



African Nature Study
by Nature Journaling Thru The Seasons

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First African Nature Study: Elephant Grass

Grass & Weeds

Grasses are a family of plants with leaves that usually look like blades. Most of them also have hollow stems and many branching roots. The green grass found in yards, the grasses growing on open land, grains, and bamboos all belong to the grass family. The different types of grasslands include prairies, steppes, savannas, and pampas.

Weeds are either broadleaf or grassy type. A few examples of broadleaf weeds are clover, dandelion, and purslane. Some examples of grassy type weeds are nutsedge, pampas grass, elephant grass and bermuda grass. Weeds can be further divided into annuals, biennials, and perennials.

Elephant Grass

Scientific names: Cenchrus purpureus

Cenchrus purpureus, synonym Pennisetum purpureum, also known as Napier grass, elephant grass or Uganda grass, is a species of perennial tropical grass native to the African grasslands. It is green, yellow or purple in colour, and boasts multi-branch stems. Its stems can reach 3 meters into the sky, dwarfing any man and leaving him shaded in long drooping shadow.

Elephant grass is not 'elephant-exclusive' and is enthusiastically enjoyed en-masse by a whole host of other African animals. It is also an essential source of forage for elephants throughout Africa, hence its name "elephant grass".

Flowers of elephant grass are arranged in the form of elongated seed-heads and designed for pollination by wind. Fruit of elephant grass is dry, seed-like grain (caryopsis).

Each seed-head consists of numerous spikelets that are surrounded with fine bristles. Seed-heads can be greenish, yellow or purple colored. Seed is small, brown-colored and oval shaped. The leaves sharp edges help protect the birds nesting inside the grass from predators. Big cats rarely tread inside a swathe of elephant grass, but can hide themselves behind it.

Elephant grass is used for the manufacture of paper, oil, biogas and charcoal. Elephant grass is rough to the touch with millions of hairs protecting its outer layer. Elephant grass blooms during the spring and summer. Elephant grass is perennial plant that can survive up to 20 years in the wild.

Composer study

Franz Joseph Haydn

March 31, 1732 - May 31, 1809

Classical Period

Symphony No. 94, "Surprise": Second Movement

https://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/composer_profile.php?id=36

Something to watch

About the Plant kingdom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kTt4xHHLzk&t=51s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYxfz1PSfZ0>

Artist

Path Through The High Grass by Pierre-Auguste Renoir 1876



Handbook of Nature Study by Anna Botsford Comstock:
pages 453- 542

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Poetry

The Grass so little has to do

by Emily Dickinson

The Grass so little has to do –
A Sphere of simple Green –
With only Butterflies to brood
And Bees to entertain –
And stir all day to pretty Tunes
The Breezes fetch along –
And hold the Sunshine in its lap
And bow to everything –

And thread the Dews, all night, like Pearls –
And make itself so fine
A Duchess were too common
For such a noticing –

And even when it dies – to pass
In Odors so divine –
Like Lowly spices, lain to sleep –
Or Spikenards, perishing –

And then, in Sovereign Barns to dwell –
And dream the Days away,
The Grass so little has to do
I wish I were a Hay –

Materials:

Journals
Pencils
Watercolour
Eraser
Ruler
Brushes

Indoor or Outdoor activities:

Create a nature journal entry

Sketch the Elephant grass, flowers, seeds and other grasses you may want to add on your journal and describe them. Observe your grasses & weeds around you, research the names and measure them.

Nature Journaling:

Add the following in your journal:

Date

Time

Drawing

Your observations

Location

Weather

Words

Label the frog parts

Quotes, Poetry

Measurements

Scientific name

Painting & drawing

<https://www.easydrawingtips.com/how-to-draw-grass-tutorial/>

Sketching Grass, Rocks, and Conifer Forests by John Muir Laws

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9X9adiPL11I>

Here's the video links of getting to know more about Nature journaling.

<https://johnmuirlaws.com/introduction-to-nature-journaling-video/>

<https://johnmuirlaws.com/getting-started-with-nature-journaling-video/>

References:

Wikipedia.org, Handbook of Nature Study by A. Comstock, Soft schools & Africa Freak.

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/798820646986484>