

# Exploring a World of Wonder

"The country is the world of the soul . . ." —Bahá'u'lláh

**H**ave you ever watched a jewel-toned dragonfly zip through the air on transparent wings? Hiked up a hill and felt a rush of excitement at the top?

Turned over a rock to study the ants, beetles, and worms underneath?

Investigating nature is fun and fascinating—and it has lots of other benefits, too.

Scientific research suggests that being in nature can reduce stress and help you

feel more peaceful. It can even boost your focus and creativity. It can help you stay physically fit and active. And sunshine helps your body produce vitamin D, which is good for your bones and muscles.

You can give all your senses a workout as you enjoy forests, fields, lakes, or the ocean. So come on outside and explore the world—it's great for your body, mind, and spirit.

**Ask your friends to join you on these fun adventures in nature.**

## Alphabet Hike

Ant, birch, cardinal, dragonfly . . . As you hike through the woods or park, find one object for every letter of the alphabet.

Name something for each letter before you go to the next. Bring a nature field guide to help you identify cool plants, animals, and insects.

## Backyard Camping

If you don't have a tent, make a blanket tent in your yard. Drape blankets over chairs or a fence. Imagine you're miles away from civilization or in an ancient kingdom, before the invention of electronics. Play games, tell stories, and sing songs.

## Awesome Obstacles

Make an obstacle course in your backyard. Leap over twigs and puddles, run around trees, jump like a frog, or dribble a soccer ball. Bring a stopwatch, and see how fast you can complete the course. When you're done, replace anything you've moved from its natural home.

## Natural Treasure Hunt

Ask someone to hide a small "treasure" for you to find in your yard or neighborhood. Then they give you the directions to find it, using landmarks in nature (Run to the biggest oak tree, turn right at the rose bush, etc.). When you've found your treasure, switch places.

## Rainbow Expedition

In a notebook, write the colors of the rainbow across the top of a page—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple. Take a walk around your yard or a park, and list what you find in each color. You might see red ladybugs, purple violets, or a green snake. Which lists are longest?