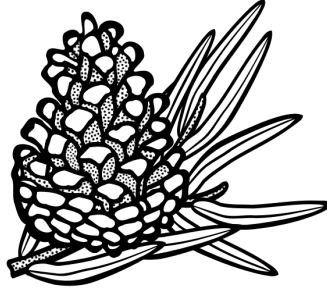


Conifers



Introduction:

We often call them pine cones, but the seed cones of evergreen trees come from many different species of conifer tree, also known as gymnosperms- a type of tree that doesn't make fruit. Fir trees, spruce, pine, larch and hemlock are just a few of the many cone producing trees in North America. Cones are important for trees of course, because that is where their seeds are stored. But, cones are also an important part of life for birds, insects and mammals- including humans! What kinds of cones are found in the place you live and how are they used? Take a close look at a few different cones and you might notice how special and unique they each are!

Materials:

1. Paper or journal, lined or blank
2. Pencil
3. Colored pencils, markers, pens or crayons
4. A cone or cones to observe

Additional Resource:

How to draw a cone step by step:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8FofPqHGkU>

Activity: Nature Journaling

1. Gather your journaling materials and go outdoors. Explore somewhere with evergreen conifer trees, like a local park or your neighborhood. Look into the branches and onto the ground for cones.
2. Observe the cones where you are or collect a few samples and take them home.
3. At the top of your journal page create a title, "Conifers" or "Cones".
4. Add some information in one of the top corners about where and when you are observing. What time of year is it? What time of day did you find the cones? What is the weather like today? This information will help you notice patterns as you continue to nature journal throughout the year.
5. Make a sketch of the cone you are observing. This can be detailed or simple shapes- there is no wrong way to sketch your cone! If you want to learn more about drawing cones you can check out the video link above.
6. Look closely at the cone. Feel it with your fingers. Smell it. Describe what you notice by making short notes and diagrams in your journal. Use arrows, numbers and symbols to help identify and describe what you notice on your sketch.
7. Add any questions that pop into your head about your cones or the trees they come from.
8. To finish up your journal entry feel free to add color to your notes or sketches. You can also think of stories, memories, poetry or anything else that your observations and experiences with your cone make you think of. Make the journal your own!