

NATURE'S NEWS

From: Four Winds Nature Institute - www.FourWindsInstitute.org

A Newsletter for Parents, Teachers, and Students participating in Four Winds Natural Science Workshops

Topic of the Month:

LEAVES: NATURE'S SUNCATCHERS



Plant leaves come in a huge variety of sizes, shapes and textures. All leaves share a common function: they manufacture food for the plant.

In an amazing process called photosynthesis, green plants use the sun's energy to make the sugars and starches they need to grow and produce seeds.

Green plants are the basis of the food chain, and all animal life ultimately depends on the ability of plants to produce food energy. Leaves are designed with a system of veins that carry water and minerals to the various parts of the leaf and transport manufactured sugars. Each type of plant leaf has its own distinctive pattern of veins.

LEAF PRINTS

Leaves come in so many shapes and sizes! You can really see the variations when you make leaf prints. You can make prints from fresh or fallen leaves from outdoors or from house or garden plants.

(Thick, fleshy leaves don't print well.) Find as many different kinds of leaves as you can to make a leaf print collection book.

Print patterns on wrapping paper and note cards or make designs on a T-shirt or on cloth for a napkin. Poster paint works on paper, but use acrylic paint for a waterproof or wash-proof design. Spread a thin layer of paint on the underside of a leaf where the veins show best. Place the "inked" leaf where you want the image printed. Cover the leaf with a piece of folded paper towel. Roll a small roller, a rolling pin, or a wooden spoon over the paper. Remove the paper towel and carefully lift the leaf. Presto!

