



Springtime Stirs Six Senses

©by Judy Isacoff

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Our senses wake up in springtime. When our hats come off our heads, there are bird and frog songs to hear. Off come our gloves and coats, too. There are silvery, soft willow buds to touch and warm breezes to be touched by. Instead of hiding in a scarf, our noses can sniff the sweet smell of the tiny tree flowers and thawed ground in the air. Our eyes catch sight of new colors and movements spring out everywhere. And, for those who know the plants well, there are also fresh tastes from the awakening, wild earth.

What are the five senses mentioned above? Maybe our sixth sense is how we feel them all combined: our joy-at-being-alive sense.

Start your own "Earth Day Every Day Journal". Keep it in a spot by the door with some black and colored pencils, so they are ready when you go out to play. Find a place where you can sit close to your house. This will be your special scouting spot. Each time you go to this perch, close your eyes for a few minutes. Count with your fingers as you hear nature sounds like birds, bugs, wind, frogs, chipmunks, squirrels, and so on. Then, open your eyes. Do you see any of the things that made the sounds?

Open your journal and write the date. Describe where you are and the weather. Then write the number of sounds, what you know about them, and whether you are watching the sound maker. Sometimes you might like to draw and make designs rather than write. Take turns exploring with your eyes, your nose, and your hands. On warm days, you can explore the beach with your bare feet. When in the company of a naturalist, ask about tastes.

Here on the East End of Long Island, there is more nature around us than in many places on earth. Big cities and sprawling suburbs are so full of people, pavement and buildings that there is very little room for other animals or the plants they need to survive.

For those who love our planet and this island's unique ecosystem, it is "Earth Day every day". We celebrate our place on earth for its biodiversity (bio means "life", and diversity means "variety" or different kinds").

We can help the earth by getting to know our neighbors, the plants and animals, and by learning what they need to live healthy lives.

Note: This article comes to you in part from the environmental organization, The Nature Conservancy.