

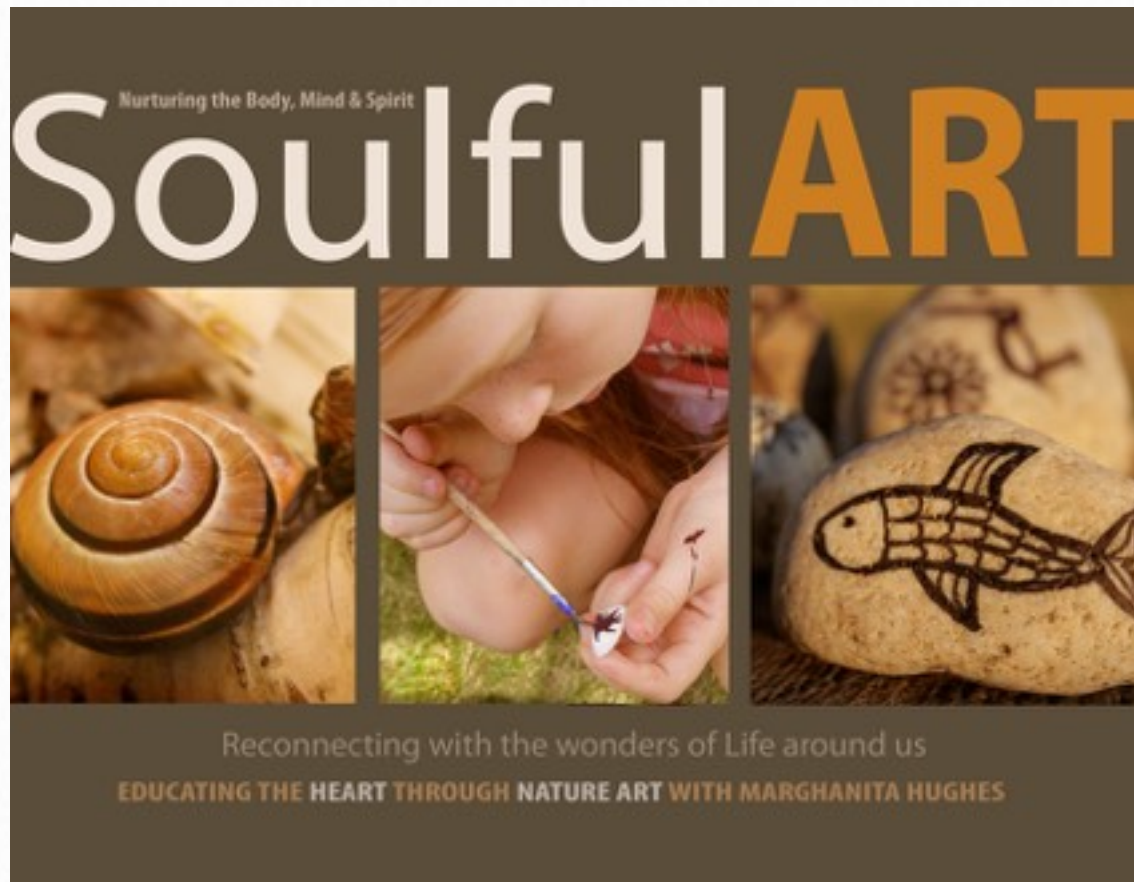
Fairy Houses and Dens

OUTSIDE WITH MARGHANITA

*“When children and nature
mix, something magical
happens”*

Marghanita Hughes

BUILD A FAIRY HOUSE WEEK 21st - 28th June



This document was created by Marghanita Hughes to help raise awareness of the importance of Nature and Creativity in a Child's life.

My belief is that we can never be whole, in harmony, balanced, unless every part of us is healthy – body, mind , heart and spirit – if we only educate the mind we are not whole, there is an emptiness that we need to fill.

Nature helps nurture harmony and balance which in turn lead to happiness.

