

## Nature Study Ideas

My kids and I love nature studies. My assistant, Andrea and her family love nature as well. Here are a few things we have come up with together:

1. Find a local field guide. Some nature centers sell field guides which are incredibly helpful in actually identifying plants and animals. Visit your local library and check out the many field guides offered there. Most major bookstores sell field guides for your particular area.
2. Find internet sites. There are very detailed websites for local vernal pools, parks and trees in our area - find out what's in your area and look on the internet for more specifics.
3. Visit a nature center. The park rangers have a wealth of information to share. The centers or parks are a great place to begin a closer study of God's creation. Some nature centers offer free programs or tours.
4. Find the nearest woods, river, creek or field and visit often. This gives the children a chance to see the changes in nature. You can even set aside one day a week that includes a nature walk.
5. If you live in the city, take a walk around the neighborhood collecting leaves, seed pods, bird feathers, dropped flowers (don't pick them from neighbor's yards!) and then identify them using guides from the library or internet. Dry them and paste them into a special book just for that purpose, making sure to label them correctly. Or start small plastic boxes containing your finds.
6. Spend time enjoying the scenery - talk about what God made on which days. Bring your Bible for reference.
7. Look for unusual things like scat (droppings), feathers, pine cones, paw prints (or claw prints), bird's nests and beaver dams.
8. Take a picnic lunch. Maybe even bring nuts and seeds and fruits to coincide with what the local animals might also eat.
9. Try to identify the common birds, squirrels or wildlife in your area.
10. Give the children time to explore. If the children ask questions you can't answer, try bringing a piece of it home, or draw or take a picture of it and then go to a local library or look on the web for identification.
11. Start a nature notebook to record or draw what you see. Have the kids record the changes every week/month/season. Bring along a measuring tape, scissors, zipper bags and other supplies for your nature adventures.

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead . . ." Romans 1:20

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## Biographical Information

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*Deborah Wuehler is the senior editor for The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine. She resides in Roseville, California, with her husband Richard. They are the parents of eight children: three teenagers, three elementary, a preschooler and a baby. They have been homeschooling since the birth of their firstborn who is now graduated from high school. Many of her articles can be found on [www.Crosswalk.com](http://www.Crosswalk.com), and many other homeschooling sites. She is a group leader in her local homeschooling support organization and she loves digging for buried treasure in the Word, reading, writing, homeschooling, and dark chocolate! Email her at [senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com](mailto:senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com).*