

Noticing Nature – I Notice, I Wonder & This Reminds Me



Presented by Stop Breathe Believe® & Dianne Morris Jones

Photo taken at Poage Lake, Colorado.

An intense appreciation of nature is a gift. How can we be open to learning about nature?

Not only as children, but as adults, how can we notice nature? The three steps of 'I notice', 'I wonder' and 'It reminds me of... ' are wonderful doors to assist us in our ability to be mindful of nature around us.

May your September be full of times to notice, to wonder and to remind yourself of the connections in life.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 1:

“Never cease to stand like curious children before the Great Mystery into which we were born.” – Albert Einstein

What is it we see and understand when we get curious? When looking at this gorgeous amaryllis flower in our peaceful garden in the backyard, my granddaughter and I talked about, “What makes this flower red? Why is it so tall? What are the yellow things called, Lovey?” How can we be like a child in how we see and wonder?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 2:

“In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.”

– Aristotle

Writing with a quill pen was such an experience of wonder. What is one thing we could do today that would inspire wonder?



Photo taken at Beaver Reservoir, Colorado.

Day 3:

**“Nature is the art of God.”
- Dante Alighieri**

**What might we notice on the
artist palette of today?**



Day 4:

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks."

– John Muir

"Oh, such a sweet little frog. What sound does he make? His eyes are so cute....oh, and his little feet....they are so tiny."

Photo taken at Sea Grove Beach, Florida.



Photo taken at Sugar Dune Beach, Florida.

Day 5:

“Mother Nature speaks in a language understood within the peaceful mind of the sincere observer.”

– Radhanath Swami

What is it to have sand of the beach running through our fingers? Can we count the grains of sand? Is this the same sand that was here yesterday or is this new sand? So many questions....such a wonderful gift, curiosity.



Photo taken at
Fort Worth Botanical Center, Fort Worth, Texas.

Day 6:

“Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.”

– Lao Tzu

Emilia bent down to see the butterfly. “This one,” she said, “he looks lonely.” He sat on her finger for a long time. She observed that his antenna matched his black wings. How might we move at the pace of nature today?

Day 7:

“I like it when a flower or a little tuft of grass grows through a crack in the concrete. It’s so heroic.”

– George Carlin

What a gift as we were walking through the Winterthur Gardens in Delaware to find a labyrinth inscribed with these beautiful words of the Navajo prayer, “In beauty, May I walk with beauty before me, With beauty behind me, With beauty above me, With beauty all around me. May I walk.” What a keen prayer to instill in our hearts.



Photo taken in
Winterthur Garden, Winterthur, Delaware.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 8:

“Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.”

– Frank Lloyd Wright

We discovered Prairie Creek Park, a small park founded by some wise nature lovers in Richardson, TX. The girls refer to the location as the Nature Park. Where might be an inspirational place set aside for beauty near you?



Photo taken at Eastern Lake, Florida.

Day 9:

“If you truly love nature you will find beauty everywhere.”

– Vincent Van Gogh

Even little creatures that might be startling as they scurry by are fascinating as you notice and observe. The coloring to blend in with the habitat, the tiny little eyes, the dexterity of the feet, the quickness with which he scampers about through the bushes—if we look through a lens of a “beauty scavenger hunt,” we will find abundance.



Photo taken at Caddo Lake, Texas.

Day 10:

"The least movement is of importance to all nature. The entire ocean is affected by a pebble."

– Blaise Pascal

The ripple effect is so vividly seen in a still pond or lake. Where might we notice movement in nature today?



Photo taken in Huayna Picchu, Peru.

Day 11:

"To sit in the shade on a fine day and look upon the verdant green hills is the most perfect refreshment."

– Jane Austin

I love the word verdant—it just holds such an image of green and beauty and growth. As we climbed the “steps of courage,” as we called them in Peru, I was overcome with the beauty, the verdant-like wonder, the grandeur of the scene.



Photo taken in Creede, Colorado.

Day 12:

"The richness I achieve comes from Nature, the source of my inspiration." – Claude Monet

As we were hiking along a river near Creede, CO, Roger looking for the best fishing spot, I discovered these luscious fresh raspberries. Such a rich and tiny little find amidst the backdrop of green beauty.



Photo taken in South Fork, Colorado.

Day 13:

"The beauty of the natural world lies in the details." – Natalie Angier

"How many sticky things does it have, Lovey?" "What does a pinecone do?" We discussed the vital job of a pinecone—how it keeps the pine tree seeds safe, and protects them from the freezing temperatures during the winter. The design of the details is truly miraculous.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 14:

"Nature gives to every time and season some beauties of its own."

– Charles Dickens

What a gift to explore and relish in the fun and exploration of the various seasons, from playing in the sprinkler, to jumping in a pile of fall leaves, holding a snowball in wonder, to discovering the first flower peeking out in spring.



Photo taken in Evergreen, Colorado.

