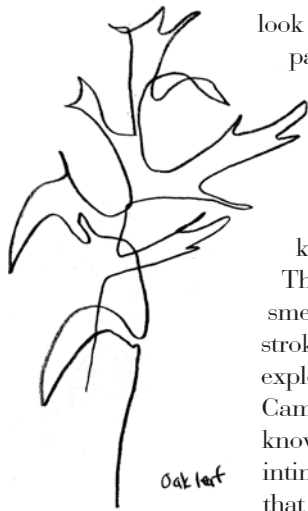


"It feels like a kite."

"It smells like green lemonade."

It's amazing what kids come up with when asked to describe an oak leaf! Chances are none of them had ever looked so closely at a single leaf before. But, in order to make a blind contour drawing of 'their' oak leaf

(during which they could not look at their paper), they needed to really come to know it. They smelled it, stroked it, explored it. Came to know it so intimately that one child would



Oak leaf

gasp, "I feel like the leaf and my mind are one thing!" Invited to become explorers, ornithologists, cartologists, the third graders of Mrs. Byrd's class came alive.



I got hit by a



acorn

Most folks out for a walk hoping to connect with the natural world would see the broken glass which carpeted the ground at Puddingstone Garden, the liquor bottles strewn every which way, and the jumbled piles of household refuse and would continue right on by to the vistas and the lush wildness of nearby Franklin Park. But with an invitation to let loose their curiosity and passion, these children found and fell in love with the life that was teeming around them.

During the first of three workshop meetings, when asked to name who and what lived at the park, the usual responses were intoned: a tree, rocks, birds, squirrels. On the last day, when asked to list all the living things they'd discovered, one child quickly penciled a list of 27 in his journal, including a millipede, centipede, stag beetle, lichen, Baltimore orioles, oak galls, daddy long legs spider, white pine, pokeberry, and on and on.



Snail

One of the thank you letters to the artist/naturalist workshop leader says it all: "Also, I will live next door from Pudding Stone park and I love it."

Mrs. Byrd wrote, "my students and I found the field trips to Puddingstone Park exciting and we



Oak leaf, green, like a Apple.



enjoyed exploring a natural habitat that exists in our community. In addition to becoming nature lovers who enjoy exploring their natural environments, we have also been able to adopt and incorporate this experience into our classroom social studies unit on Boston. The students' mapping and graphing skills were also enriched by the Puddingstone nature journal workshops."

Ms. Grant



Client:: Mrs. Byrd's Third Grade Class
Holland School, Dorchester, MA

Artist/ Naturalist: Sarah Grant
Northampton, MA

Workshops: September, 2001