The exercises we follow in my nature program are designed to engage mind, body, heart and spirit, which in turn helps the child, grow into a whole being.

The spirit needs to be recognized, nourished, encouraged; the imagination needs space and seeds of wonder to nurture, and the body needs fresh air and exercise.

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Photo by J

“Passion is lifted from the earth itself by the muddy hands of the young; it travels along grass-stained sleeves to the heart.” — Louv, Last Child in the Woods

Fairy house building and Den making are part of the magic that occurs when children and nature mix. That natural-magic is part of childhood. The lack of time spend outdoors



is having an effect on children’s health and well-being. What better way to help reconnect our children with the natural world than building fairy houses and constructing dens - fueling their imaginations and letting creativity flow.

Helping to raise awareness of the importance of nature and creativity in a child's life.

Playing games that originate from a child's **imagination** such as fairy house building, creating dens and lookout towers, hide and seek or simply climbing a tree are part of the magic and freedom of childhood.

Reconnecting to our children with Mother Earth's Heart



I believe in providing nature based art activities that help children bond with the natural world, helping them build personal relationships with nature. These simple, beautiful activities such as Fairy House Building, provide ways to express their **creativity, curiosity and wonder**.



www.marghanita.com

When I was a child, my favourite place to hang out was high up in the Silver Birch in the back garden. Alone with my thoughts and dreams, my imagination soared. I also loved roaming wild and free on my bike or building dens in the woods with my friends and brothers, these were happy, sacred moments in my childhood. It was those magical experiences in nature that helped shape my life. And I still do all of these nature based activities today, which I believe keep me happy and healthy and creatively inspired.

Magic is Everywhere in Nature





One of my students decided her pebble bee and owl would like to sleep in her fairy home

