

Nature Notes

A digital journal documenting the search for truth, beauty and goodness in God's lovely creation throughout the diocese of Fort Worth.

April 16, 2020

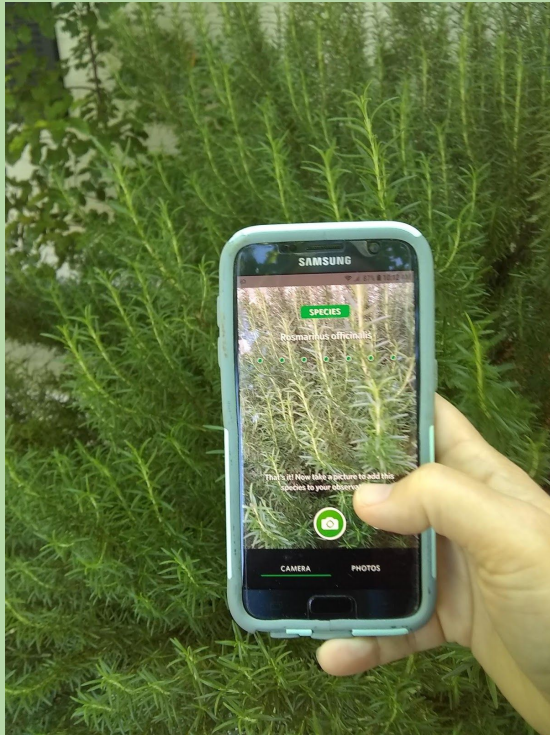
I Wonder. . .

Last week we saw several trees at a park with new leaves growing all along the trunks. My daughter wondered why the tree grew that way. Doing some searching online, I learned that the tree is a [cedar elm](#), but I did not discover why the tree was sprouting leaves on the trunk. Perhaps it's not getting pruned as much with the quarantine?

While I was searching online, I made another discovery about [elms](#). Earlier this spring, by the lake at Nolan, I had observed some weird little scales growing on tree branches. Evidently, these are called "corky wings" and grow along the branches of winged elm trees. They're just a normal part of the tree, although scientists have not figured out why the tree produces these growths.



I notice. . . .



Mr. Garnett's ecology classes are doing a FANTASTIC job with their [bioblitz project](#)! They are getting outside, making observations about plants and wildlife, and uploading them to iNaturalist. You can learn so much just by scrolling through the pictures of their project (click on the link to see)!!

iNaturalist is an app for citizen science that enables you to record observations, and get identification help from other naturalists. You have to be at least 13 years old to use the app. Be aware that using the app tags your location.

iNaturalist also has an app called "[Seek](#)" that anyone can use. When you have the seek camera open, it will identify the plant or animal you're looking at as you take the picture. Then you can learn more about your plant/animal, and earn virtual badges for finding lots of different species. While it's no substitute for good observations in a nature journal, it is a GREAT way to learn more about a species while you're out exploring. I had lots of fun identifying all the weeds and mystery shrubs in my flower beds with this app.

"Curiouser and curiouser!" Cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English)."

Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass

Outdoor Adventures

Last week we planted clover in our yard to help the lawn. Clover helps return nitrogen to the soil, which helps other plants grow. This week, we have tiny seedlings sprouting everywhere! Once they get bigger and bloom, we'll be helping out the local bees with a great source of pollen. Have you been planting around your home?



Where to find Mrs. Breclaw next week

Exploring nature and beauty from home. Please feel free to email me with any questions you may have, and stay tuned for daily “10 minute nature breaks” to help you through your distance learning adventures!

Nolan Outdoor Learning Headquarters

In the office immediately to the left of the teacher boxes in room D22.

Please come by anytime! Let’s chat about how we can work outdoor learning into your lesson plans!

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