Published | Edit

This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible

due Oct 20

10 47

Journal Part I

Keeping a journal of your ideas, images, sensations, experiences, sketches, and proposals will be an ongoing part of the studio. The sit-spot practice is a core component of the journal. We will engage in a regular practice of sitting, observing, and witnessing our environments, our response to them, and our growing awareness of them and the changes that transpire over time. In addition to this sensory attunement, we will consciously cultivate gratitude as a practice of acknowledging and reveling in the joy of innumerable gifts. As Joanna Macy writes, gratitude for the gift of life "can make us more fully present to our world, jolting us awake to our own aliveness, and charging our will with the possibilities of choice."

There are four parts to the Journal Entry:

1. Sit-Spot Practice. Begin your regular sit-spot practice (at least 2x/week, more if you can). Duration is especially important at first as you learn to tune into your environment and, in doing so, tune in to yourself. Regularity is key in order to go deeper and to witness subtle changes.

2. Content.
a. Please note that your entries will be available to other members of the class.
b. Your journal entries should include reflections on: i) your sit-spot; ii) land you are on; iii) ideas you're absorbing from course material.
c. Your reflections may take any concrete form: words, images, sculptural objects, performance, a combination...
d. Please include a short textual expression.

I highly recommend that you write your journal as a reflection after your sit-spot practice, rather than during the practice, as the journaling process will distract you from tuning-in as deeply as possible. That said, if the process of sketching, etc. helps you tune-in to your environment, then by all means do so!

3. Submission. Submit your journal entry here in this Discussion by clicking "Reply." You may write text directly here or you cut-and paste from a word-processor (recommended). If you prefer to work in a paper journal or other non-digital medium, you may photograph or scan those materials and upload them into the body of journal entry.
Click "Post Reply" to submit your entry.

If you are writing by hand, please make sure your writing is easily legible and that your photo or scan looks good. Please do not attach journal entries. Please upload them as images into the body of your discussion entry.

4. Peer Reviews. Provide feedback on two journal entries (more if you like), preferably before the next studio meeting. Spread the love! Make sure that everyone receives at least two peer replies before you add more to an entry that already has received feedback from two peers. Your feedback should include all three of the following types of response:
a) at least one aspect of the journal entry that you liked and why you liked it;
b) a genuine and useful question about the entry;
c) a comment relating the entry to something else, either from the course or from your own knowledge and experience.
Note: The assignment is not complete until you have been submitted peer reviews. All assignments must be complete to pass the course.

Search entries or author | Unread | Subscribed

Reply

Makenzie Fry (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/53755)

Oct 19, 2023

Caws, croaks, chirps, and trills

The breeze brings the birds calls to me

In a breath we sigh together, I am calm

The drip of dew drops in the cool morning air,

The start of the day, crisp and bare,

Drops drip from the trees

Blown down by the breeze

I long for this mist to last forever more

The rumble, roar, and groan of machines

Interrupts the quiet and calm

I hope for peace but it’s just out of reach

Stolen by the makings of man

The smell of smoke is in the air,

The haze is tinged with nostalgia

Like camping and cooking fires,

But something is burning, and it’s me

I spy a spider spinning its web

To capture critters to prey upon,

The light hit it just right

And I could see the beauty in the death trap

There’s too much noise in the quiet

The nonstop commotion of my thoughts,

I hear my breath and feel my heartbeat

I’m distracted by myself

Reply

(http

Veyd Yewle (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/56382)

Oct 20, 2023

Hi Makenzie, I really enjoyed reading your journal, even though it doesn't specifically point out where/what your sit-spot is, it is still very descriptive and I could feel what you wrote. Though I wonder what the place is you are writing of, I too don't feel like directly naming or alluding to what my sit-spot is/was in my journal entry.

Reply

(http

Rei Jin (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/43773)

Oct 22, 2023

Hi Makenzie!