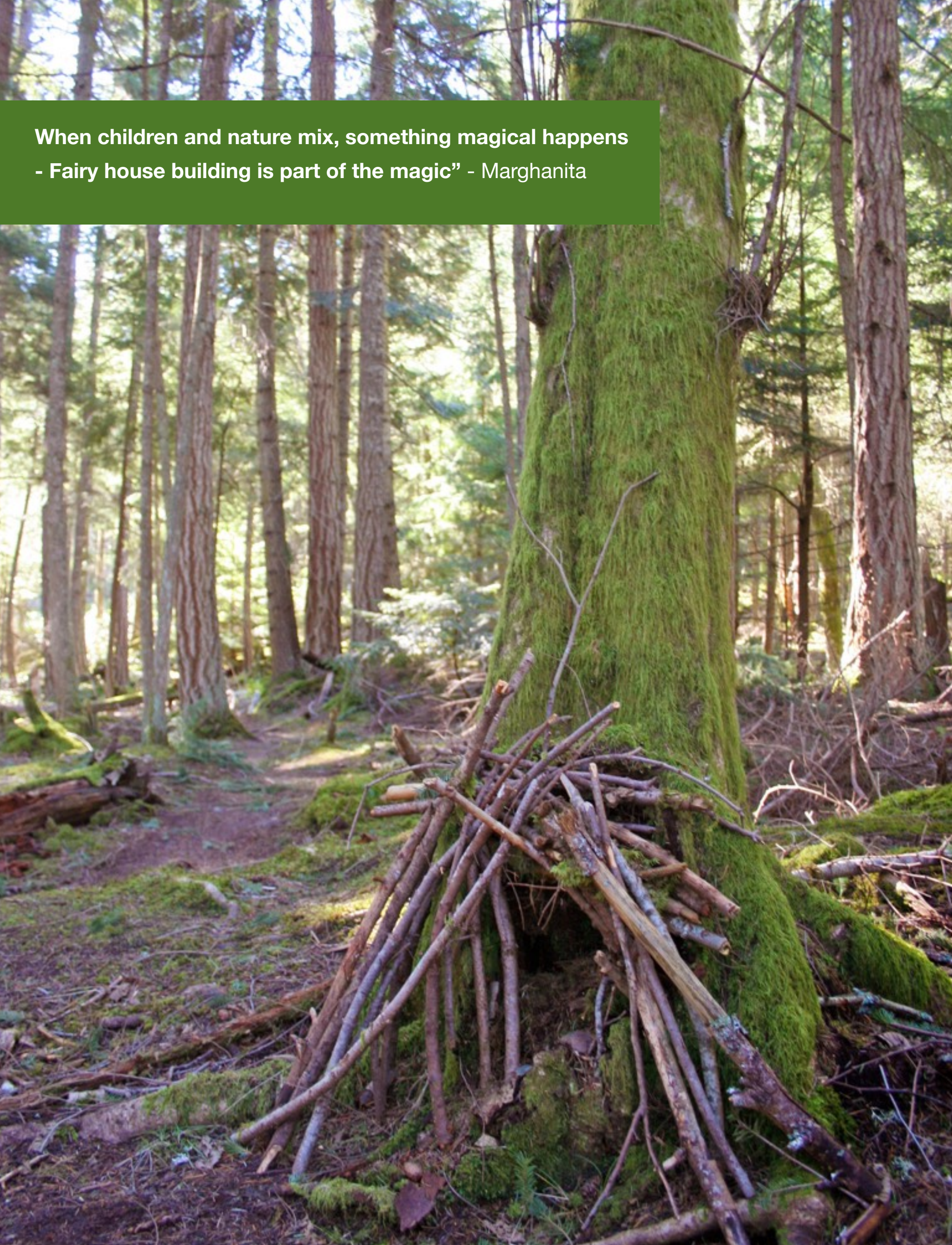


Let's Make Nature Play Every Day

Nature play improves all aspects of child development – physical, cognitive, social and emotional.



**When children and nature mix, something magical happens
- Fairy house building is part of the magic” - Marghanita**





"Children have a natural love for all living things"-

Marghanita Hughes - Founder of Educating the Heart through Nature Art



"Every child can remember laying his head in the grass, staring into the infinitesimal forest and seeing it grow populous with fairy armies" - Robert Louis Stevenson



From the minute a child is born, they are alive with wonder and curiosity.

A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood.
~Rachel Carson



A fairy pillow made from an empty walnut shell and covered with soft pink petals, by Arielle, age 6



Creativity is as important as literacy – Sir Ken Robinson

It seems children today, have very little time to play, to lose themselves in their imagination. Many



children spend most of their day indoors. A day beginning with school then onto one structured activity to another, back home to play on

the computer or watch television leaving very little time to play outdoors and use their imagination.





Magic is everywhere in nature. Look with your heart and you'll find the wonder of earth magic in every natural creation.





You can build a Fairy House or Den Anywhere...

In your Back Garden

In the Woods with Family

At your Grandparents

You could create a **fairy village in a retirement home grounds**. This would bring youth and elders together in celebration of nature and it's wonder and magic.

At a local park or beach

When you build a fairy house in a park or at the beach not only do the fairies benefit from your magical creation - you have also left a treasure for another child to discover and enjoy. This mysterious and exciting find is an untold story that stimulates the imagination.

Make a willow or flower wreath to decorate your fairy home or a daisy chain to drape in the doorway

WHY : To help raise awareness of the importance of nature play and creativity in children's lives

WHERE : Anywhere: your yard, school grounds, at home; Kindergarten; playgroup; community centre; retirement home

WHEN : Build a Fairy House or Den Week June 21st - June 28th

HOW : Hold an event or just make it a family affair, get together with friends or hold a fairy house build at your school, brownies and scouts club, kindergarten etc.

WHO : Anyone and everyone up to the age of 99 years. We would like to encourage everyone to participate in this beautiful experience.





