

I was near the outdoor classroom in the forest. The outdoor classroom was old and smelled of grass, there were leaves and grass surrounding it and there was a small green lizard climbing up the side of an empty chalkboard post, it was about a quarter past one so the sun was still peaked in the sky like a vulture searching for its next meal. I was surrounded by trees that seemed to keep going up, dead leaves that crunched loudly when you stepped on them, animals like birds and other insects that would tweet or simply crawl when you walked past them. There were other kids in the class who came out as well to do the same experiments, but some of them were a little too noisy so it was harder to make the observations with them around, but it's fine, their company was nice because then I knew that I was not alone outside, and they most likely made the same observations I did.

When I was outside I observed birds singing and leaves rustling. I smelled trees and fresh air. I saw insects flying around. It surprised me how quiet it got when people stopped talking and started listening to the sounds of nature. It was like a large barrier had divided me and the noise of human life. It was nice outside, a little cold, but it still felt good to sit there and listen to the peaceful noise. As we were listening, I thought "Who knew that a forest behind a school, positioned on the side of a highway, could be so quiet and relaxing."

My observation was interesting to me because I already knew all the noises and life in the outdoor world because I usually spend so much time out there, but this time I saw and smelled different things which you don't always see, I don't usually see many dead leaves because the leaves at my house don't fall on the ground, because they are oak trees and they stay green all the time as well.

My observations make me think about how nature is so peaceful when people are quiet and how even if we do have really good hearing, we still can't hear the birds singing, or the leaves rustling. Some of the organisms in nature can be skittish and not come out when they hear us, but when we are quiet, they seem to think we are gone and start to come out from their hiding places. It also made me wonder about the things in nature that we can't see. I could try to go outside by myself more often and just sit there and listen while I take notes of what I'm hearing, seeing, smelling, and feeling. When I think about other things that are outside, I can't stop thinking about all the organisms that are out of my reach, smell, or sight, like a bird, that may be on a tree behind me that is tweeting, or a flower, just a few feet away.

My experiment will be about animal migration in Texas forests, I will try and learn how different animals migrate and where they migrate to. Do they migrate to different places in Texas, or do they migrate to whole other countries across the

ocean, or, what could be affecting migration? So in the bigger picture, where do animals migrate to, and what might affect their migration?

Interestingly enough, light pollution can interfere with migratory birds, such as the American Robin, Yellow warbler, Swallow-tailed kite, and even bats, causing disorientation during nighttime migration. Air and water pollution, like smoke, toxic waste, landfills, and water contamination can also impact the ecosystems that support migrating animals. Not to mention Urbanization, deforestation, and climate change that can impact natural migration routes. Animals may struggle to find their traditional pathways or stopover points if habitats are destroyed or altered by human development, which is starting to happen more and more. (Shackelford, Rozenburg, Hunter, and Lockwood, [The Migration and Migratory Birds of Texas](#) 2005)