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The Art of Field Journaling

What you need:

1. **Field Bag:** Should be lightweight, big enough to hold your notebook and drawing implements, and have multiple pockets.
2. **Notebook:** I prefer a spiral-bound 8 ½ x 11, but you may be comfortable with something smaller. Stay away from fancy journals, which may be inhibiting. You should feel free to mess up.
3. **Drawing and writing utensils:** I carry a mechanical pencil, a soft ebony pencil, a good eraser, 2 Faber-Castell PITT artist pens (1 fine, 1 medium point), and a selection of 10 Prismacolor pencils. Sometimes I add color in the field but more often I make notes about color and add them later at home.
4. **Binoculars and hand lens optional**
5. **Field Guides:** I don't carry field guides in my bag, but use my notated drawings to help identify plants and animals later at home.
6. **NATURAL CURIOSITY**

About field journaling:

I refer to the “art” of field journaling only because the “science” of field journaling sounds too intimidating, and the “practice” of field journaling too boring. The truth is, it is all three. Journaling is observing. It is questioning, and going back to the same places for a second, third, and fourth look. It is an intimate involvement with nature’s constant changes. It is the most effective way I know of to truly connect with the world around us.



Image by botanical artist and international art instructor Cynthia Padilla.