At Kindergarten

At Elementary

Watch Marghanita's School Visit here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFFZ08Az1Jo>

During my school visits, the children get to construct, paint and decorate fairy houses and critter homes. This is a great team work project. Bringing math, science and art together in a stimulating and fascinating way. This engaging nature art activity leads to

storytelling around the fire: how we used to live: using literature including poetry, short stories and myths and legends.

We also discuss architecture - An infusion of art and engineering. Older students document their creations through journals. The older students accompany the younger students to observe their creations over the changing seasons.





NATURE ART IS FUN AND ENGAGING FOR ALL AGES

Fairy houses and den building can act as a healthy activity for children to engage in alone or with family and friends.

BENEFITS

Encourages children to get outside
Actively engages children with nature
Children learn to respect nature
Helps children fall in love with the natural world
Expands their creativity and imagination.



The child has direct contact with the earth, trees, flora, the child can collect, construct and decorate; this interactive play with nature has rules made only by the child, *their imagination is unhindered by expectations.*



Painting the driftwood fairy den with earth paint

Fairy Houses Come in all Shapes and Sizes



The longer a child plays the deeper and more meaningful their play becomes.

There has never been a more important time for adults to make outdoor play a priority for the children in our lives. It is one of the best things we can do for their health, education and well-being and for our awe-inspiring, ever-giving Mother Earth.

Nature needs us too!

Run barefoot on the sand and grass and dance for the fairies



Imagination is more important than knowledge

When a child builds a fairy house, the child is actively engaging the mind, body, spirit and all of the senses. Just like their creations, each child is unique. Building fairy houses



allows the child to express themselves creatively.

This simple nature-based art activity can simulate social, physical, intellectual, creative and spiritual learning and development.



Why not leave some berries or nuts for the fairies to feast on.

Write messages on leaves, paper thin bark using a sharpie pen for the fairies to find.





It is a happy talent to know how to play.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson



After the children had built this wonderful Butterfly Girl Fairy House I couldn't resist decorating it with lanterns and spending a magical night. The child within is ever present when in nature.



Early childhood Educators learning how to build a fairy house. ECE workshops with marghanita: www.marghanita.com



In this class, the children are painting their fairy houses and adding little driftwood doors.

Every Child Is An Artist

The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up. ~Pablo Picasso

Make a driftwood castle home





Doors and accessories

Little twig ladder made with tiny sticks and twine



Handmade doors can be added to the bottom of a tree, offering entry for the fairies. Doors can also be added to stone built fairy houses.

Mini felt flags can be draped across the entrance as a friendly welcome to all fairies.

Tiny Fairy Houses



MAKE A FAIRY JOURNAL: Save a few of the flowers that you have collected to decorate your fairy house and press the flowers between a book. Once dry, you can add them to your fairy journal.

Hand in Hand, with fairy grace, We will sing and bless this place. -~William Shakespeare





Best Time to Spot a Fairy

According to the fairy specialist, the late Cecil Mary Barker, the most likely time of year to see a fairy is Midsummer's Eve - the night of June 23rd.



Fairies remain hidden under a magic veil. They are incredibly happy little souls - If you are very quiet, you may hear the fairies singing and laughing.

Sit among the flowers and you will find joy



My latest book character "Orange Moon" : www.orangemoontribe.com



Let us make time to listen to the birds singing; to stop and smell the sweet perfumed flowers; to touch and feel the softness and warmth of the earth beneath our bare feet; to simply take a moment to just breath a deep breath of happiness...***fairies know how to do this.***

One of my most favourite things to do is walk barefoot amongst the wild alpine flowers. Nature is a constant source of inspiration for my work as an artist and educator. Every gentle step makes a flower bloom.



Large Fairy Houses and Dens

How my large fairy house evolved

The large fairy houses evolved through my children's book character's "The Little Humbugs" .



Half human, half bug - the protectors of nature. Unlike most fairies, my Butterfly Girl fairies and Dragonfly Boys are the size of a human child - hence why I began creating large fairy houses with students during school visits.



