

# Spriggly's Dueling Nature Walk



## Activity Materials:

- Flashlight
- Notebook
- Writing utensil
- Interactive nature walk list (included in full download)
- Camera/phone (optional to take pictures of what you find if desired)

## Take two different nature walks:

1. Preferably one in an undisturbed, natural setting like a hike in a forest (one that gets some sun along the trail is an ideal choice)
2. In a manicured neighborhood, city or town area, or other developed/urbanized area

Discover how different a walk in each of these places can be. Pay attention to the insects, animals, plants, and trees you see. Also pay attention to the sounds in each place. Can hear the nature around you? Birds chirping, wind blowing, bees buzzing? Or do you hear cars, leaf blowers, lawn mowers, and other human-made sounds?

## Nature Walk Checklist

*Check off anything you see - put multiple checks next to the items you see more than once*

- Pollinators and other beneficial animals
  - Bee\_\_\_\_\_
  - Butterfly\_\_\_\_\_
  - Moth\_\_\_\_\_
  - See if you can find the elusive hummingbird clearwing moth - this incredibly fast moving species looks like a cross between a hummingbird or a bee along with maybe a flying crawfish\_\_\_\_\_
  - Wasp\_\_\_\_\_
  - Mimic or Bee Fly\_\_\_\_\_
  - These flies generally can be found hovering around flowers. You can usually tell the difference by looking at the eyes, wings, and legs.
    - Flies have characteristically pronounced compound eyes that sit far more on the top of their heads than bees
    - Flies only have one set of wings, while bees and all insects in the Hymenoptera family (bees, wasps, ants, sawflies) – which all have two sets of wings

- Flies have thin, dainty legs in comparison to bees and they also do not have hairs on their legs like many bees do, called scopa
  - Hummingbird or other birds\_\_\_\_\_
    - Hummingbirds are our only true bird pollinators as they feed on nectar, but most other birds play an essential role in seed distribution and pest control
  - Ants\_\_\_\_\_
  - Salamander or newt\_\_\_\_\_
    - These small lizards visit flowers for either nectar or pollen and will sometimes pollinate when they do
- Standing dead tree or a large stump\_\_\_\_\_
  - Look for holes in a dead standing tree or stump and see if any are plugged with mud or leaves- this is the sign of a wood nesting bee such as a mason bee or leaf cutter bee.
- Fallen dead tree\_\_\_\_\_
  - Look again for the holes above
- Large rocks\_\_\_\_\_
  - If you want to look under a rock, please lift it slowly and carefully and only enough so you can peer under, then slowly place to leave anything below undisturbed and unhurt.
- Peeling bark
  - Take a flashlight and peer behind bark that is peeling off of the tree - you can touch but DO NOT peel the bark back from the tree in order to do this process. See if you can find any trace of animal activity behind the bark or around the tree
- Tall grasses\_\_\_\_\_
- Bare soil\_\_\_\_\_
  - Look for small holes in the ground without an associated ant mound. This is most likely the hole of a solitary and/or gregarious ground nesting bee or wasp
  - Ground nesting solitary bees and wasps either live by themselves, known as solitary, or in a neighborhood of sorts, known as gregarious
    - Gregarious for ground nesting bees generally means there is one entrance to a series of separate nests, similar to a neighborhood with one road and driveways to each of the houses on the road.

