

Blooming Tales

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illustrations by CARLY LAKE

I recently became an aunt to twins! I'm imagining all the fun I'll have with my new family members, introducing them to nature through many of the activities I've shared with you. I also can't wait to read stories to them. One of those stories will be *Waa'aka': The Bird Who Fell in Love with the Sun*, by Cindi Alvitre with illustrations by Carly Lake. In their book, Alvitre and Lake share a Tongva creation story from Southern California. We learn about Waa'aka', a beautiful bird who loves Tamet, the sun, so much that she wants to fly high in the sky with him. The book follows the journey of creation of plants, birds, and Earth—I highly recommend it!



Many thanks to Cindi and Carly for collaborating on this Kids' Corner! Purchase a copy of *Waa'aka': The Bird Who Fell in Love with the Sun*, at heydaybooks.com.

A Poppy's Journey in a Month

MATERIALS:

- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Drawing supplies
- ✓ Magnifying glass, camera (optional)

We are going to find a California poppy and watch how the plant changes over four weeks. Visit the same poppy or group of poppies each week and follow the prompts below. If you can't find a poppy, look for another wildflower in your yard or close to home, with the help of an adult. Make observations on your paper or nature journal about what looks, feels, and smells different.

PROMPTS:

Week 1: Go outside in your neighborhood, local park, or favorite hiking trail and find a poppy, or any plant that catches your eye. Take notes or photos of the exact spot so you know where to go each week. Note what time of day you visited.

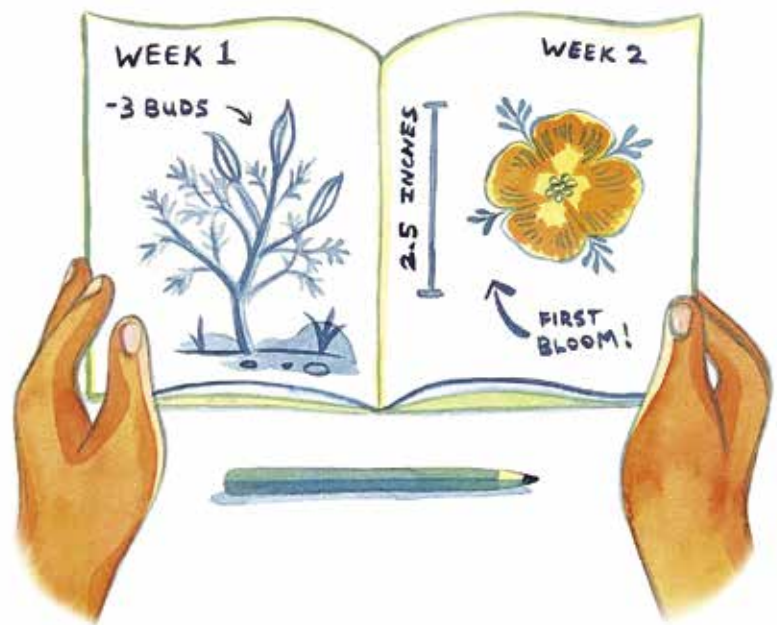
Week 2: Do you notice any changes from the last time you saw it? Try drawing the plant from a different view (from above, below, far away, and up close) and record any changes you see.

Week 3: Record any changes on or around the plant. Has it grown? Do you see any flower buds? Any seeds forming? Carefully draw your plant once more with a different drawing material this time.

Week 4: Draw your plant one more time with another material, color it, and record the changes using your close observation skills. Flip back to your other pages and see how the plant compares to Week 1.

TIPS from Carly Lake:

- Visit your plant at different times of day and weather to see if they affect it at all.
- Slow down when you draw, moving your eyes from the plant to your page and back often. This way you can enjoy the process and notice lots of details!



Storytime

Stories passed on through generations helps us feel connected to our past and culture. Cindi's story features Tongva words that share Tongva culture with younger generations and Californians that call Tovaangar, or Los Angeles, home.

Think about your own family and where they came from. What kind of stories do you know about your family? What stories does your family tell? If you read the book, what similarities can you find?

Let's write our own stories! You can be as creative as you'd like. Here are some ideas. Write a story about:

- The life of a poppy
- A plant you've seen in your observations
- Plant and animal friends
- A nature hike