It was watching my own children (pictured here) play in nature that inspired the Little Humbugs.



The longer a child plays, the deeper and more meaningful the play becomes. Building dens fosters a deep connection to and love of the natural world.

Create a natural Journal for your large Fairy house. Observe, draw and document the insects, birds and animals that visit your fairy house den. Take photographs of your fairy homes throughout the changing seasons - note how it changes?

The Little Humbugs - In the beginning



Since The World was young, and for as long as Mother Nature can remember, Butterfly Girls and Dragonfly Boys have danced happily amongst her wild flowers and towering trees. These Little Humbugs have always been with her. Through the hardest of times, they have been there, never failing to take care of her. Little Humbugs are strong, sensitive and caring beings. They have always felt responsible for the creatures they share their world with, especially those that are unable to take care of themselves. The Little Humbugs are The Protectors of Nature! But, The Little Humbugs' World is quickly disappearing; more and more forests are being cut down and the rivers and oceans are becoming polluted. The Humbugs are very concerned by the greed, wastefulness and carelessness that so many people seem to show! However, they know that there are many more good people in this world who do care, people who treasure the earth and want to look after it. People like you and me. Humbugs are wise, they know the signs! They see it all around, they smell it in the air. They hear it in the wind and they can feel it in their hearts... Time is running out! They know that they must do something before it is too late and all the beautiful forests and rivers are lost forever.....

We are part of the earth and the earth is part of us"
Chief Seattle





How to Build a Large Fairy House or Fairy Den



You will need:

- Large fallen branches or driftwood; tree poles or bamboo sticks to construct a tepee-like structure
- Waste garden foliage to weave in and out of the structure
- Twine and scissors
- Natural items such as flowers and cones to decorate the house structure

This is a great team work activity. Perfect for an elementary school project. When visiting schools we encourage pairing grade 1 and 2's with a buddy from grade 5 and 6.



How to Make a Large Fairy/Wizard House:

You will require adult help

1. Take your four or six poles and cross them at one end pointing upwards (like a tepee structure). Have an adult stand on ladders to tie the poles together with twine. Tie the twine around each pole, joining them together.

2. Now allow the children to take smaller pieces of drift wood or branches and measure them to see which ones would be a good fit to lay across horizontally.

3. As a child holds either end, the third child can attach the stick to the structure using the twine.

4. Once all the main structure has been completed, begin to weave foliage and flowers in and around the paneled sections.

5. Using the twine attach handcrafted decorations and pinecones - anything the children wish to add



A welcoming heart (made from willow, handmade felt beads, a pine cone threaded on twine) for the entrance.

Watch the video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UTwbk6k1BI



Medium Sized Fairy Homes at the Beach



Building a fairy home on your own or building one with friends, both are fun ways to explore the magical world of make believe inspired by nature.



Look for animal tracks in the ground near your fairy house - who visited?



Stone Built Fairy Houses



Why not make a fairy village in your school or kindergarten. Or create a village of fairy houses in the local park.



Use pebbles or rocks to create a water feature for your fairy home. Build a stone path and entrance. Paint a bee or lady bug pebble to sit in the fairy garden. Toadstools are a fairy favourite.

For further fairy house activities and how to make fairy house accessories visit: www.marphanita.com

Where the Wild Things Are

OWNERSHIP OF NATURE



"It's that sense of ownership that's important – ownership of nature. How many children get that now? For this generation, nature is more of an abstraction than a physical reality. Kids today can tell you about the Amazon rainforest, but not about the last time they went into a wood alone. Nature is something to watch from a distance, something to consume. Something very profound has happened in children's relationship to nature." - Richard Louv “(Let them climb trees” Gaurdian. 2010. John Henley)





Den building is part of **Childhood**

The 'forts' are in a state of constant transformation; floors become walls, roofs come and go, stick-porches are added and removed, independent clusters of teepees spring up and disappear.