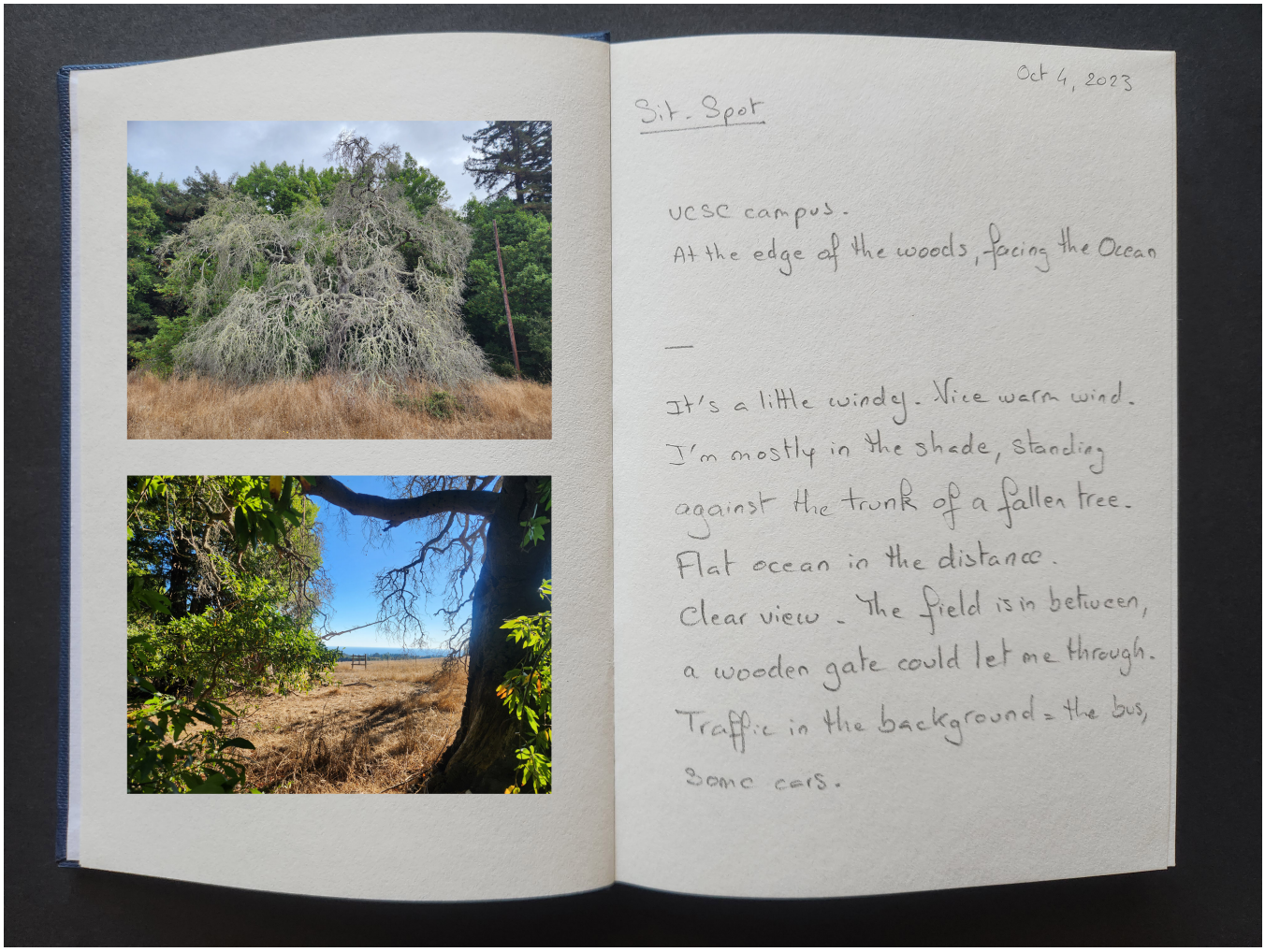
I really like your poem, it really brings me into your feelings when you are in your sitting spot. I especially love this line, "And I could see the beauty in the death trap". I'm very curious about where your sitting spot is because you can hear so many different sounds there, from humans, and from nature.

