

Natural History - Botany emphasis

We focused on one Naturalist for study - Edith Holden. There are many others that could be chosen for this, but because our Botany course was a part of a larger course focusing on the Victorian period, this naturalist made sense and was very inspiring! Edwardians/Victorians had a special hobby of observing and identifying botanical information, so the breadth of knowledge during that period of the *average person* is really quite astounding.

BOOKLIST

- ** The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady by Edith Holden
- ** Edwardian Lady: The Life of Edith Holden compiled by Ina Taylor
- ** The Nature Notes of an Edwardian Lady by Edith Holden
- ** Learn to Draw Nature in the Style of the Edwardian Lady published by ArtTricks
- ** The Botany Coloring Book by Paul Young - this was a core book of the course. There is almost enough information in this book to build a very solid course in Botany! Don't let the idea that this is a coloring book fool you - it is DENSELY PACKED with information on each page. Each coloring page gets a 2-page spread - one detailing information, one for coloring with a key for differentiating certain aspects of the image (ex. parts of a flower, plant cell structure, etc.)
- ** Botany in a Day by Thomas Elpel (**NOTE** This author has written some books that have a definite New Age bent, however the book Botany in a Day is strictly science information. We found it a very helpful tool, but I wanted to mention the author's connections for consideration.)
- ** Winter Tree Finder by May Thielgaard Watts and Tom Watts (**NOTE** these small booklets would be an adequate substitute for Botany in a Day if you choose not to use it.)
- ** Winter Weed Finder by Dorcas Miller (see above note)
- ** Fern Finder by Anne and Barbara Hallowell (see above note)
- ** Flower Finder by May Thielgaard Watts (see above note)
- ** Keeping a Nature Journal by Clare Walker Leslie
- ** Amateur Naturalist by Lee and Gerald Durell (**NOTE** This book is out of print, but worth the find! I like it because while it fosters a sound and common sense approach to ecological stewardship, it doesn't go overboard. It was originally published in 1982 by Dorling Kindersley)
- ** Favorite Wildflowers coloring book published by Dover
- ** Wildflowers - Peterson Field Guide Coloring Books
- ** Botany Illustrated by Janice Glimn-Lacy and Peter Kaufman.
- ** Countryside Rambles by William Furneaux (out of print and difficult to find copies, but great for seasonal encouragement and awareness of natural observations in various settings - fences and hedgerows, woodlands, etc.)
- ** Nature Through the Seasons by Richard Adams (**NOTE** this book is out of print, but easier and very inexpensive to find used than Countryside Rambles - it would be a good substitute. Great color illustrations and detail throughout.)
- ** A variety of field guides and reference...too many to list, but you'll need to have a good selection for identification and research. My favorites are Golden Guides. I prefer Peterson to Audubon guides (personal pref). And for general use and reference I like [Readers Digest North American Wildlife](#).

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PROJECTS:

** Wildflowers, Weeds, and Garden Flowers journal (notebooking pages [available here](#)). This study coordinates with the PLANTS section in Anna Botsford Comstock's, [Handbook of Nature Study](#)

** Complete a diary/journal of the natural year as it relates to our local setting. At least one monthly page required in the journal with botanical information detailed. Use a variety of media to illustrate Natural Year Journal, including watercolors. In addition to Clare Walker Leslie's books on nature journals, check out John Hawkinson's [Collect and Paint from Nature](#) and [More to Collect and Paint from Nature](#) - very helpful and simple!!

** Dissect and identify flower, seed, nut, fungus [Spore Prints project](#) (use guide to identify safe and common mushroom for this...if unsure...use ones from the grocery store.) [Flower dissection helps here](#).

** Specific project directed nature walks with seasonal emphasis...example - when reading [Winter Tree Finder](#) we walked in an unknown area and the assignment was to identify and illustrate 3 unknown trees based on the guidelines offered in Ms. Millers booklet.

** Observe plant dispersal and consider and explain various dispersal methods. Ex: maple tree in the front yard is easy...but be able to offer an explanation for why a sassafras tree is growing in the front garden when we don't have a sassafras tree near the house. Begin to observe unique plants growing in out of the way locations on nature walks...are they a seed or spore dispersal plant? how did they get there?

** Document observation of pollination with butterfly, bee, other insects.

** Pond water analysis with Pond test kit. Algae observation under the microscope. [Pond Study](#) was on my agenda but will be saved for another day.

** [Photosynthesis - Watch it Happen](#) - further study: [Photosynthesis: Sneak Peak inside a Leaf](#). (We didn't complete this project, but it would be fun...so mentioning...[Photosynthesis: Test for Starch](#))

** [Growing Mold](#) - use of microscope helpful.

** [Leaf Chromatography](#) - should be done before the fall. Further information specifically for the fall - [How Leaves Change Color in the Fall](#)

** The following project will be completed next year, but applies here: [Bioassay Test for toxicity of seeds](#)

** Don't forget to check into local service options that would further foster a botanical study. Check with your local botanical gardens or nature conservancy.

NOTES:

** I broke the books down into plans seasonally which made more sense when studying Botany.

** I wish I would have taken the [Botany Coloring Book](#) and used it as more of a springboard/scope and sequence for lessons rather than as something that highlighted a lesson so I'm mentioning that so you could take that into account if you're interested.

** Projects were encouraged seasonally based on the local offerings.

** **Use of p. 33 - 46 of [Science Scope](#) to reference coverage checkpoints of course for thoroughness.**