Den building in the wilds

Louv points out that if you speak to most environmentalists they themselves built forts causing destruction to a particular natural area. He argues that these experiences fostered their care for the environment and led them to a career to protect it. He goes further to suggest that if we prevent children from having these potentially “destructive” experiences we may not have any environmentalists in the future.

Does it matter? It does, says Louv forcefully, and for several reasons: obesity is just the most visible of them.



There's also an increasing body of research showing that time spent in the natural world has a significant impact on more than physical wellbeing. "Kids can grow fine up without nature," says Louv, "but with it, there are marked improvements in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning ability, creativity and mental, psychological and spiritual health. When you consider that in some US schools, **up to 30% of boys are now on Ritalin** ... I've lost count of the number of teachers and youth leaders who have told me how different kids become when you get them out into nature. Trouble-makers become leaders. **Nature is their Ritalin.**"

Reference: The Guardian - 2010 by Jon Henley





“ Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living.” — Dr. Seuss

There may not be many wild places left but we can create a small piece of wild in relatively small places.



Large fairy dens created at beaches and woodland areas - part of the outdoor classroom experience.

Hunting and Gathering

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.” - John Muir



Be respectful when gathering any item from nature. Just like our children, the flowers, rocks and sticks are sacred and must be treated with love and respect.

“The perfumed flowers are our sisters.”

– Chief Seattle

We collect by hand the magical treasure locally. Our respect for the treasure gifted by Mother Earth is shown through our protocols of always ask first and give thanks for what is given. We only take what is needed. When out gathering, discuss poisonous plants and watch out for stinging nettles and bugs that may bite.



Love and Respect for all Living Things



The question is not what you look at but what you see. - Thoreau

FALLING IN LOVE WITH NATURE

Children need to be given the opportunity to “Fall in Love” with the natural world, only then can we ask them to help look after it.



In our outdoor classes we are teaching the children to know the place they live in, the insects and birds, the flowers and the land. Through these authentic experiences and nature art activities, they grow to care for it and to have a love and respect for the natural world and all its inhabitants.



**Future caretakers of
our beautiful Earth**

Out and about hunting and gathering natural items for Fairy houses, we encounter butterflies and spiders. The children are curious about the spider and wish to share.



Building a Fairy House

Fairy Houses can be built anywhere. The base of a tree in your street, in your local park or a magical spot in your own backyard or in the forest.

More details on how to hold a fairy house and den event are available by visiting:

www.educatingheartnatureart.com

FREE POSTERS AVAILABLE



To build a small tepee structure Fairy House like the one in this photograph, simply follow the instructions on how to build a large Tepee Fairy house on page 24. (Reducing everything in size).



Life begins with an open and unlimited imagination

URBAN Fairy Houses



You can build a fairy house anywhere. Simply collect natural items



from nature, twigs, small fallen branches and a small selection of flowers can be gathered from your

own back yard or friends house.



Remember when foraging for any items from nature, to be respectful and give thanks, ask if mother nature can offer you anything for your fairy house and see what she provides.



We love using walnut shells, acorns and sea shells for fairy house accessories. Some children may wish to add little recycled items too,

2

The Enchanted Forest

Grown-ups never understand anything for themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

~Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince, 1943

Imagination is the eye of the soul



Imagine...

Fairy house building is a beautiful, simple, highly creative way for children to connect in a most magical way with nature, either as a group or individually. As with all tales of myth and legend, Fairies engage a child's imagination, they immediately respond to the wonder of a magical world. Fairies are well known as earth dwellers and by asking children to build a home for a fairy they respond with excitement, joy and enthusiasm. All things fairy are child size...they take ownership and responsibility over the fairy space they create.



Nature is a Wonder

From wonder into wonder existence opens - Lao Tzu

To Be Rooted

“ To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.” – Simone Weil



The importance of contact with “ordinary “ nature is powerful. “It is through close and intimate contact with a particular patch of ground that we learn to respond to the earth. We need to recognize the humble places where this alchemy occurs.

