

4-H Investigators Club January Calendar



First week of January, 2021

- Receive your January Spark Kit containing four activities for the month.

January 19th (Tuesday). 6:30-7:30 PM

Each month we will have a “middle of the month” Zoom gathering to share more information about 4-H Investigators and talk about the Spark Kit activity that month. (A Zoom link will be sent out on Jan. 11th)

January Spark Kit Preview Outdoor Explorers!!

The “Outdoor Explorers” kit contains:

- Hard cover Field Journal (*very cool!!*)
- Watercolor kit, brushes, pens, and pencil
- Animal tracking guide
- Plaster Track Cast Kit
- Raindrop Collector, paper plates, drinking staw
- Wildlife observation tools and techniques that really work

Questions about 4-H Investigators?

Contact Darsy or Pat:

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4-H Investigators Outdoor Explorers Kit



This packet contains information about your Outdoor Explorer Spark Kit. Have a great month exploring!

Activity #1: Field Journals

This kit contains:

- A hardback field journal, zip lock bag
- Watercolor kit and brushes
- Pen, pencil, tape



Step 1) First of all, take some time to “bond” with your journal!! Make it your own by drawing or painting or decorating the front/back cover. Your journal will be like no other. The best journals are your journals!! *Keep it safe and dry by storing it in a zip lock bag.*

Step 2: Start exploring! This Spark Kit gives you lots of tools and ideas to explore the outside world. Your backyard, a local park, your school grounds are perfect places to start. Field journals are just what the term implies, used in the field. Use your journal to draw, paint, collect objects, or write about things you see. There is tape in your kit to attach leaves, sand, shells, or other natural items you want to collect. Nobody is going to judge your journal—it is just for you. The only rule is that you use it!!



Even more: Try using the left side of your journal pages to record things you want to remember such as the date, the weather, who was with you, where you are, a map of the area, a list of the animals you saw, etc. Then on the right side of your journal page, try drawing, painting, writing stories, describing smells, and creating poems about what you experienced or observed.

