

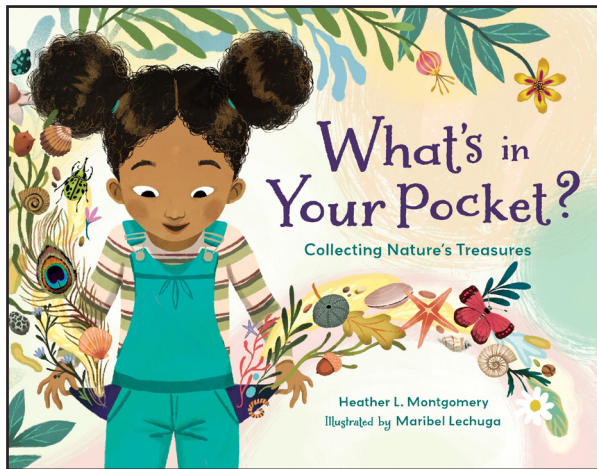
# What's in Your Pocket?

## ACTIVITY KIT

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★ "[A] cleverly conceived and appealingly executed title. . . . Inspiration for nature-loving children."  
—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review



Heather L. Montgomery  
Illustrated by Maribel Lechuga  
978-1-62354-122-4 HC  
e-book available

### About the Book

When you find something strange and wonderful, where do you put it?

Charles Darwin, George Washington Carver, and Jane Goodall were once curious kids with pockets full of treasures! Meet nine scientists who, as kids, explored the great outdoors and collected "treasures": seedpods, fossils, worms, and more. Observing, sorting, and classifying their finds taught these kids scientific skills—and sometimes led to groundbreaking discoveries. Back matter includes Heather's tips for responsible collecting.

### About the Author

Author and master teacher Heather L. Montgomery uses curiosity and yuck-appeal to engage young minds. Her many science books include *Bugs Don't Hug: Six-Legged Parents and Their Kids* and *Something Rotten: A Fresh Look at Roadkill*. Heather has a BS in biology and an MS in environmental education. When she's not writing, she can be found climbing a tree, wading knee-deep in a creek, or collecting natural treasures with kids in beautiful Alabama.

### About the Illustrator

Maribel Lechuga is the illustrator of *Seaside Stroll* and *Ten Beautiful Things*. She studied art at the prestigious Escuela de Arte 10 (Artediez) in Madrid.



# What's in Your Pocket? Activity Kit

## Discussion Guide

Use these questions to kick off classroom discussion, guide pre-thinking and post-reading responses, or inspire a writing or drawing assignment!

### Nature

1. *What's In Your Pocket?* takes place in many outdoor locations. What are some of the places you see these young scientists exploring? Have you been to places like this?
2. What is the environment like where you live? (Hint: Many things make up an environment! Weather, wildlife, geography, and plant life can all play a role in shaping the place you call home.)
3. Do you collect things from nature? If so, what and why?
4. If you could collect anything at all, what would you pick?
5. Do you have a favorite spread in this book? Describe it and explain why it is your favorite.
6. The back of the book includes a list of field guides. Have you used a field guide before? What do you think makes a good field guide? What kind of field guide would you look for to learn more about your collection?

### Science & Scientists

1. What is science? Can you name some of your favorite science topics?
2. What are some jobs that scientists do?
3. How does someone become a scientist?
4. Have you heard of any of the scientists listed in this book? Were there any names that were new to you?
5. Do you have a favorite of the scientists listed in this book? Why?
6. What does it mean to be a "citizen scientist"? Are there citizen science projects going on in your area that you can participate in as a class?
7. Read the illustrator's note at the end of the book. What do you think of Maribel's statement about how illustrators and scientists are alike?
8. Read Heather L. Montgomery's *Rules of Nature Collecting* (page 9) aloud. Have you heard some of these rules before, from your grown-ups or from school or park codes of conduct? Why do you think each section of the list begins with respect for something?

# What's in Your Pocket?

## Activity Kit

## Create Your Own Collection

**I will collect:** \_\_\_\_\_

(For example: leaves, shells, rocks)

**I will find my treasures:** \_\_\_\_\_

(For example: in my backyard, at a local beach, on the sidewalk)

**To hold my treasures, I will use:** \_\_\_\_\_

(For example: an Altoids tin, a shoebox, a blank diary, a jam jar. Use your answers to the questions above to figure this out. You may need something waterproof, something flat, or something that can fit in your pocket.)