Everybody has a ditch, or ought to. For only the ditches – and the fields, the

woods , the ravines – can teach us to care enough.”





where we held beetle races, and lit the wood fires and roasted potatoes and talked about Africa, and the makes of motor cars, yet still the next day, it remained as unexplored as the Poles...

And that park grew up with me; that small world

The fabulous storyteller Dylan Thomas describes the emotional adventure of directly experiencing nature in even the mundane and familiar of settings:

“Though it was a little park, it held within it’s borders of old tall trees, notched with our names and shabby from our climbing, as man secret places, caverns and forests, prairies and deserts, as a country somewhere at the end of the sea....And though we could explore it in one day, armed and desperate, from end to end, from the robbers’ den to the pirates cabin, the highwayman’s inn to the cattle ranch, or the hidden room in the undergrowth,

widened as I learned it’s secrets and boundaries, as I discovered new refuges and ambushes in its woods and jungles, hidden homes and liars for the multitudes of imagination. “



These magical moments in nature are sacred



“This sudden splash into pure wilderness – baptism in Nature’s warm heart – how utterly happy it made us! Nature streaming into us, wooingly teaching her wonderful glowing lessons, so unlike the dismal grammar ashes and cinders so long thrashed into us. Here without knowing it we still were at school; every wild lesson, not whipped but charmed into us.” – John Muir



Lie down next to your den and look up at the clouds.

Wizards

Where do wizards live?



The Magic of Imagination

Where do Wizards Live?

Maybe in the side of a cave, or at the edge of a forest...

In a castle,,,or maybe in a flat or condo.

I wonder where they might live - do you know where they live?

Let your imagination take you on a journey and create a home for a wizard. What would it look like? What is it made from? Explore and create! **There Are No Rules!** It can be whatever you **imagine** it to be!