Reply

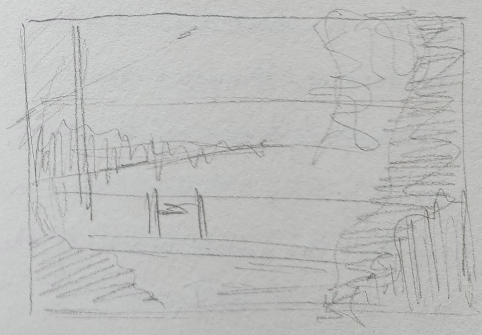
(https:/

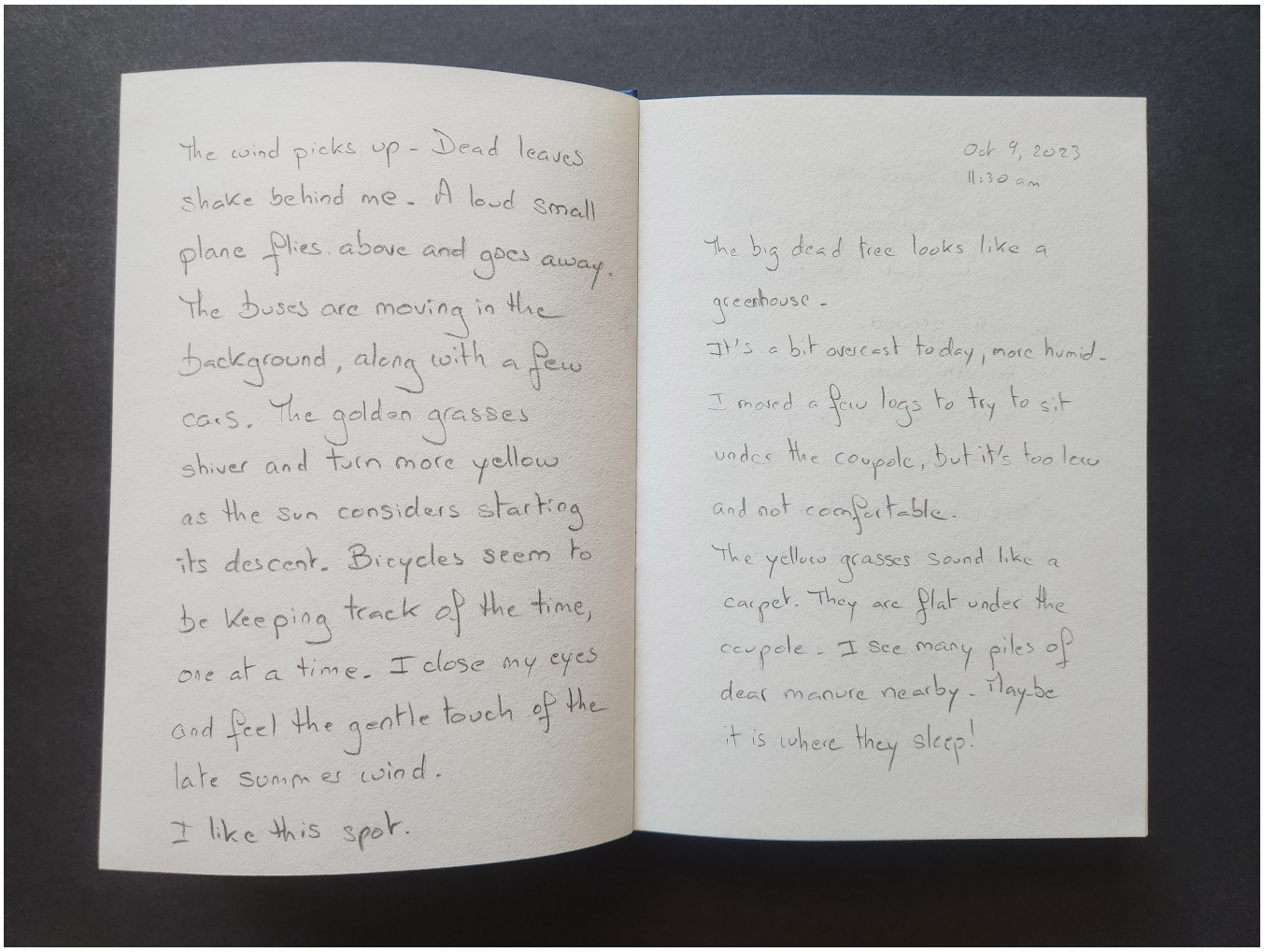
Astrid Chevallier (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/101816)

