

PLANT WALK!

Venture out for a walk. While you are walking I would like for you to look for living things!

Look at the ground and discover Bryophytes (non-vascular mosses or liverworts). Notice what kind of habitat (moist cool?) you find them. Do you see any spore structures? Look about for lichen as well (fungus-protist symbiosis) in trees and on the ground. They both share similar habitat. Are there any Fungi around? Remember they once were considered non-photosynthetic plants! What else do you see?

Do you see any ferns or snake grass (puzzle grass or horsetails)? You likely will find them in moist habitat as well. Remember they use spores for reproduction but also have vascular tissue (straws) to draw water..

Look at any Gymnosperms (pines, fir, spruce, larch) and observe the developing cones. Can you tell a difference between male and female? Can you tell which variety by the "spiky spruce; friendly fir; poky pine" adage?

Observe any flowers from the Angiosperms. Remember some flowers and not quite flowery looking (may even be green). Do you see the stamen and pistil? What pollinators are hanging about?

Now find a spot and sit for 5-10 minutes and just listen and observe your habitat. Look up look down look all around. What other organisms other than plants do you find? Truly take time to observe and just wonder in the connectedness of our ecosystem. We have studied bacteria, protists, fungi, plants and will discover the animal kingdom. Who is present with you now? Be aware of all the microhabitat and larger connections. Pretty neat, huh?

Use the back of this page (or another paper if you wish) to write a "journaling" of your walk. Feel free to gather a few specimens (as long as you are not hiking in Glacier National Park) especially if you are not sure what you found! We can look at them at school. For a "4" in work ethic: walk with your family... a signature on this page says you did!

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