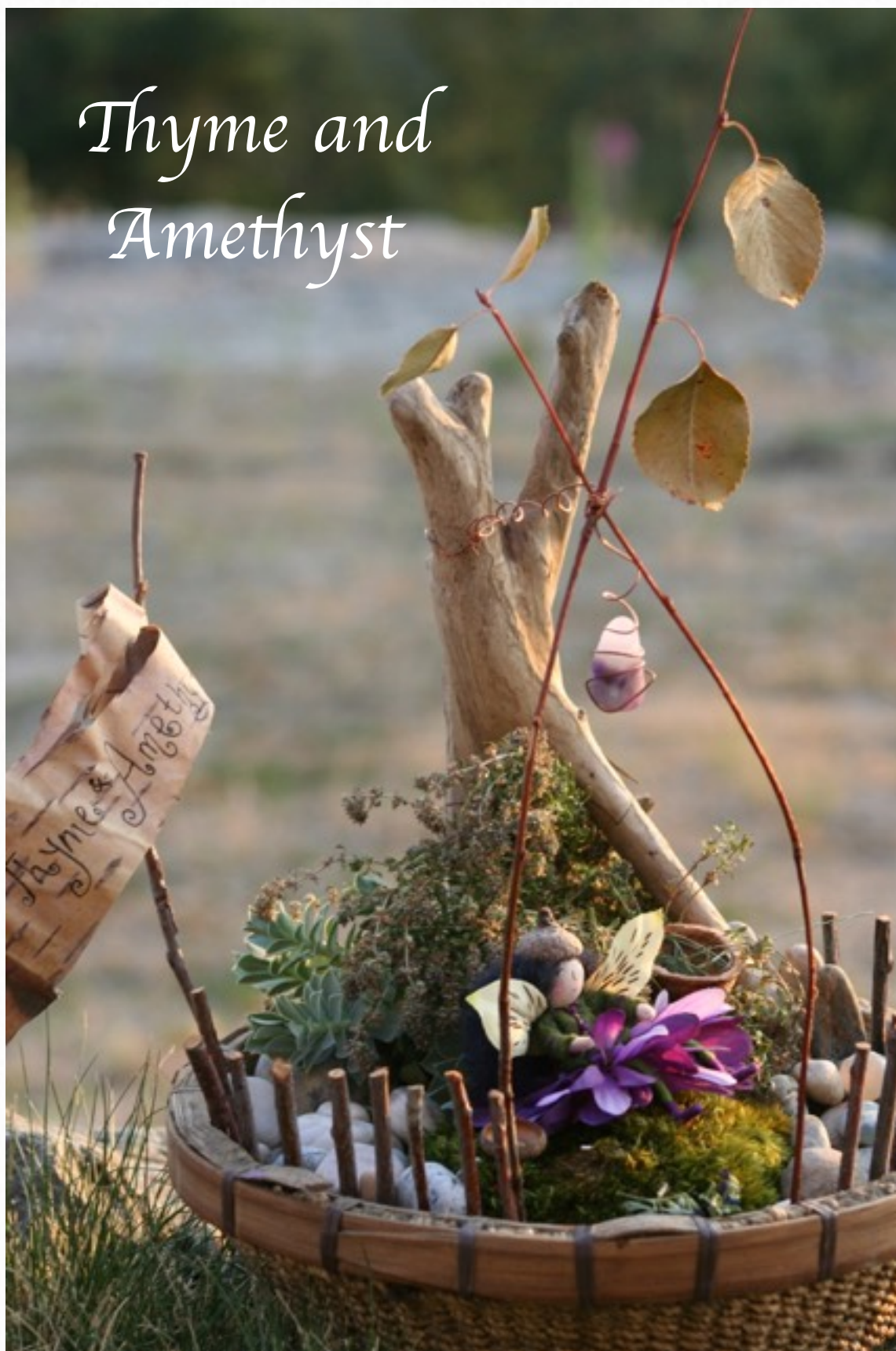
Nature Play is for all ages - adults can join in the fun!



Be inspired by the beauty of the natural world. Hunt for little pieces of treasure, giving thanks along the way...open your heart and let the love flow into your creations...*enjoy the creative process! No one is judging your art!*



Little Fairy Garden in a Basket



Wild thyme Flower Fairy

by Cecil Barker (copyright Baker) 2019

Did you know fairies dwell in fragrant herb gardens to ensure that herbs will flourish and protect humans from illness.

Why not make a little fairy garden.

All you need is a small pot, a few herbs or small plants and compost. Plant the herb or flower deep in the pot. Decorate the garden with **whatever you like** - shells, pebbles, a little twig fence. We added some gem stones. The fairies will love discovering the sparkling stones.





Encourage butterflies and other pollinating insects to your fairy garden



FAIRY HOUSES: Beach House
www.marghanita.com

BEACH FAIRY HOMES

A simple way for little ones to have a permanent mini fairy home that they can carry around or move from time to time to find the perfect fairy spot, if they so wish.



Fill the basket with a thin plastic sheet as a lining to hold in the sand. Fill with earth then top up with sand. Add shells, sea glass, pebbles. We added a welcome sign, little felt flags and some sparkling gem stones...***What will you create?***



Open your heart to those things that gave you joy as a child.
Remember the preciousness of fantasy and imagination.



May all children experience the magic, with deep love and gratitude, peace Marghanita x



Thank you to all the beautiful children
who bring the magic to life.

A special thank you to beautiful souls **Henrietta Poirier**,
David Hughes, Jeanene Tremoulet
and Heidi Vant Geloof.

**"We need only listen to what the earth is telling us –
Living for each other is the rule of nature.**

“ Thomas Berry

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Elise invited me to play and make a fairy home too - what fun we had!

Let's make Nature Play Every Day!



Help keep the enchantment of childhood alive.

– Marghanita Hughes