Oct 20, 2023



One big bird signals my presence. Two smaller birds converse. The bay leaves chimer gently. Insects fly around. Some kind of bees? No, wasps. "Bzzz" as one flies by my ear.
Someone else just sat on the other end of the trunk I'm standing against. I felt the movement. I'm adjusting my stance, some wood cracks under my feet. Bicycles travel through the Preserve, their glide echoes the dance of the wasps.
There's an old telephone or electric pole right there. It looks very straight compared to the curvy lines of the old oak that provides shade for me.
Green, gold, dark green, and blue.





The wind picks up - Dead leaves shake behind me. A loud small plane flies above and goes away. The buses are moving in the background, along with a few cars. The golden grasses shiver and turn more yellow as the sun considers starting its descent. Bicycles seem to be keeping track of the time, one at a time. I close my eyes and feel the gentle touch of the late summer wind.
I like this spot.

Oct 9, 2023
11:30 am

The big dead tree looks like a greenhouse -
It's a bit overcast today, more humid -
I moved a few logs to try to sit under the coupole, but it's too low and not comfortable.
The yellow grasses sound like a carpet. They are flat under the coupole - I see many piles of deer manure nearby - Maybe it is where they sleep!

I try to sit again under the coupole that tree has no leaves left but the branches look like lace erecting from the ground.
On the other side, behind me, the bay leaves are very green A bird silently landed on top of a tree above the electric pole. A few bay leaves have turned yellow, some are rust, and some are dead, brown, and dry. I collected a few samples.
There's a couple of very stange insects on the leaves: half a sphere, shinny blue black color, like a metalid liquid...

