

# Twenty Ideas to Connect Kids with Nature

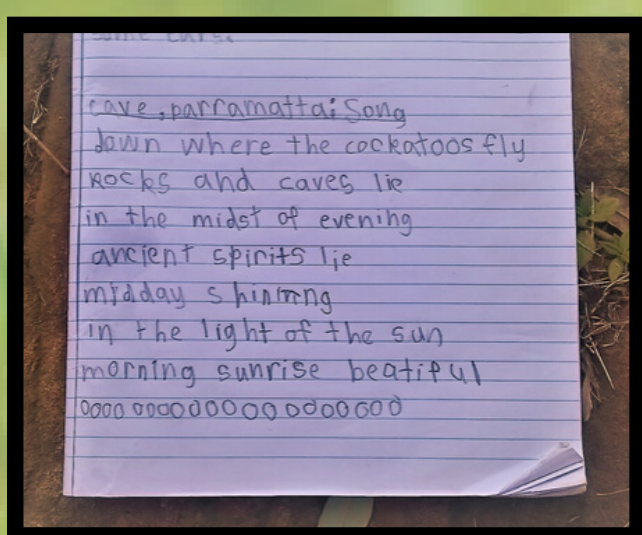
By Ruth Wivell

## ANIMALS



1. Follow a trail of ants back to their home, count skinks, or watch a spider make a web.
2. Lip-sync to birdsong (kookaburra laughs are especially fun); put on some music or a nature show, and dance like the animals you are watching.
3. Make a home for a creature, fairy, or stuffed toy.
4. Participate in some citizen science eg. the Aussie Backyard Bird Count, Frog ID or Butterflies Australia.

## LIVING IN THE MOMENT AND DREAMING FOR THE FUTURE



5. Write songs, poetry, or make pictures about a place special to you.
6. Tell creation stories—how the world or the child or the frog or the butterfly came to be.
7. Notice and give thanks for all the gifts of nature around you.
8. Make a plan to explore the furthest part of the view from your window when possible.

## GETTING OUTSIDE



9. Go for a night walk to see the stars, breathe night scents, and listen for sounds of the darkness.
10. Cook something on a fire, gas cooker, or BBQ, or take your lunch or a hot chocolate outdoors.
11. Take your indoor work outdoors. Phone calls, schoolwork, food preparation—do it outside!
12. Take a tree, bird, or edible plant ID book on a walk or into the garden and see what you can spot.

## BRINGING NATURE IN



13. Display collected nature items on a table or shelf or in a box transformed into a diorama.
14. Make playdough and incorporate collected petals, leaves, feathers, cones, stones, shells, twigs...
15. Warm stones in the oven and draw (carefully!) on them with crayon.
16. Wrap sticks with colourful wool, or weave string in the open space of a Y-shaped stick.

## REMINDING YOUR BODY OF ITSELF



17. Indoors or out, make an obstacle course with cushions, scrap wood, ropes. Practise balancing.
18. Observe your child's movements and copy them.
19. A bag of dry beans on a sheet is a lovely indoor alternative to the sensory play that sand offers.
20. Crack nuts with a stone, or shell peas, grind spices with a mortar and pestle, roll your own pastry.