Once you have chosen your collection container, make it your own with paint, stickers, marker, construction paper, or other decorations! Use the space below to plan what your container will look like.

# What's in Your Pocket?

## Activity Kit

## Catalogue Your Collection

A catalogue is an explanation, in words or pictures, of what is in a collection. Museums, libraries, and archives all have catalogues. Use the space below to make a catalogue of your own unique collection!

Example:

### My Shell Collection

1. Moon shell, found 5/1/21  
(white, small chip in the edge)
2. Clam shell, found 5/1/21  
(white with gray spots)
3. Abalone shell, found 5/1/21  
(shiny inside!)
4. Periwinkle shell, found 8/8/21  
(very small)
5. Moon shell, found 8/8/21  
(large, pinkish)
6. Periwinkle, found 9/15/21  
(white with brown zigzags)

# What's in Your Pocket?

## Activity Kit

## Make a Nature Journal

Sometimes it's better to draw pictures or take photos instead of taking from nature. When is this true?

### Quick Tips for Your Nature Journal:

1. Find a sturdy notebook that feels comfortable to carry. Lined, blank, dotted, or grid paper can all work.
2. In the front or back of your notebook, make a list of questions you want to answer while exploring.
3. Take quick descriptive notes or sketches while outside—leave room to fill in connections later!
4. Go back and fill in more detailed drawings and descriptions when you're done.
5. Look up information about the things you've collected.

# What's in Your Pocket?

## Activity Kit

## Get Off the Beaten Path

There are all sorts of ways to enjoy the outdoors!  
Use this checklist to track your adventures.

### Hike and Bike

State and national parks can offer miles of trails for hiking or biking. Prepare to enjoy the outdoors safely: check the park's website for any hazard alerts, dress appropriately for the weather and terrain, and give your bike a tune-up so it's in good shape.

### Geocache

This modern treasure-hunting pastime is beloved around the world. To play, start online with a geocaching organization that shares GPS coordinates for little stashes located near you. Once you've found the geocache, sign and date the logbook to prove that you found it—and hide it exactly where it was so the next hunter can find it. Larger caches sometimes have small trinkets, toys, or stickers that you can trade!

### Volunteer

Many parks have dedicated clean-up days for volunteers to pick up trash, mend worn-out trails, clean and fix facilities, and generally make the park a safer and more pleasant place to be.

### Walk the Dog

A four-legged buddy can give you a whole new perspective on the outdoors. If your family doesn't have a dog, ask a friend who does if you can join them on a dog walk or offer to walk a neighbor's dog while they're out of town.

### Make a Splash

Your nearest waterfront park may offer boat rentals, which is a great way to get a closer look at whatever swims in the sea, lake, or river! You'll need an adult buddy to help you stay safe on the water.

### Look Up

Find an open field near you—in a park, garden, school playground, or backyard—and lie down and look up. What do you see in the sky? Try this on cloudy days, snowy days, near sunrise and sunset, and after dark when the stars are out.

### Get Down

You know your own backyard, right? Look again! Get low to the ground—crawling on hands and knees—and see what you can see from this angle that you might have missed otherwise.

### Quiet Time

Find a time when you can sit silently in your backyard or another nature space by yourself for twenty or thirty minutes. This will feel like forever—but you may get the chance to see wildlife that's easily scared off by noise or movement! See what you notice when everything is still.

### Climb and Clamber

With an adult buddy to spot you and/or give you a boost, try climbing a tree or large boulder. What do you notice about the world around you when you're up high?

### Bring the Outdoors In

Using collected materials and an adult's help, make a shoebox diorama of an outdoor place you love! Carefully observe the place you're recreating and notice all the little details that make it special.

# What's in Your Pocket?

## Activity Kit

## Collecting in Cities

It's easy to pick up rocks, sticks, leaves, and flowers when you've got a sprawling forest—but collecting in the concrete jungle can be an exciting challenge, too!

### Step One

Start by noticing where nature flourishes in your city. Parks and public gardens will probably be the largest green spaces you can find. There may also be trees on public sidewalks, planters outside public or corporate buildings, hedges around your school's playground, windowboxes full of flowers, and veggies growing in buckets on your neighbors' porches or balconies.

