



May 2007

Get Outside!

Young Naturalist Club



Nature Activity Page



Up-turned Garbage Can Lid Birdbath

One of the simplest birdbaths to make is an up-turned garbage can lid. Fill the lid with pebbles to give the birds firm footing and add weight so it won't blow away. Birds like a place to perch after bathing, so place the lid near some brush or under a tree. Put it on the ground (in an open area so the birds feel safe) or on a pedestal. A tree stump will do, or rig the lid by tying a rock to the handle and placing it on top of a length of clay drainage pipe. Check the level of water occasionally, and watch the birds have a blast!

Make a Birdbath

To keep their feathers in peak condition, birds spend many hours each day preening them. They pass their bills over the stiff contour feathers to re-align the barbs; some spread water-proofing oil on their feathers (from a gland at the base of their tail). But did you know birds like to bathe as part of their preening ritual? Some even "bathe" in the dirt! This helps keep down insect pests, and may serve to fluff the down feathers. Watch how birds splash around in puddles!



Visit a Working Farm

Once upon a time, every family kept chickens for eggs, and milked a family cow. Today some people still tend animals. Many are happy to show you around if they have time (just offer to help feed the animals!).

What do you think farming must be like? Check out these farms for more farming fun near you:



- Pond Hill Farm
- Just A Plain Farm
- Friske Orchards
- Bills Farm Market

Plant Some Seeds Outdoors

The Sunflower is one of the sunniest flowers and great fun to grow. They grow quickly, and very tall! Make sure you choose a spot for them where they won't shade other plants. Sunflowers need to be staked as they grow to keep them from toppling over. You will need to water them often because they drink a lot.



Can a Butterfly Smell?

Henry Knows!

It may surprise us, but butterflies and moths have keen senses of sight, smell and taste. The organs of taste in most butterflies are in the mouth, which is what you would expect. But most organs of smell in butterflies are on the antennae. And there are some butterflies that smell things through “noses” on their feet!

Many butterflies have odors, or scents, which they use for two purposes. One is used to attract the opposite sex; the other is used to drive away enemies. The scents of male butterflies smell like flowers or spices. The scent of female butterflies do not usually smell pleasant to humans. Did you know that the taste organs of a butterfly are far more sensitive in some ways than that of humans? They are far more sensitive to sweet things than our tongues are! Butterflies can see colors very well. They can even see ultraviolet colors that the human eye cannot see.



Little Traverse Conservancy
3264 Powell Road
Harbor Springs, MI . 49740

Explore a Nature Preserve!

Andrea Nature Preserve

Set in Pigeon River Country, this nature preserve has lots of trails meandering along the river. A rustic cabin sits overlooking the river. The cabin is used by scout groups for educational outings at the preserve. This preserve is just under 80 acres - plenty of space to cool off hot feet after a long hike on a warm spring day! Have Fun!

Directions to the Preserve:

From Indian River, take M-68 east for 5 miles and turn left onto Onaway Road. Follow Onaway Road about 1½ miles to Riverwood Road and turn right. At the “T” junction with Big Sky Trail, the preserve sign is visible near the gate.

