Earth Month Activities for Everyone

Check out these simple ways to protect, nurture, learn about, and celebrate nature, individually or as a family.

Compost
Composting diverts food waste from landfills and is something the whole family can do. Put your food scraps in a bucket, making sure to add a balance of greens (food waste, grass clippings) and browns (dry yard waste, paper). With care, within a few months, you'll have compost you can add to your garden or potted plants! Learn more about composting with kids at KidsDoGardening.

Read Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth by Mary McKenna Siddals and Ashley Wolff for knowledge and inspiration.

Volunteer
There are many ways to give back! Find an organization in your community seeking volunteers or look for areas in your neighborhood that need attention. From picking up trash to pulling invasive species at your local forest preserve, even young kids can get involved.

If you're unsure where to start, visit Volunteer.gov or search online for "friends" groups associated with your local park or forest.

Plant a Seed
Visit your local gardening center or look at an online seed catalog. Think about what will thrive in your space—herbs like basil and cilantro grow well on the windowsill! If you get a variety of seeds, explore their similarities and differences in shape, size, color, and texture. After planting, care for your seeds and watch them grow!

Another fun (and messy) activity from KidsGardening.org is making seed balls with kids. Explore further with One Little Seed, a lift-the-flap board book that explores how flowers grow, and Little Dandelion Seeds the World which follows the path of a dandelion seed around the world.

Observe Nature
Keep things simple and pick a spot to sit and observe nature in your backyard, through your window, or in a nearby park. What do you see?

Can't get outside? Search for nature webcams featuring your favorite animals. Explore.org/livecams has an amazing selection to choose from! The book, How to Bird by Rasha Hamid, encourages young birders to explore their neighborhoods in search of birds.
Learn about Local Plants
Native plants provide food and shelter for wildlife while bringing beauty to your neighborhood! Visit your state’s Department of Natural Resources website to learn about plants adapted to your climate. State and local field guides and free apps like iNaturalist and PlantNet Plant Identification can help you identify plants and learn more about them.

The Smithsonian Institute’s Trees, Leaves, Flowers and Seeds: A Visual Encyclopedia of the Plant Kingdom is a kid-friendly exploration of plants from the smallest seeds to the tallest trees. Step outside your neighborhood and check out The Big Book of Blooms for a wide-ranging exploration of flowering plants around the world.

Go for a Walk
Become more familiar with the nature in your neighborhood by simply walking around! Set out with intention - you can map out your route in advance and add points of interest when you get home. Try bringing a camera along and allowing children to capture things they notice. Enter your zip code at DiscovertheForest.org to find a forest or park near you!

Wonder Walkers by Micha Archer is the perfect pre-walk book! Get the Kids Outside has some creative ideas for adding intention to your next nature walk. Read about them here.

Read a Book
Books are a great way to get inspired, deepen your understanding of a topic, and have fun! Read a book as a jumping-off point for exploring animal tracks (Whose Prints?), gardening (Jayden’s Impossible Garden), birds (How To Bird), the weather (Zap! Clap! Boom! The Story of a Thunderstorm), and everything in between!

Visit your local library to find a variety of great titles. We enjoy Blueberry Award books, which honor books about nature connection and stewardship.