**Eco-Art**

**What is Eco-Art?**

Eco-art is any art created with natural items, typically with the idea of impermanence - the idea that the art is not meant to last forever. Eco-art is created with anything you can find outdoors and can be made anywhere! The art is meant to change with the seasons, or be reconstructed and made again if in an indoor setting.

**Who can make eco-art?**

Everyone! There is no need for previous art experience to make your own eco-art.

**What is used to make eco-art?**

 Anything natural that you find outdoors! Our educators love using leaves, sticks, rocks, mud, snow, and flowers. Just remember to use the 1:15 rule when picking anything alive. You can use one item for every 15 of it that you see growing naturally! We recommend trying to find as many fallen or dead items as you can to protect our ecosystem.

Check out examples from both famous and novice eco-artists on the next page!
Andy Goldsworthy (British, born 1956)

One of the most famous eco-artists, Andy Goldsworthy uses natural materials to create beautiful works of art in nature. Andy photographs each work of art, but leaves them all to change and disintegrate with the seasons.
Robert Smithson (1938-1973)

Smithson was an American sculptor known for land art with a strong underlying theme of geology and ecology. One of his most famous pieces can be found right here in Utah at the Great Salt Lake! The Spiral Jetty is a 1500 ft long spiral created from local rocks and mud. It becomes submerged at times and is a good indicator of lake levels.
Nancy Holt was an artist fascinated with space, the earth, and the sky. One of her most famous pieces is found here in Utah in the Great Basin Desert! The Sun Tunnels are a unique art project composed of four tunnels laid out in an X shape, each drilled with holes to pattern constellations. Two of the tunnels align with the setting and rising sun during the summer solstice; the other two line up during the winter solstice.
You!

Now you get to to be the artist! While many of the examples above are large projects completed over many years, you can take some of the same inspiration to make your own eco-art creations right in your backyard or local space!
Nature Walk

The first step to making eco-art is collecting supplies. Explore your yard, walk around your neighborhood, or visit a local park to find art supplies. Remember the rules of sustainable collecting. If appropriate, go off the beaten path to find items others haven't touched or stepped on. It is always a good idea to wash hands after collecting eco-art supplies.

Games and Activities

Creating eco-art is a group or a solo activity, but if you and your family are having a hard time getting the creativity flowing, or want to mix it up, here are a few games you can try!

Silent Building: Sit with a partner with your collected items in front of you. Silently choose who will go first and take turns creating something together in silence! Each person may place up to three items on the creation during each turn. Silently decide when you think your creation is done!

Group build: If you have a large group, place all of the items in the middle and all build a creation together! You can make this more challenging by applying rules to the group build, such as each item must touch two others, items must be placed on top of another item, only red items can be next to yellow items...etc.

Secret build: Grab a partner and sit back to back with piles of materials in front of each of you. Make sure you have similar items in each of your piles. Choose one person to be the creator and the other to be the copier. The creator describes what they are doing as they build, while their partner tries to copy their build - all without looking! The creator needs to be as descriptive as possible. When you are finished, face each other and see if your creations match! Take turns playing each role.
What do you see in this squiggle? An animal? A landscape? An ice cream cone? Use markers, paints, or crayons to add to this design! This is a great exercise to get creativity flowing and put you in an artistic mood for eco-art.