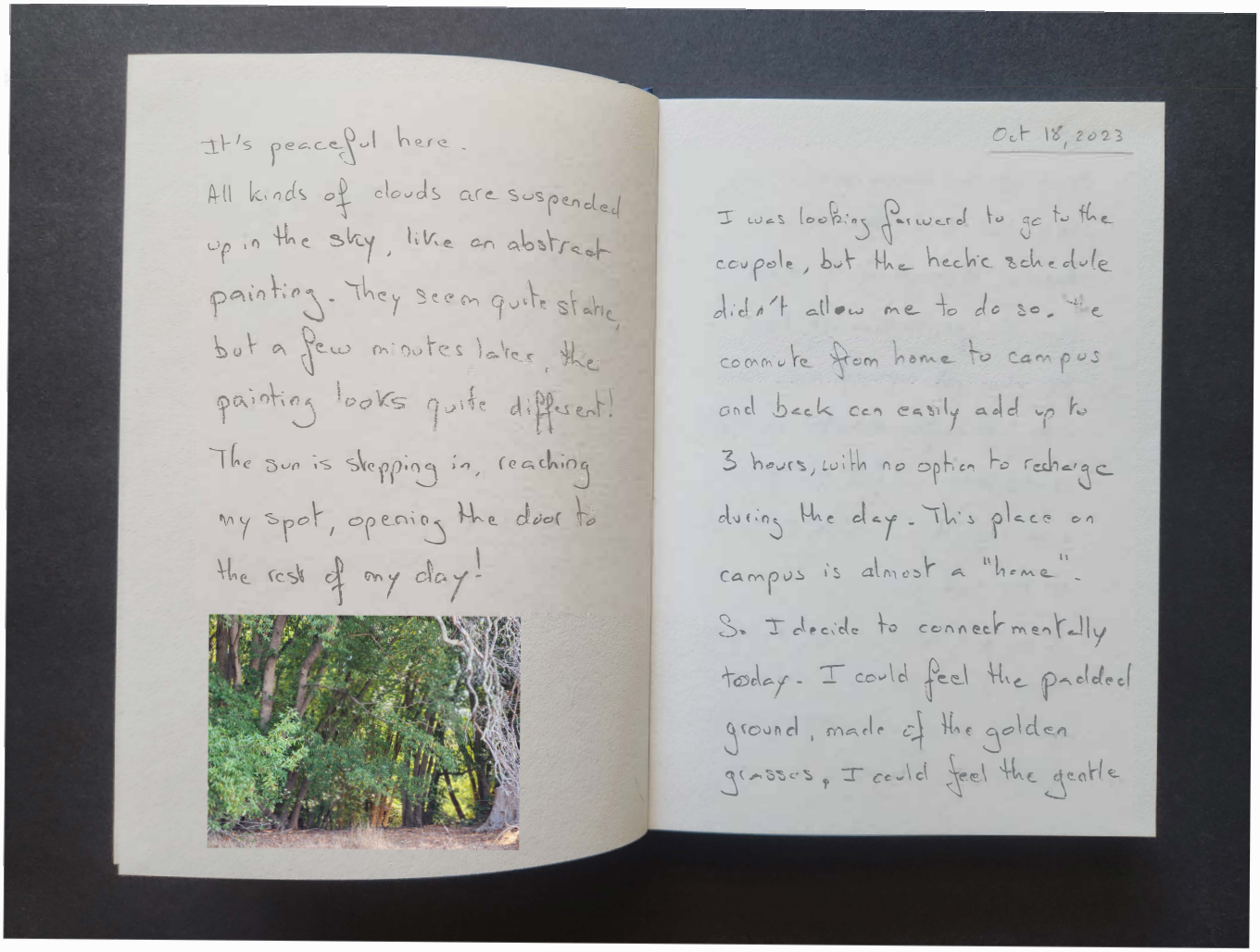
The bay leaves
are changing colors

Wild Turkey
under feathers

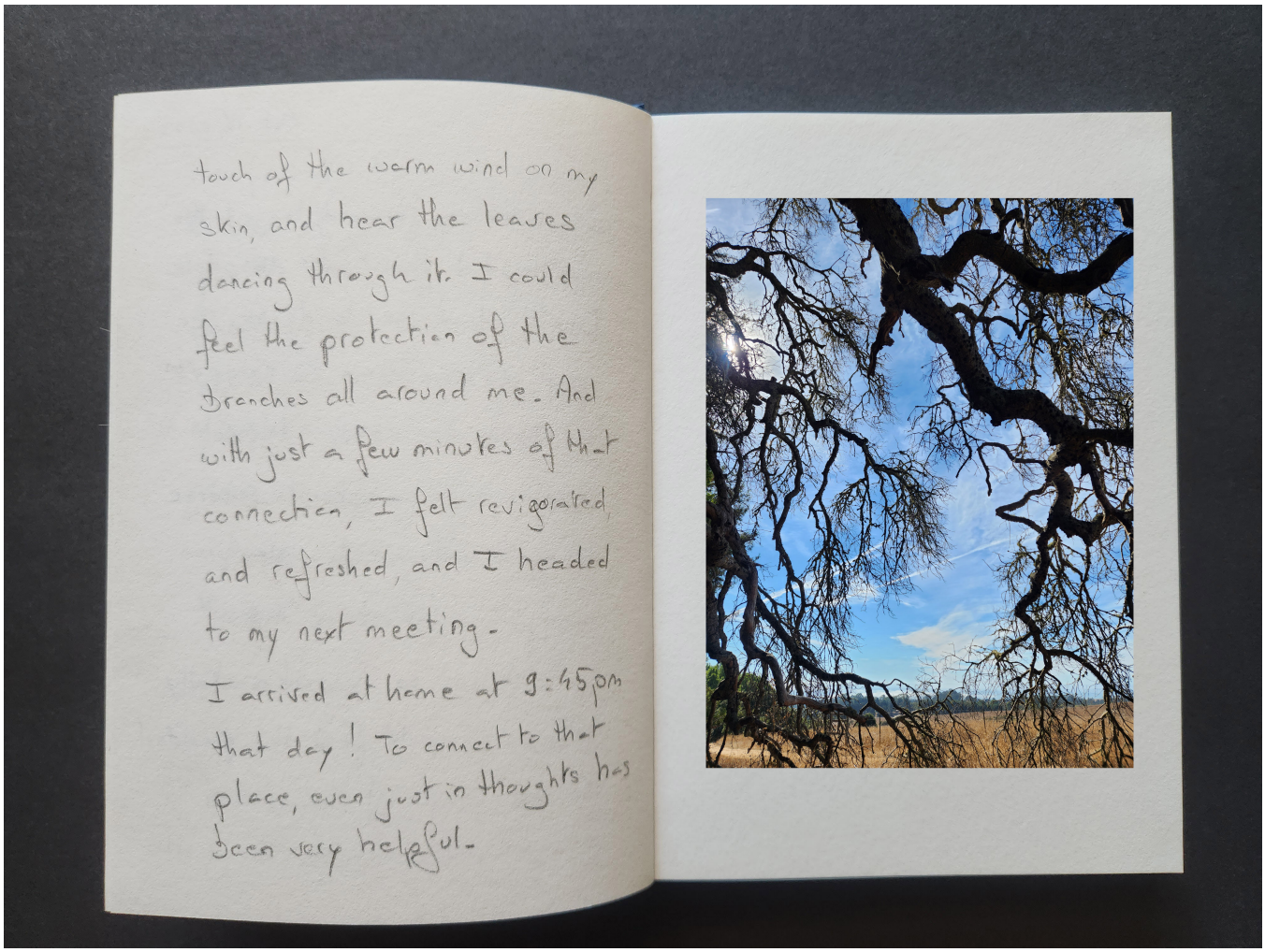
Oct 16, 2023
11:10 am

Arriving at the coupole, I dropped my bags, just like I do at home! At first glance, everything is how it was like the last time I was here.
The wind makes the leaves move gently, which produces a nice welcoming music, like a soft chime. The cars I can hear in the background seem to belong to another world.

The ocean is covered with a bright layer of clouds, which makes it hard to decide where to place the horizon line.
A very loud bird almost above me has a conversation with a friend much further away. He switches trees a couple of times, makes something fall on the ground.
The light is filtered by the leaves in the forest behind the electric pole, and some trunck get a very warm reflecting light
A woodpecker!
"Pok . pok". "Pok - pok - pok - pok"
"Por . pok . pok."
A a crow on the other side
"Crow, crow, crow"
Some much more discreets smaller birds chat in the background.
Smaller noises appear as well : little cracks, nutty sounds, mini - steps_
The sounds of my pencil on the paper starts to blend in...



Astrid,
Lovely reflections in your journal. I appreciate you close attention to your surroundings and the way that you are communing with your sit-spot. I'm so glad that you have been regularly communing with your "coupole" and that it has had such a positive, calming effect. I like some of the very cheerful closing words in your entries.
I wonder if you would consider trying to focus more on how you feel; to place less emphasis on observing the qualities of the site and more on observing what you are feeling inside in relation to the site. I know that your feelings are intense and that you are feeling raw, so maybe this is not the right time for that, or maybe it can help with your healing process.