### Step Two

Cities are also full of nature that doesn't have a dedicated place. Weeds and grass can push through cracks in the pavement. Bees can build hives in the walls of abandoned houses. Moss, ivy, and lichen can cling to brick or concrete walls. Keep your eyes open and remember that plants need only three things to grow (permission is not one of them). Where you find water, soil, and sunlight, you will probably find something living!

### Step Three

Get curious about wildlife! Are your streets full of pigeons, or crows, or both? Do cicadas make a racket every summer? Are you close enough to the water for seagulls? Do rats, lizards, or wild rabbits hide in the bushes?

### Step Four

Pick something that you can collect in your city: pebbles from the waterfront, dandelions from the sidewalks in your neighborhood, leaves fallen from the trees in the park. Use the "Create Your Own Collection" worksheet (page 3) for an easy start guide.

### Step Five

Remember Heather Montgomery's Rules of Nature Collecting (page 9). Also, check your local park and garden websites for rules on collecting plant life.

# What's in Your Pocket?

Activity Kit

## Word Search

P A T T E R N S O S  
P O C K E T F C U O  
C O M P A R E I T R  
A N I M A L S E D T  
S P E C I M E N O N  
A F O S S I L T O A  
A O H L S X I I R T  
C O L L E C T S S U  
M S B H J I O T S R  
T R E A S U R E H E

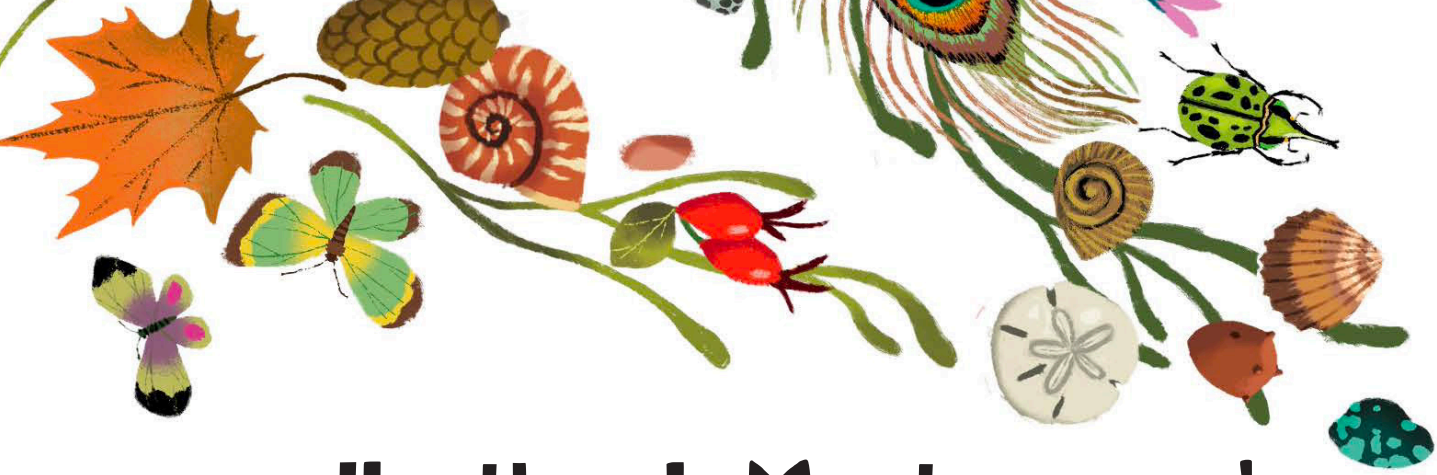
SCIENTIST  
NATURE  
ANIMALS

SPECIMEN  
POCKET  
PATTERN

COMPARE  
TREASURE  
FOSSIL

OUTDOORS  
COLLECT  
SORT





# **Heather L. Montgomery's Rules of Nature Collecting**

## **To Respect Nature**

I collect only things that are not alive.

I collect only if it won't hurt nature. I never take rare items or things an animal might need.

I collect only if it is allowed.

## **To Respect the People I Live With**

I make sure my artifacts are clean and (mostly) stink-free.

I have areas set aside for my treasures.

I make sure my collections do not bother my family.

## **To Respect Myself**

I don't put my hands where my eyes can't see.

I learn about plants and animals that could hurt me and avoid them.

I never put unknown items in my mouth.

