

Reading the Earth



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Class Layout

- Class met twice each week
- We observed three times outside of class
- We observed on and off campus, alone and in groups

Map of our Observations

Learning to Observe

- We read excerpts from Thoreau, Dillard, Darwin, etc.
- We peer-edited and revised our journals
- We posted our journal entries on Moodle

Class Fieldtrips

The Connecticut River



Class Fieldtrips



The Mill River

Class Fieldtrips

Fitzgerald Lake



Ways of Recording

Text

Sept. 14, 2008, 1:08 PM – Alumnae House Garden – EF

“On one white flower, the beads of moisture appear iridescent, a trick caused by the crystal clear water’s rounded shape over the pristine white petals. More drops of water cling to the bottom of the flower, whose delicate head bows with the weight. They look as if they could drop off at any moment, but in fact remain quite still, suspended somehow from the flower’s underside in a gravity-defying feat.”

Text

*Sept. 25, 2008, 5:30 PM –The trail left of the
bridge and near the gym – OG*

“A piece of a cherry tree’s trunk lies on the edge
of the stream in the water. I can tell it is a
cherry because its remaining bark is
horizontally striped, with an orange undertone
beneath.”

Text

Oct. 3, 2008, 12:43 PM – Barrett Street Marsh.

Cloudy and cool today. – BP

“The cattail heads are mostly seeded, losing the shreds of cottony white fluff that my sister and I used to collect in winter from our childhood pond. I remember it always clung to our mittens, and from there to our noses and mouths and eyes; but forgetting this, we would be back to collect more every year, loving the silky texture.”

Text

Nov 15, 2008, 9:30 AM –Child's Park, a misty but warm morning – CL

“At first, the dark pond appears to host no life. I am hesitant about saying this because I usually turn out to be mistaken, but after many minutes of waiting, I feel confident I will find no life here. However, while watching the droplets fall from the bare branches above and creating ripples in the water below, I finally notice a tiny black fish about an inch long, meandering just under the surface.”

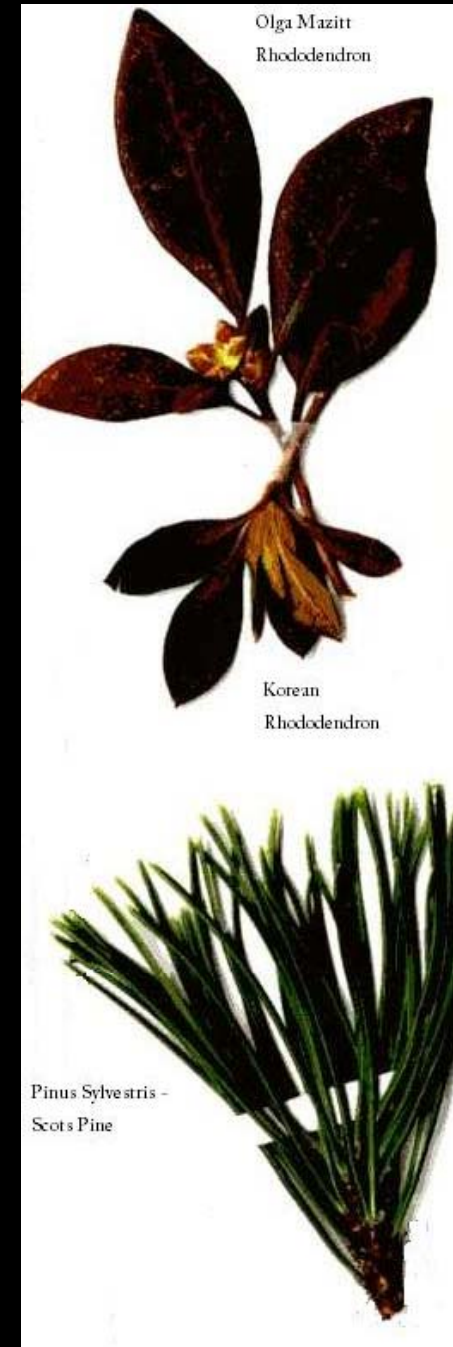
Text

Dec 7, 2008, 4:25 AM — In front of JMG – WP

“The campus is incredibly silent. Fresh snow blankets the ground, looking like frosting on a cupcake. A faint glow fills the air from light reflecting off the snow crystals, and the air, while frigid, feels warmer than it did before the snow came. This is the first real snow and for the first time it feels truly like winter.”

