



## Nature Study

Each Friday morning, you will go through two of our nature cards. They are labeled in the upper right corner with the corresponding week. These are short, factual cards with images to help your child become familiar with objects in the natural world.

As you progress through our sessions, you may find it handy to keep your past nature cards in a binder for easy reference when your children come across a familiar object. These seeds you are planting will grow into a wonderful garden of knowledge for your children in years to come.

As you explore nature outside your home, watch and listen for newly discovered delights. Most of all, remember...

*"Point to some lovely flower or gracious tree, not only as a beautiful work, but as a beautiful thought of God."*

~ Charlotte Mason

Nature Study

# 1

## Tarragon *Artemisia dracunculus*



- Tarragon is a perennial and a member of the sunflower family.
- Another name for it is the estragon herb or the dragon herb.
- Tarragon is edible and is frequently used in French cuisine.
- French tarragon does not produce seeds very often, making it expensive.
- Tarragon is easy to grow and does best in a sunny or partially sunny area.

# 1

## Rosemary *Salvia rosmarinus*



- Rosemary can grow to be a little over 3 feet tall. Some can even be up to 5 feet tall.
- It is native to the Mediterranean and Asia.
- The name rosemary comes from the Latin word "ros marinus," which means "dew of the sea."
- Some people in ancient times believed rosemary helped improve memory. This is where the phrase "rosemary for remembrance" came from.
- Rosemary was considered sacred to ancient Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks.
- Rosemary is great for vitamin C, vitamin A, magnesium, calcium, and fiber.

# 2

## Lavender *Lavandula*



- Lavender petals can be dried and used for their scent.
- During World War I, lavender oil was used to disinfect walls and floors in hospitals.
- There are over 30 different species of lavender.
- Each lavender plant can make 1-8 bunches of flowers.
- Some lavenders are annual, while others are perennials.
- The name "lavender" comes from the Latin word "lavare," which means "to wash."
- Lavender is a very popular essential oil known for its calming effects.

# 2

## Marjoram *Origanum majorana*



- Marjoram leaves are smooth and simple.
- Marjoram can be used for teas or seasoning.
- To develop into its full aroma, marjoram needs to be kept in a hot climate.
- In Greek mythology, Aphrodite, the goddess of love, used marjoram.
- Marjoram is used medicinally for coughs, colds, and digestive problems.
- The flavor compounds in marjoram are sabinene (fresh, woody), terpinene (citrusy), and linalool (floral).

3

### Oregano *Origanum vulgare*

- Oregano is part of the mint family.
- Throughout the Mediterranean, oregano has been used for different cures and remedies.



- The word "oregano" comes from Greek. "Oros" means "mountains" and "ganos" means "joy."
- Oregano became more popular in America after WWII.
- Oregano can grow between 8 to 35 inches tall.
- Oregano oil is used medicinally and is thought to have natural antibiotic properties due to the carvacrol it contains.

3

### Nutmeg *Myristica fragrans*

- The largest producer of nutmeg is Indonesia.
- Nutmeg isn't made from a nut! It is made from the seeds of a tropical tree.



- Whole nutmeg lasts a long time when stored in an airtight container.
- It is believed that nutmeg was first discovered in Rome, but the nutmeg tree originates from Banda.
- Nutmeg is a warm spice that is often used alongside cinnamon, allspice, and ginger.

4

### Chervil *Anthriscus cerefolium*

- Chervil can be found year-round but peaks in the spring.
- Chervil is one of the "fine herbs" of French cuisine and is a staple in French kitchens.

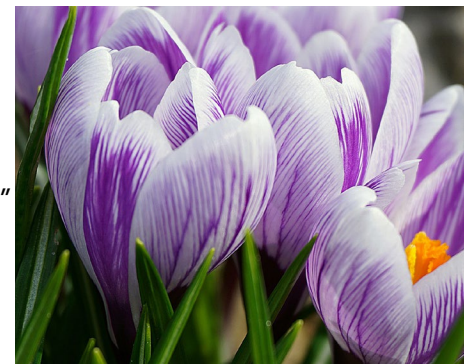


- Chervil is similar to myrrh, one of the gifts given to baby Jesus.
- The Romans spread chervil around Europe. They used it for medicine and flavor.
- Chervil is said to have a faint licorice taste.
- Chervil can grow up to 24 inches tall!

4

### Saffron *Crocus sativus*

- The name saffron comes from the Arabic word "zafaran," meaning "yellow."
- Saffron has a sweet and floral taste.



- The primary producers of commercial saffron are Spain, India, and Iran.
- Saffron comes from the flower "crocus sativus." It is often called the "saffron crocus."
- Saffron has labor-intensive harvesting methods.
- Saffron might work about as well as the prescription drug donepezil (Aricept), which is used to treat Alzheimer's disease.

# 5

## Bay Leaf *Laurus nobilis*



- Bay leaves can be used dried, whole, or ground.
- Bay leaves have a sharp, bitter taste. Normally, they're not eaten but used for spices.
- Bay leaves are also called laurel leaves, and they belong to the laurel family.
- The leaves and oil are used for medicinal purposes.
- In France, it is an essential component of the classic culinary bouquet garnish, which at its simplest is parsley, thyme, and bay leaves.

# 5

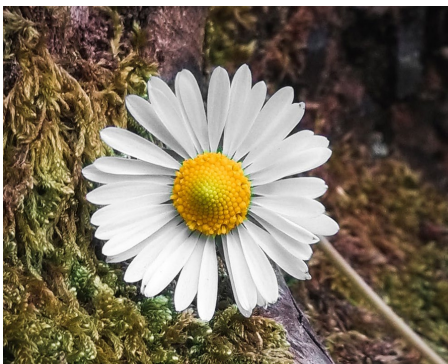
## Peppercorn *Piper nigrum*



- Peppercorn is from the family Piperaceae.
- Peppercorns are tiny fruits.
- Ground pepper is just ground black peppercorn.
- The word pepper comes from "pipor" in Old English.
- Peppercorn isn't just black! It can come in many colors, including black, red, green, or white.
- Black Pepper extract is often used for arthritis treatment.

# 6

## Roman Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*



- Flower heads are often used to make chamomile tea, a popular herbal tea.
- "Chamomaela" in Ancient Greek meant "ground apple."
- Chamomile has a faint apple scent.
- Chamomile originates from North America, Europe, and Asia.
- It usually reaches 8-12 inches in height.
- Chamomile is useful for hay fever, inflammation, muscle spasms, and other common ailments.

# 6

## Valerian *Valeriana officinalis*



- Valerian is native to Europe and Asia.
- It has been sold as a dietary supplement in North America and Europe.
- Ancient Greeks and Romans used Valerian as a medicinal herb.
- Valerian blooms from June to August.
- Valerian is commonly used to treat sleep disorders.