Day 15:

**“Look at a tree, a flower, a plant.
Let your awareness rest upon it.
How still they are,
How deeply rooted in Being.”
– Eckhart Tolle**

**As we were hiking in Evergreen, Colorado,
this tiny crocus surprisingly greeted us at
the base of the trail...somewhat alone,
with more to follow I am sure as the
season progressed. Such a gift of color
and hope that the crocus flower bestows
to us. What might surprise us in nature
today?**

Day 16:

"When I walk out into the world, I take no thoughts with me. That's not easy, but you can learn to do it. An empty mind is hungry, so you can look at everything longer, and closer. Don't hum! When you listen with empty ears, you hear more. And this is the core of the secret: Attention is the beginning of devotion."

– Mary Oliver, Attention

The beauty of a raindrop on a flower is such a significant reminder of the nutrients, the source of sustainability, the call to pay attention to the flower, to the raindrop, to the wonder of it all. Where might we see beauty today?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 17



Photo taken in Beaver Reservoir, Colorado.

Invitation

Oh do you have time
to linger
for just a little while
out of your busy
and very important day
for the goldfinches
that have gathered
in a field of thistles
for a musical battle,
to see who can sing
the highest note,
or the lowest,
or the most expressive of
mirth,
or the most tender?
Their strong, blunt beaks
drink the air
as they strive
melodiously
not for your sake

and not for mine
and not for the sake of
winning
but for sheer delight and
gratitude –
believe us, they say,
it is a serious thing
just to be alive
on this fresh morning
in the broken world.
I beg of you,
do not walk by
without pausing
to attend to this
rather ridiculous
performance.
It could mean something.
It could mean everything.
It could be what Rilke
meant, when he wrote:
You must change your life.
– Mary Oliver

How might we search for the intentional pause in our day today?



Photo taken at
Fort Worth Botanical Center, Fort Worth, Texas.

Day 18:

"I believe the world is incomprehensibly beautiful. An endless prospect of magic and wonder."

– Ansel Adams

The Butterfly Garden at the Ft. Worth Botanical Center is a delight to young and old alike. How might we search for magic and wonder today?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 19:

"What shape waits in the seed of you to grow and spread its branches against a future sky?" – David Whyte

Even though we have little success in our gardening ventures, it is worth the attempt, at least on a small scale, for the wonderments and smiles and "work" provided by our little helpers as we plant seeds and small plants together.

I wonder, what is the shape of the seed of us?



Photo taken in Colorado.

Day 20:

"Part of doing something is listening. We are listening. To the sun. To the stars. To the wind."

– Madeleine L'Engle

Rainbows are so beautiful, such a reminder of the artist's palette of nature. When is a time that we might have seen a rainbow that was remarkable?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 21:

“Adapt the pace of nature; her secret is patience.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Just noticing...how the middle of the flower is a different color than the petals, how many petals are on each flower, how the leaf feels prickly, “kinda spongey.” What might we notice a bit more closely through our sense of touch today?



Photo taken in South Fork, Colorado.

Day 22:

“The poetry of the earth is never dead.” – John Keats

The sunshine on this flower was poetic to me. The variance and richness of the color combination drew me in to look more closely. Where might we read poetry in a garden today?



Photo taken on Trinity Trail, Lake Lavon, Texas.

Day 23:

“To pay attention, this is our endless and proper work.”

– Mary Oliver

The magnificence of a butterfly holds our attention. How might we look more deeply into nature today?