Samples

Samples of Korean Rhododendron and Scots Pine – AK



Photos



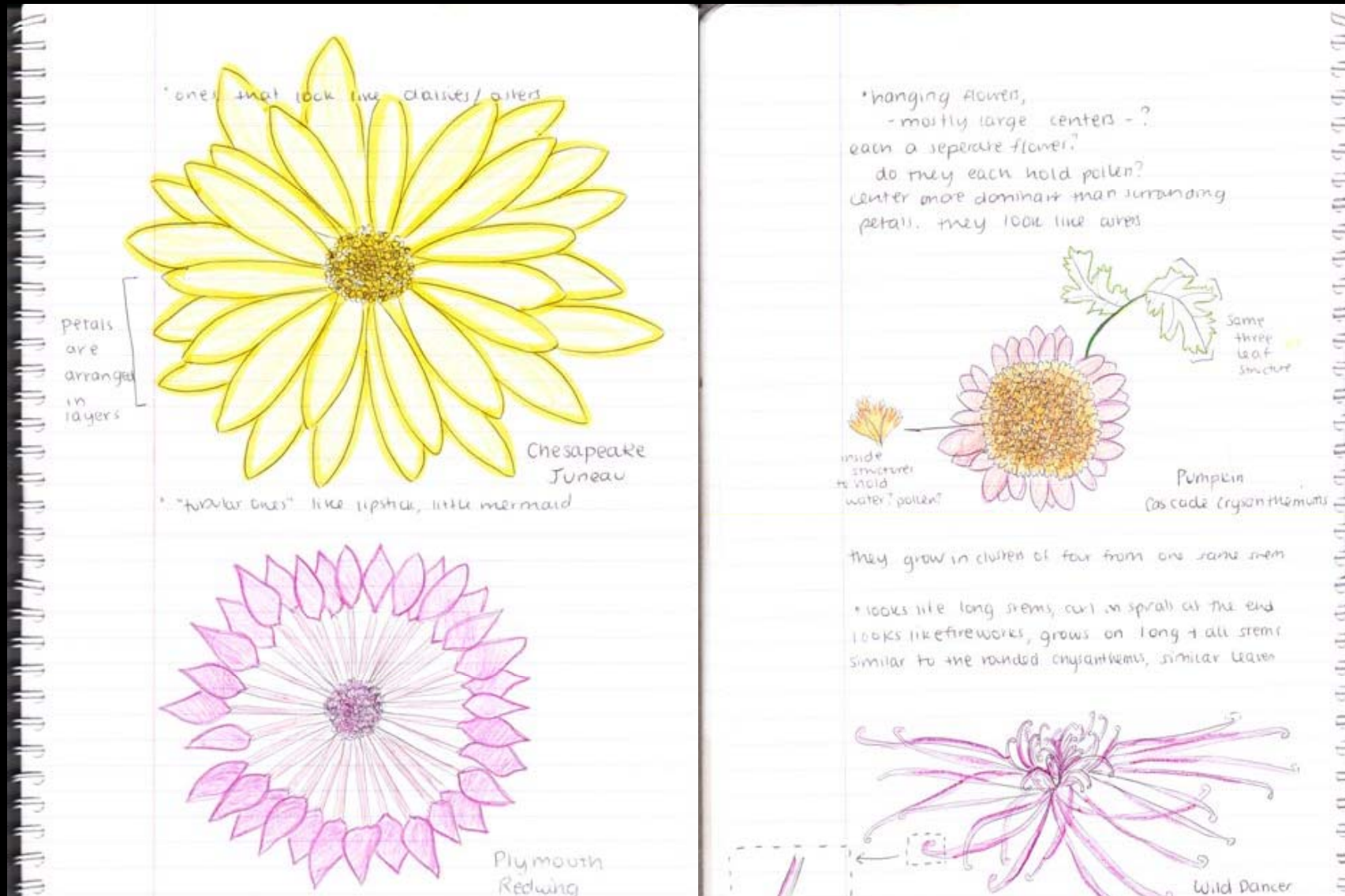
Campus leaves – *GA*

Photos

Photograph taken by
Phoebe Camilletti



Sketches

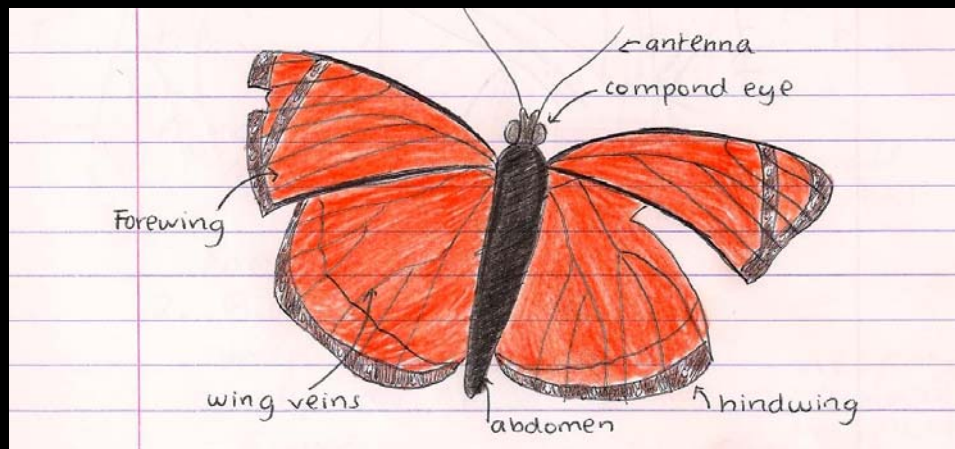


Mum Show Sketches – KB

Photos to Sketches



Monarch
Butterfly – *KB*



The Group: A Diversity of Interests

- Students in this class came from California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Nebraska, and New Jersey.
- For our final project, we created individual projects on our areas of interest. Topics ranged from medicinal plants along the Mill River to educating third graders on nature.