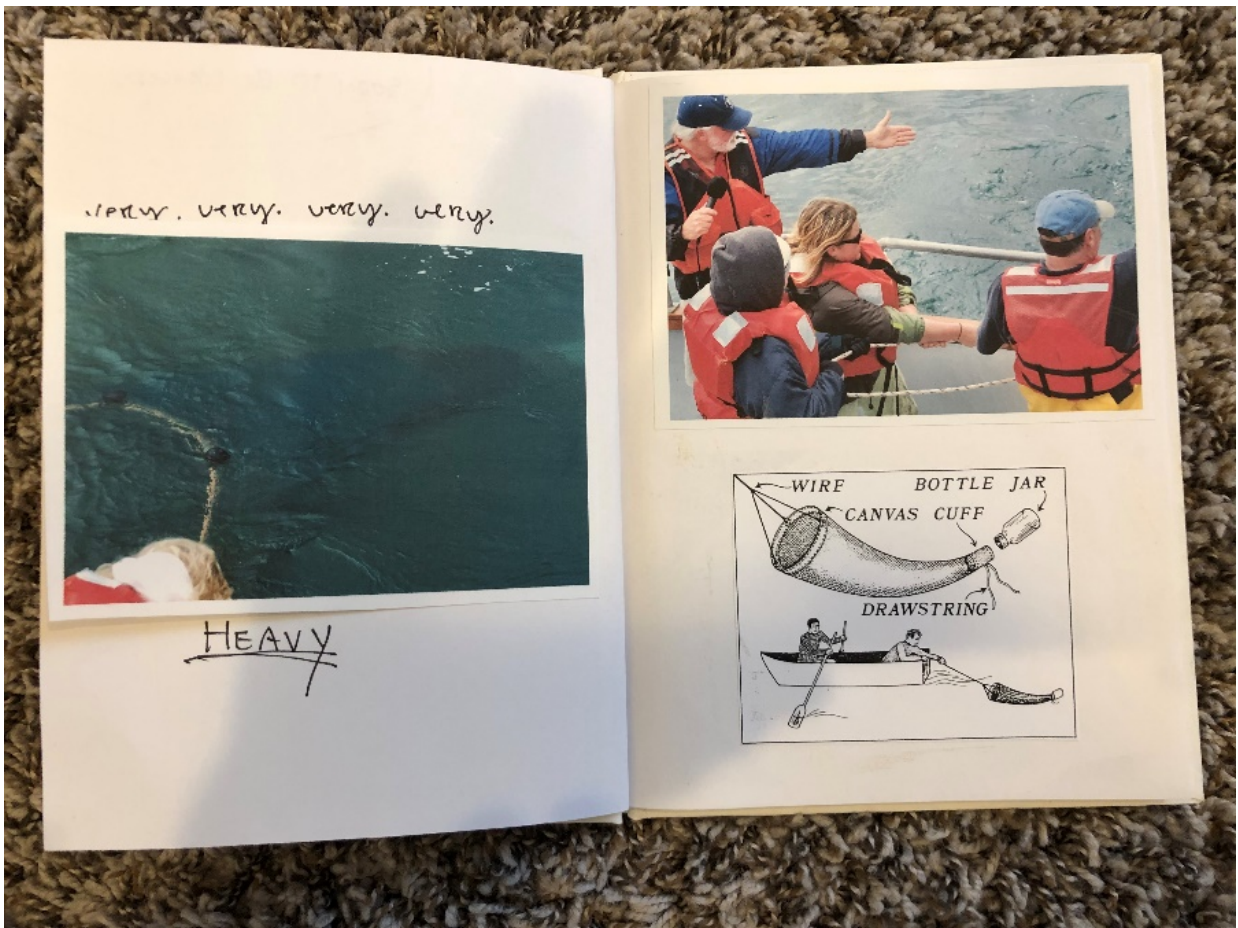
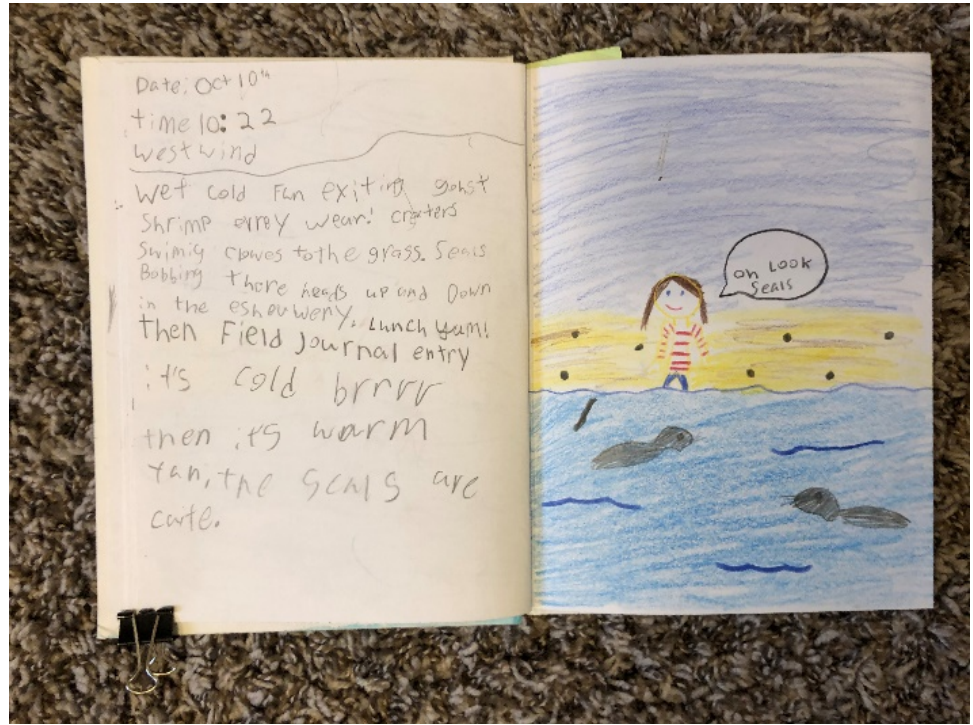
This “Left and Right” technique helps you remember what you saw and experienced and it makes your outdoor exploring even better!!

This Field Journal is great to use with all the other outdoor activities in this Spark Kit and on other outdoor adventures!!

A Field Journal is a valuable record of your experiences in the natural world. The information you gather has value and significance.

Here are some examples of a Left and Right Side Field Journal. Use your watercolors, pen or pencil to draw or write. Try taping leaves, maps, or photos in you journal.

The most important thing is to try it out. You will be amazed at what you are able to design!!



4-H Investigators

Outdoor Explorers Kit



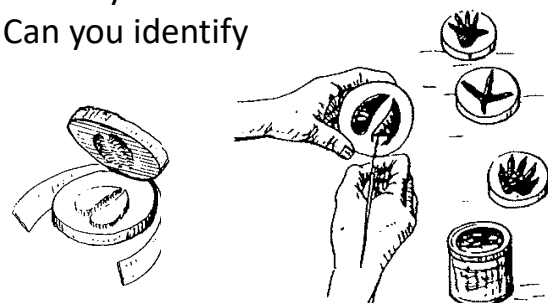
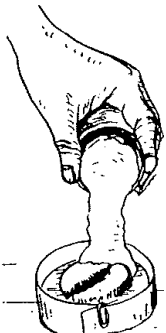
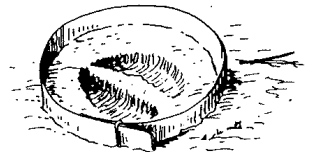
Activity #2 : Plaster Casts

This kit contains:

- A Zip Lock bag of Plaster of Paris
- Extra Zip Lock bags, a craft stick
- Track guide, strips of thick paper
- Pen, pencil, tape

