



# Nature Treasure Hunt



**Learning Goals:** To encourage children to observe plants and animals in their area, and to create a simple riddle about one of their nature discoveries.

## What You Need:

- Nature Treasure Hunt printable pages that follow
- Pencil or pen
- Permanent marker
- Crayons or markers (optional)
- Magnifying glass (optional) NOTE: Adults should carefully supervise to avoid a possibility of a fire started by magnifying sunlight
- Camera (optional)
- Field guide (optional) to help identify local plants and animals
- Bag or bucket to collect nature finds, such as stones, leaves, and shells

## What to Do:

1. Explain to your child that a scavenger hunt is like a treasure hunt, in which you have to find all the items on a list.
2. Go with your child to a natural area nearby, such as a park. Hand out the Nature Treasure Hunt pages. Explain that they are going to go on a hunt to find some different items and then make pictures of some of the plants and animals they find - just like a real scientist. You may need to help your child write answers to the questions on the pages. Have them collect one rock to help them remember their journey. (You might want to put the child's initials on the rock in permanent marker to show that it belongs to them.)
3. Later, at home, help your child write a simple riddle about one of their favorite plants or animals from their scavenger hunt. All the riddles can start off with the question, "Can you guess what kind of \_\_\_ I Am?" (animal or plant). Encourage your child to be as specific as possible (in other words, say "beetle" "ant" or "spider" rather than just "bug"). They can look back on their pictures to help them identify the details. As clues for their riddle, they can focus on features such as an animal's size, how many petals the flower has, and so on.
4. Help your child say their nature riddle to others, and see if they can figure out what plant or animal each child found!

## Extensions:

As you explore the park with the your child, ask them to think about how the place might be different at night. What other animals might they see? You might introduce the term "nocturnal" to describe the behavior of animals that are more active at night. Contact your state's Department of Fish and Wildlife, as well as the environment department in your state government to find out more information about wildlife in your area. What plant and animal species are endangered?



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(NOTE: Each child may draw the answers to the questions on this page, or have an adult or older child help them record their responses.)

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Find 2 different kinds of plants. Use crayons to draw below a picture of each one. Pay attention to the shapes of leaves and the colors of any flowers.



## PLANTS I FOUND

What is a question you have about one of the plants?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Find 2 different kinds of animals. Use crayons to draw below a picture of each one. Show as many details as you can.



## ANIMALS I FOUND

What is a question you have about one of your animals?

\_\_\_\_\_



3. What is your favorite nature find of the day? (It can be a plant or animal.) Why do you love it?

**MY FAVORITE:**

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4. WRITE A RIDDLE! Have a grownup help you write a riddle about one of the things you found. We gave you an example. You can make your riddle rhyme if you'd like - but you don't have to.

**Example:**

Can you guess what I am?  
I have wings but I am not a bird  
I used to be a caterpillar

I'm a \_\_\_\_\_

**MY RIDDLE:**

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