



Nature Journaling Thru The Seasons

Christmas Nature Study

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**Christmas Nature Study
by Nature Journaling Thru The Seasons**

African Nature Study by Nature Journaling Thru The Seasons

Christmas Nature Study

Poinsettia:

Poinsettia's botanical name is *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, plants are native to Central America, especially an area of southern Mexico known as 'Taxco del Alarcon' where they flower during the winter. The ancient Aztecs called them 'cuetlaxochitl'. The Aztecs had many uses for them including using the flowers (actually special types of leaves known as bracts rather than being flowers) to make a purple dye for clothes and cosmetics and the milky white sap was made into a medicine to treat fevers. (Today we call the sap latex!) The poinsettia was made widely known because of a man called Joel Roberts Poinsett (that's why we call them Poinsettia!). He was the first Ambassador from the USA to Mexico in 1825. Poinsett had some greenhouses on his plantations in South Carolina, and while visiting the Taco area in 1828, he became very interested in the plants. He immediately sent some of the plants back to South Carolina, where he began growing the plants and sending them to friends and botanical gardens.

Mistletoe:

The name mistletoe originally referred to the species *Viscum album*.

Mistletoe is a plant that grows on range of trees including willow, apple and oak trees. The tradition of hanging it in the house goes back to the times of the ancient Druids. It is supposed to possess mystical powers which bring good luck to the household and wards off evil spirits. It was also used as a sign of love and friendship in Norse mythology.

Common Ivy or English Ivy:

Hedera helix is a species of flowering plant in the family Araliaceae, native to most of Europe and western Asia. Clinging evergreen vine, it is a familiar sight in gardens, waste spaces, on walls, tree trunks and in wild areas across its native habitat. English ivy has attained popularity as an ornamental plant, and escaped plants have led to naturalizations outside its native range.

Holly Tree:

Ilex or **holly** is a flowering plants in the family Aquifoliaceae, and the only living genus in that family. The species are evergreen or deciduous trees, shrubs, and climbers from tropics to temperate zones worldwide. The type species is *Ilex aquifolium*, the common European holly used in Christmas decorations and cards.

Pinecones:

The members of the pine family (pines, spruces, firs, cedars, larches, etc.) have cones that are imbricate (that is, with scales overlapping each other like fish scales).

All conifers produce male and female cones. Sometimes on the same tree, sometimes not. The pinecones we see are only the female cones. The male cones are much smaller and not showy. You may have never noticed them. The male cones release pollen, which drifts into the air and eventually finds and fertilizes the female cones. Pine cones only come from pine trees, although all conifers produce cones.

Composer study

1. Tchaikovsky - Christmas waltz
2. Vivaldi - Winter
3. Handel - The Messiah
4. Mendelssohn - Hark The Herald Angels Sing
5. Bach - Christmas Oratorio
6. Hely-Hutchinson - Symphony of Carols

Something to watch

<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/lyrics-hark-the-herald-angels-sing/>

Handbook of Nature Study by Anna Botsford Comstock:

Pages: 515, 670-78 & 684

Poetry

**“O Holy Night” by John Sullivan Dwight
(based on the French text from Placide Cappeau’s Cantique de Noel)**

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine...

Picture Study:

Winter Landscape

Caspar David Friedrich (1811)



Nature activities:

Create an ornament from nature

1. Make your own natural Christmas wreath & Tree.
2. Make a simple twig star.
3. Make pinecone ornaments.
4. Pinecone Garland.
5. Wood slice ornaments.

Nature Journaling:

1. Observe the trees, plants and shape of the leaf.
2. Draw and label the parts.
3. Measure the width and length.
4. Describe your observation.

Add the following in your journal:

Date

Time

Location

Scientific name

Weather

Words

Quotes, Poetry

Materials:

Look for: fir tree, pine tree, poinsettia, mistletoe, pinecones, english Ivy, christmas cactus & christmas rose etc.

Journals

Pencils

Watercolour

Eraser

Ruler

Brushes

Painting & drawing

<https://johnmuirlaws.com/draw-tree-conifers/>

<https://youtu.be/i8FofPqHGkU>

https://youtu.be/sOBfWEWaH_w

<https://youtu.be/YYhy33AEloY>

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:

Handbook of Nature Study by A. Comstock, John Muir Laws, Why Christmas & Wikipedia.

*Please do share on the Nature Journaling Thru The Seasons on the FB group your African Nature journaling anytime. Thank you all.

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