

# The Field Notebook

An excellent practice to help you to develop your observational skills is to create a book of annotated illustrations of organisms encountered in the field. The drawings you make should be much more than a quick sketch, but rather showing enough detail to reveal the unique characters of this species and this individual. You should especially emphasize the features that allow you to identify this organism.

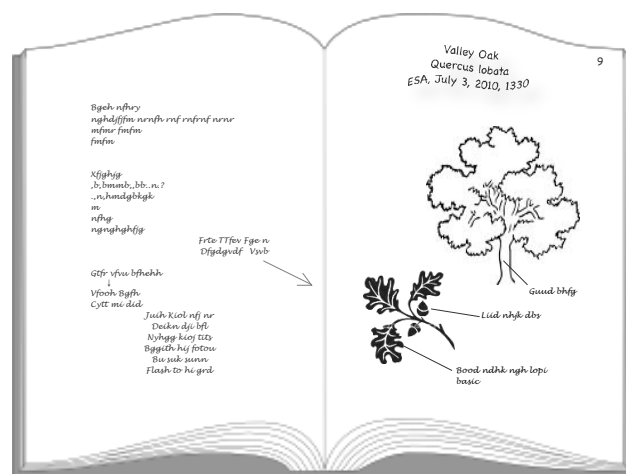
The field book should be a stitch-bound journal or record book with numbered pages for field notes and illustrations — *not* loose-leaf or spiral bound. If you choose to also use this notebook for other material such as class notes, the field illustrations must be separated in a distinct, tabbed section of the notebook.

The first pages preceding the illustrations should be left for a progressive Table of Contents. Each time an illustration is added to your journal, its name should be added to the Table of Contents along with the page numbers where the drawings and annotations are found.

Each organism documented in the journal should get a two-page spread. One page will feature the **large**, full page drawing of the organism. Often, multiple drawings showing specific details are included. Adding color with colored pencils increases the value of the illustrations. These images should be labeled to point out distinguishing and interesting characters. [Photographs may supplement, but *not* replace these drawings.] And the page should be titled with the organism's common and scientific name and the date, time and specific location where the organism was observed or collected.

## Only organisms actually observed are valid subjects!

The facing page should include notes and comments written during the observation such as habitat description, associated organisms, and/or interesting behaviors seen. Additional notes may be added here later from further background research regarding this organism. (Remember to cite sources.)



## Field book contents

### I. Cheeseman Environmental Studies Area (ESA)

- Select **five** different plants representing five **different** ecological areas of the ESA to identify and draw. (One specimen per entry.) Include both an overall drawing of the plant and a detailed illustration of its leaves.
- In the notes area for each plant, identify in which area of the ESA it was seen. And include a detailed description of its specific leaf anatomy using the correct botanical terminology. ( — See Appendix A.)
- For at least one of these plants, include a drawing of its flower or fruit.
- Select one of these plants, and also include its complete taxonomy (phylum through species or subspecies) and some comments on its natural history (normal range and habitat).

### II. Villa Montalvo

- Select **six new** species (i.e., not drawn previously) seen on these trips to identify and draw, including one plant from each of the four communities visited.  
At least three must be trees included in the **Pacific Tree Finder**.
- For these three trees, include the key path from the **Tree Finder** in the notes area.

### III. McClellan Ranch Park / Stevens Creek Watershed

- Identify and draw **six new** plants. At least three must be trees included in the **Pacific Tree Finder**.
- For one of these specimens, include notes with its full taxonomy and its natural history (normal range, habitat, trophic interactions, associated vegetation, etc.).

### IV. “Bug Hunt”

- Identify and draw **nine** terrestrial arthropods collected during the “bug hunts”:
  - **three** ground inverts, such as from the pitfall traps and/or Berlese funnels.
  - **three** vegetation-associated bugs collected with the sweep nets and/or beat nets.
  - **three** aerial insects collected with aerial nets or observed as pollinators.
- For **each** specimen, describe the specific location and what method was used to collect it.
- Select **two** of these bugs of **different orders** and include their full taxonomy and natural history notes.

### V. Bird Survey

- Illustrate **eight** different bird species observed by you on the bird survey or on a field trip (not the zoo).
- Select **two** of these birds representing **different families** and include their full taxonomy and natural history notes.

### VI. San Francisco Zoo

- Draw (on the same page) the two animals you chose for your ethogram activity.
- Include the labels and notes described in items 1–4 of the worksheet.

### VII. Study Site

- Identify and draw **four** new organisms observed at the site of your field project.
- Select **one** of these specimens to include its full taxonomy and natural history notes.