play with the boys in the river. What better way to top off a great first Outdoor Hour Challenge? No nature journal this time, just a great walk in the outdoors.



# Getting Started

## Outdoor Hour Challenge # 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Season: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you observe: \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you spend observing: \_\_\_\_\_

List the things you saw:

Did you bring anything home?

What would you like to learn more about?

Describe something you observed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

While researching what you would like to learn more about, what did you discover? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

