

# PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY, AND ART

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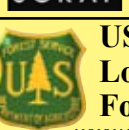
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## This Month's Theme: Nocturnes

### Waking Up Your Night Senses

By Liz Mason Gaspar, Santa Barbara County Parks Dept.

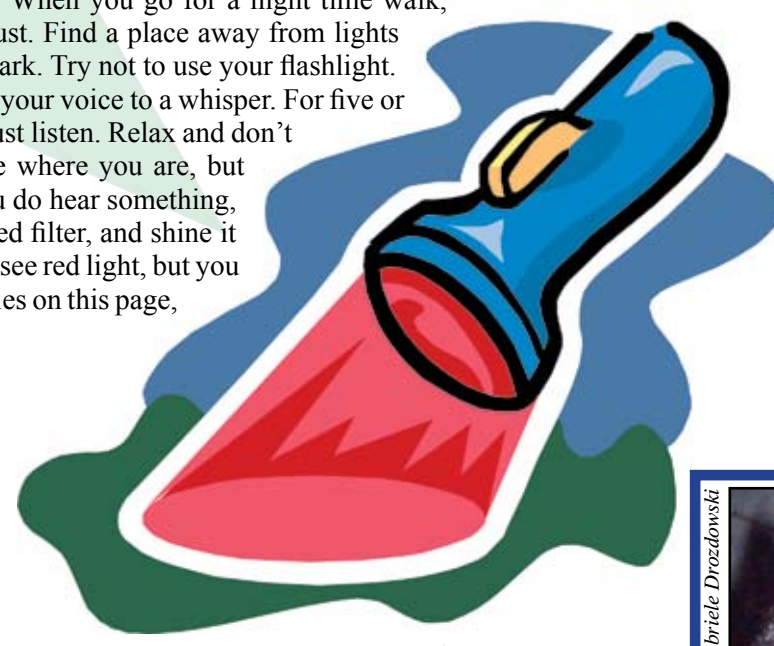
Going outdoors and exploring nature at night awakens our senses and opens us to new experiences. We listen better at night, because we can't see very well. Sounds seem louder at night because the drama of color is gone, and we can focus on listening. Night time brings out many insects and other animals that we don't see during the day. We may not see them at night either, but we can listen for them.

### Night Walk

**Head out with your family and friends after dark.** Bring a small backpack with supplies (see list). Stick together. When you go for a night time walk, take the time to let your eyes adjust. Find a place away from lights and let your eyes get used to the dark. Try not to use your flashlight. Walk quietly like a fox, and lower your voice to a whisper. For five or ten minutes, stand or sit still and just listen. Relax and don't worry — wild animals will sense where you are, but they will want to stay away. If you do hear something, take out your flashlight with the red filter, and shine it toward the sound. Animals cannot see red light, but you might see them. Try out the activities on this page, and enjoy the darkness!

- Where to take a night walk:**
- Your own neighborhood
  - A local trail in the foothills
  - A local campground such as
    - Cachuma Lake
    - Los Padres National Forest
    - El Capitan State Beach
    - Carpinteria State Beach

- Things to bring and wear:**
- A flashlight with red cellophane or a red filter over the light
  - A drawing pad and pencil, paint, or crayons
  - A quiet whispering voice
  - Closed shoes
  - A jacket
  - A grown up or two



### Insect Investigation

- A great way to learn about night time insects is to attract them.** It's very easy to do.
- Tear a page or two from your drawing pad
  - Hold them up, side by side, or hang them on the side of a tree (no nails!), or lay them on the ground
  - Shine your flashlight(s), without the red filter, on the paper for 10 minutes or more
  - The white light will attract a variety of insects.
    - How many different species do you recognize?
    - Is there more than one kind?
    - How many different kinds of moths are there?
    - Beetles?
    - Other winged insects?

### Night Time Animal Scramble

**Nocturnal wildlife can often be heard but not seen.** Here is a list of wildlife you hear or see at night. Unscramble their names and match them to the sounds they may make either with their voices or activities. Not all of them make sounds that you can hear. The answers are below.



- |            |         |
|------------|---------|
| eoytco     | chortle |
| cerseh wlo | bark    |
| nkkus      | clicks  |
| orcacon    | howl    |
| xof        | splash  |
| pumoso     | hoot    |
| eteble     | scratch |
| hmto       |         |
| tapoot ugb |         |

Answers: Coyote, howl; Screech Owl, hoot; Skunk, quiet; Raccoon, splash; Fox, bark; Possum, chortle; Beetle, click; Moth, quiet; Potato Bug, scratch



### Painting the Colors of Night

By Holly Cline, Wildling Art Museum

### Finding Light in the Dark

When artists paint a "nocturne," a work of art dealing with evening or night, they must look carefully for the hints of light hidden in the shadows, sky, and surroundings. Artists must let their eyes adjust to the darkness, so they can see the way the moonlight, starlight, or streetlights reflect off of water or clouds or shine off of leaves and other surfaces.

When you go for a walk at night, take the time to let your eyes adjust, and then look around. Is it completely dark? Can you see any trees, bushes, rocks, or buildings? Why? What is lighting them? Using paint or crayons, see if you can draw the night time scene around you. Look closely for shapes, then color in the lightest areas and the darkest areas.

To see how other artists captured the light in the dark, visit the Wildling Art Museum exhibition, "Nocturnes," through November 16 in Los Olivos.



Page created by Holly Cline, Wildling Art Museum, and Liz Mason Gaspar, Santa Barbara County Parks Dept.

 <b>Marine Science Institute, UCSB</b> 805-893-8765 www.msi.ucsb.edu	 <b>Kids do Ecology</b> National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis 805-892-2500 nceas.ucsb.edu/nceas-web/kids
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