



What's the Matter in Nature?

ADAPTED FROM NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S *MONARCH MISSION*, GRADES K-5, ACTIVITY 2, WHAT'S THE MATTER IN THE GARDEN?

Investigating Question: What are properties of matter?

1. For this activity, children can start by optionally reading one of the three books below:
 - *What is it made of Noticing types of materials* by Martha Rustand,
 - *Matter: Physical Science for Kids* by Andi Diehn; or
 - *What Is the World Made Of?* By Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld
2. This activity is best suited for the outdoors, finding nature within reach, such as your backyard or by way of a neighborhood walk. Use the information in the box to the right to make a discovery box. If your child's discovery box has a lot of items, for this activity, you may ask them to choose 5-10 items to observe.
3. Explain: "There's a lot of matter in nature. Understanding properties of nature is useful knowledge when preparing a garden for wildlife."
4. Using the items from the discovery box, sort, draw, and describe each item's properties using the template on the following page. Find a family member. Can they name the object just from the list of it's properties?

Making a Discovery Box.

Suggested box size: shoe box size
Items can include, but are not limited to:

Magnifying glass, variety of mulches (hardwoods of varying colors), recycled mulches, pebbles, soil, lava sand, dried molasses, moss, plant leaves, flowers, stems, sealed containers of water and air, etc.



EDUCATOR SUPPORT

What is matter?

Matter is literally everything, you and every living and nonliving thing are made up of matter. Matter consists of atoms that combine to form what we see and experience in our everyday life.

What are properties of matter?

Simply, properties of matter are characteristics that are used to describe and measure matter – ways used to describe matter.

The most common examples of physical properties of matter include:

Size, shape, color, texture, odor, and density





DRAW THE OBJECT	PROPERTIES OF MATTER	NAME THE OBJECT