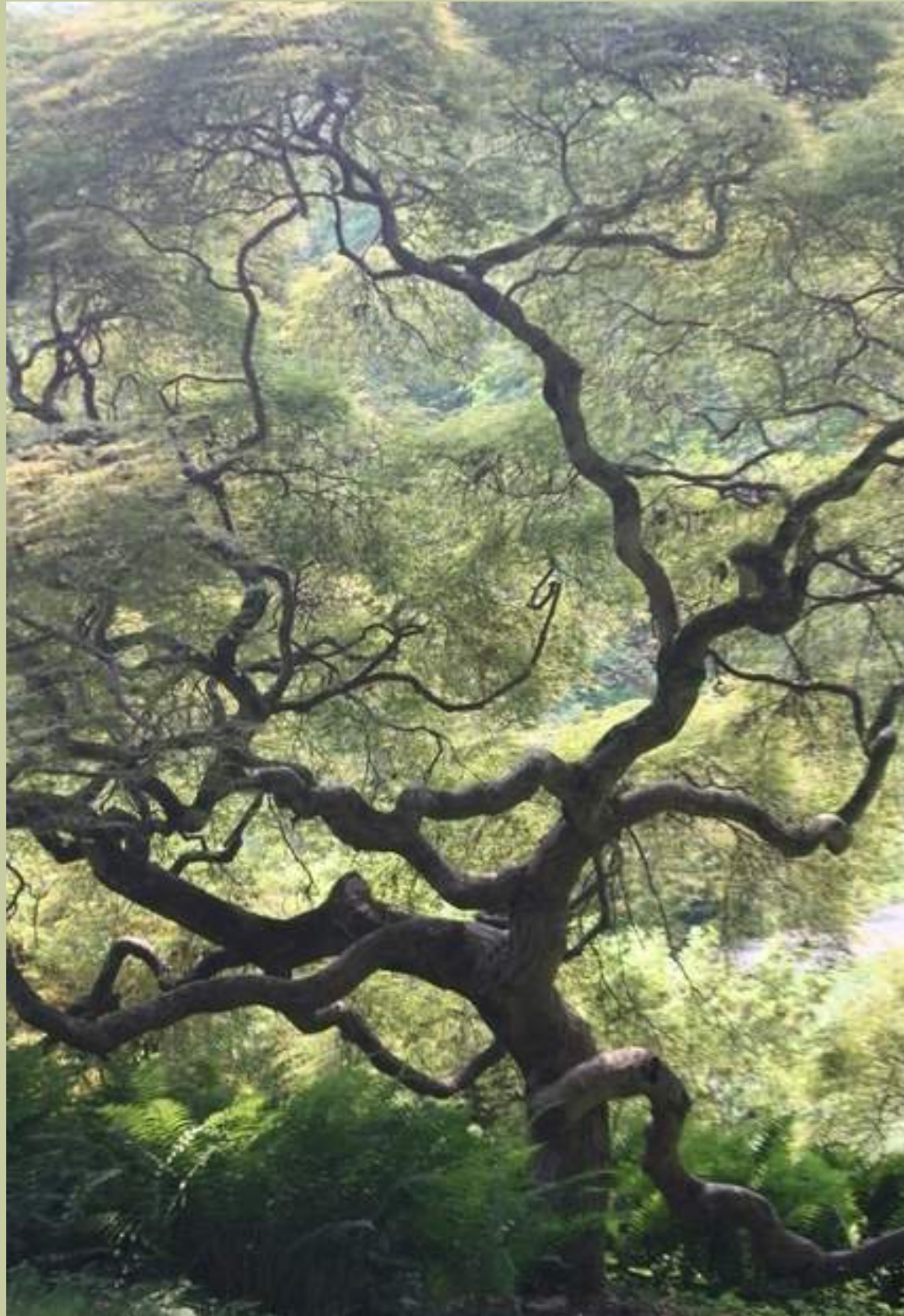


Photo taken at
Winterthur Garden, Winterthur, Delaware.

Day 24:

“Listen to the trees as they sway in the wind. Their leaves are telling secrets. Their bark sings songs of olden days as it grows around the trunks. And their roots give names to all things. Their language has been lost. But not the gestures.” – Vera Nazarian

This tree—oh my, what a lovely representation of beauty in a tree. What type of tree might beckon us to closely pay more attention to today?

Day 25:

“Listening is a form of spiritual hospitality by which you invite strangers to become friends, to get to know their inner selves more fully, and even to dare to be silent with you.”

– Henri J.M. Nouwen

How is it that we can even be strangers with ourselves and/or strangers with our partners? Often, when we are kayaking or hiking, we don't talk a lot. There is just something refreshing about being out in nature, free of the everyday distractions, cell phone tucked safely away, listening to ourselves and to one another. What can we learn from another by being quiet?



Photo taken at
Robinson Preserve, Bradenton, Florida.



Day 26:

“I tried to discover, in the rumor of forests and waves, words that other men could not hear, and I pricked up my ears to listen to the revelation of their harmony.” – Gustave Flaubert

Just as we listen to music, how can we listen to nature? How can we listen more closely today?

Photo taken at Yellow River State Park, Iowa.



Photo taken at Beaver Reservoir, Colorado.

Day 27:

“Pay attention to the intricate patterns of your existence that you take for granted.”

– Doug Dillon

Those three ideas of noticing and wondering and what does this remind me are wonderful questions of curiosity as we look for patterns. How might we pay attention in a fresh way today?

Day 28

Praying

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.

– Mary Oliver

When we spray the river rock in the peaceful garden with
water, it opens up a whole new way of seeing the rocks. We call
it the “magical moment”...when the water clearly intensifies
the beauty within each rock. What magical moments might
we look for today? A glint in a friend's eyes? A tear of
opening up with a friend? A tree's branches swaying in a
dancing way?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 29:

“People need wild places. Whether or not we think we do, we do. We need to be able to taste grace and know again that we desire it. We need to experience a landscape that is timeless, whose agenda moves at the pace of speciation and glaciers. To be surrounded by a singing, mating, howling commotion of other species, all of which love their lives as much as we do ours, and none of which could possibly care less about us in our place. It reminds us that our plans are small and somewhat absurd. It reminds us why, in those cases in which our plans might influence many future generations, we ought to choose carefully. Looking out on a clan plank of planet earth, we can get shaken right down to the bone by the bronze-eyed possibility of lives that are not our own.” – Barbara Kingsolver, Small Wonder

The wisdom and beauty of a river is something to behold. May we allow ourselves to have rivers of wisdom and beauty flowing through us today.



Photo taken in Creede, Colorado.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 30:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” – Psalms 19:1

The cumulous, cotton-ball-like clouds provide such magnificence. May we stop and notice something in the heavens today.