What to do: *This kit has materials to make Plaster Casts of animal tracks*

- 1) Find an animal track. You can even get a track of a pet. Finding tracks in soft sand or mud works great.
- 2) Clear away any leaves or sticks from the area around it.
- 3) Make a circle with a strip of thick paper, join the ends, and push it into the ground around the footprint
- 4) Mix about two parts of plaster to one part of water in a Zip Lock bag. Mix it up by gently kneading the Zip Lock bag until it is about the thickness of toothpaste.
- 5) Pour the plaster into the footprint and let it sit for at least 30 minutes. Use the craft stick to label your plaster cast. (Hint: Don't mix water with the plaster until you are ready with your track—it hardens fairly fast)
- 6) Gently scoop up the plaster cast from underneath and let it dry. (In about 8 hours you can brush it off and even wash it off with water)
- 7) Use your journal to record what you did. Write down where you found the track, draw a picture of the track or even the animal. Can you identify what animal made the track?



Check out this YouTube video about making your own plaster casts!! <https://beav.es/J3f>

*There are many great tracking guides available to help you identify your track.
Check them out on the web, at libraries, or book stores*

COMMON ANIMAL TRACKS



Badger



Bear



Beaver



Cat



Cow



Crow



Dog



Duck



Eagle



Ferret



Fox



Frog



Gerbil



Goat



Hedgehog



Heron



Horse



Lynx



Marten



Moose



Mouse



Otter



Owl



Partridge



Pig



Pigeon



Rabbit



Raccoon



Rat



Sparrow



Red Deer



Roe Deer



Sheep



Squirrel



Weasel



Wolf

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Activity #3: Rain Drop Collectors

This kit contains:

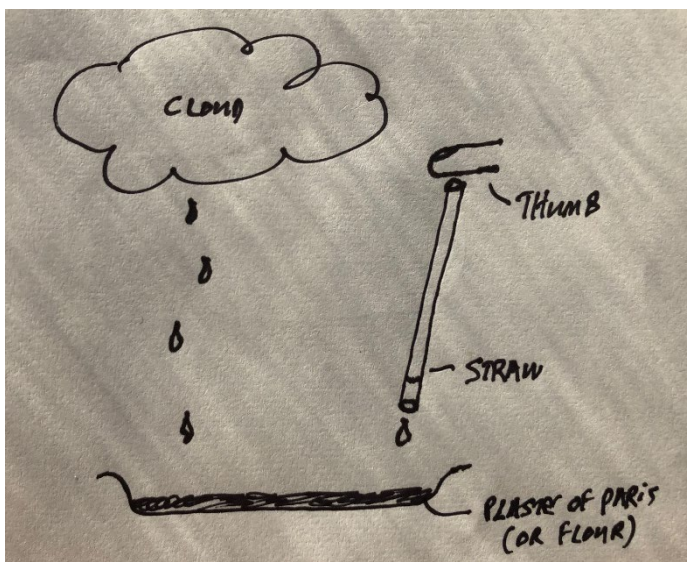
- A two small paper plates
- Plaster of Paris
- Drinking Straw

What to do: *You will collect raindrops in a bowl with Plaster of Paris.*

Step 1) Evenly spread about ½ inch of dry Plaster of Paris on the bottom of one of the paper plates, then cover it with the other paper plate so it doesn't get wet. (If you run out of plaster, plain bread flour works good too)

Step 2: When it's raining, take your Raindrop Collector outside with the plate on the bottom that has plaster in it, covered with the plate on top. In the pouring rain, quickly remove the top plate to collect a few raindrops. Cover it up quickly, bring in back inside, and let it sit for about 30 minutes. The raindrops collected in the plaster or flour will form a model of the raindrop. Try collecting Raindrops during different rain storms. Are they different? Can you identify what type of clouds the plaster raindrop came from? Try making your own raindrop using the straw to create drops of water. Do your straw water drops look the same as raindrops?

Even more: Make sure to record what you did and learned in you journal.
(This is what Outdoor Explorers do, they figure out ways to explore our natural world)



After your raindrops have hardened, gently scoop them up with the craft stick and place them on a piece of paper. Label where each drop came from, either the straw or a cloud.

When we meet on Zoom on January 19th, share with others how this worked and what you learned.

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Activity #4: Sound Maps

This kit contains:

Blank Sound Map

Pencil/pen

What to do: *Stand or sit in a natural area and be very quiet. Face to the north and listen for 30 seconds and record what you hear on the sound map or in your journal. Then change directions to the east, south, and west and listen for 30 seconds. You don't need to know what created the sound, just describe it as best you can.*

Even more: Try cupping your hands over your ears. We call this “Putting your Big Ears” on! You will be amazed how it increases what you are able to hear. Also try this at various times of the day, morning, noon, night. Do you hear different sounds at different times of the day? Do you hear sounds made by humans more than sounds in nature?



Create your Sound Map by drawing or describing the things you hear with you in the middle of the map

North

x

East

South

West

