

Nature Notes

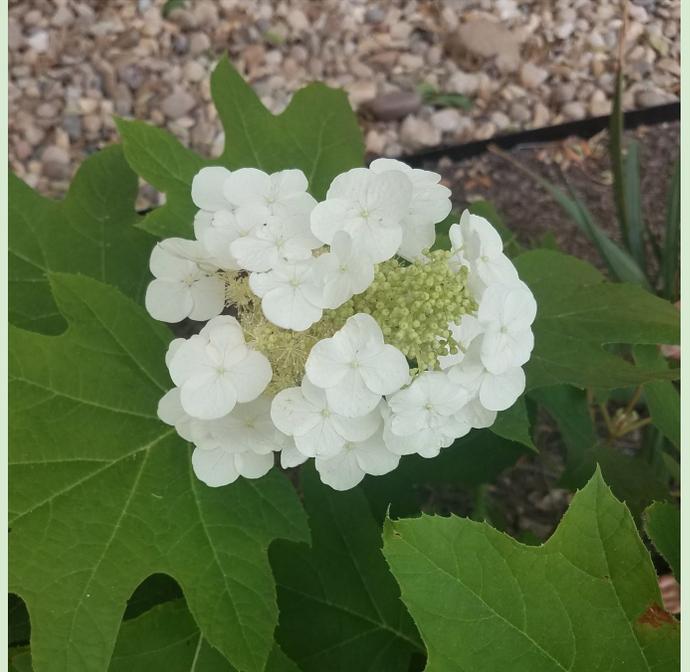
May 7, 2020

A digital journal documenting the search for truth, beauty and goodness in God's lovely creation throughout the diocese of Fort Worth.

I Notice. . .

The Oakleaf Hydrangea is blooming in Mary's Courtyard! Last fall, I was intrigued by the lovely leaf shape of these plants, but the blooms are even prettier! This native Texas shrub provides changing beauty in all four seasons- gorgeous blooms in spring that mature and change color through summer, brilliant leaf colors in autumn, and interesting, cinnamon colored bark in winter time.

Oakleaf hydrangeas also provide pollen for bees, which is an advantage over their non-native cousins.



I notice. . .



Ducklings on our daily walk! We've seen this cute little family twice in a concrete ditch near our home. We have been fascinated by the antics of the mama and babies as they wander along, playing, hiding in shade, and looking for food. Mama duck seems nearly as interested in us. Even though we're a safe distance away, she watches us carefully, cocking her head to one side when we get too noisy. Based on mama's bright blue wing patch, I assume this is a family of mallards. One of my daughters asked about how you tell baby ducks apart since their feathers are all the same colors. I started researching, and found that only female mallards quack. Males make more of a hissing or grunting

noise. So when they're about six weeks old, and learning to make sounds, you can tell girl ducks from boy ducks by sound. How cool is that?

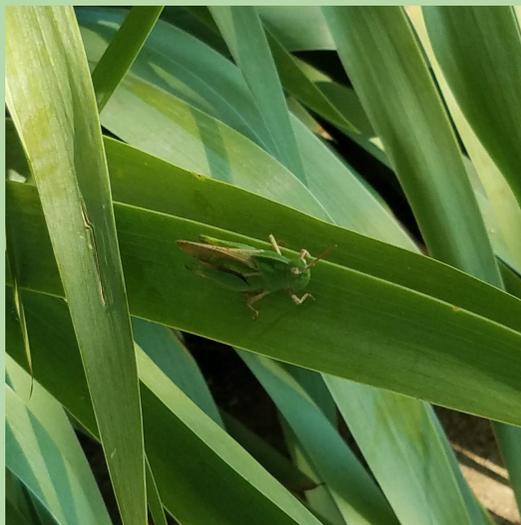
I also learned about feeding ducks. I'm sure we've all taken stale white bread with us to feed the ducks, but did you know that's really bad for them? Too much white bread can even prevent ducks from flying. It's best not to feed ducks at all, but if you must, try fresh romaine lettuce or other veggies. They like fruit too, so long as you avoid citrus.

"If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere"

-Laura Ingalls Wilder

Outdoor Adventures

This grasshopper blended well with the iris leaves along the sidewalk. It took me a while to figure out what kind of grasshopper this is, but I think it's a Northern Green-Striped Grasshopper. Click [here](#) to see a really cool color version. These grasshoppers can change colors to better blend into their surroundings.



Where to find Mrs. Breclaw next week

Exploring nature and beauty from home. Please feel free to email me with any questions you may have, and stay tuned for daily "10 minute nature breaks" to help you through your distance learning

Nolan Outdoor Learning Headquarters

In the office immediately to the left of the teacher boxes in room D22.

Please come by anytime! Let's chat about how we

adventures!

can work outdoor learning into your lesson plans!

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