Reply

(http

Veyd Yewle (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/56382)

Oct 20, 2023

Hello Astrid, I really love the documentation of your sit spot, you were very creative in your presentation. You provided so much in your words and inclusion of visual imagery and location. I think the journal looks nice as a whole too, and very cohesive with the drawings of the place, pictures of it, and real life leaves you picked up from there.

Reply

(http

Makenzie Fry (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/53755)

Oct 20, 2023

I love the variety of media in your journal, with writing, drawings, photos, and materials found at your sit-spot. How have you found the experience has been for you so far, are you enjoying your spot or wondering if you could find another? keep up the good work with your journals!

Reply

(http

Annalie Taylor (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/75736)

Oct 20, 2023

Astrid, your journal is truly inspiring and gives me some good ideas about integrating more mediums. I saw one of those liquid metal bugs when we were at Pogonip and found it so fascinating! I also really like the way you write, tuning into all of the senses and your experiences.

Reply

(http

Mary Anderson (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/85884)

Oct 20, 2023

Hi Astrid,

I loved reading your entry. Your observations are keen and refreshing. I enjoyed your inclusion of physical bay leaves that show the changing of the seasons. I admire that you connect to that place even if you're not physically there.

Reply

(http

Katie Edwards (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88984)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Astrid! I love the way you organized your journal entry, it's very aesthetically pleasing. More specifically, I like how you incorporated physical objects like leaves & feathers into your entry. I think the photographs you took capture the essence of your sit-spot beautifully, well done :)

Reply

(http

Olivia Trejo (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/68988)

Oct 29, 2023

Hi Astrid, I love how in depth you got with your journal! It feels really whole and complete. I like that you were asking questions in your journal, you picked a really good sit spot!

Reply

(https:/...

Arlo Reilly (*he, him, his, his, himself*) (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/54152)

Oct 20, 2023

Day 1:
I have found my sit spot:
The west wind hits the cliff and runs up to greet me where I sit in the ice plant.
I can smell the ocean on the breath of the wind.
The sun stays warm but never hot.
The Cormorants use the waves as take-off ramps.The wind is offshore today.

Day 2:
The sand has mixed with the dirt and is soft between my toes.
It is foggy today.
I can't tell why the fog fears the Valley that holds Waddell Creek.
Like a thin vale, the fog hides the waves down the cliff, like the misty glass of a shower door.

Day 3:
The moon shines as if it were impersonating the sun.
The air is warm, almost like it is trying to remember the day.
Without the light, everything seems like it's trying to be quiet.
Even the waves seem like they are taking a break till morning.
The pelicans fly higher than they do in the day.
They move like they are going home past curfew.

Arlo, I really like the directness of your short poetic lines, which are like individual bursts that cohere together in interesting ways that are nonlinear. I appreciate your close observation of your sit-spot and your lovely photos of it. I wonder if you would consider trying to focus more on how you feel; to place less emphasis on observing the qualities of the site and more on observing what you are feeling inside in relation to the site. Just a thought...

Day 4:
A bug has left its prints in the dirt next to me.
I hear the sound of saws at the mill.
The sounds fight against the wind till they reach my ears.
The long interval South West swell is filling in.
I have to call my uncle.
A seal jumps

Day 5:

There must be a road closure up north because the cars will come in intervaled caravans from that direction.
Paragliders set up their "gliders?" I wonder what the birds think of them.
The combo swell is peaking today, or at least that is what it looks like.
I wonder how many animals use the trail below me.
The seals are very active today, jumping in and out of the water like a needle hemming pants.

Day 6:

I was wrong; the swell is still growing.
Everything seems like it feels like the excitement.
The wind has washed away the bugs' trail.
I wonder if it needed its trail to find its way back to where it was.
I feel delighted today.
A pod of dolphins jumps as they move south.

Reply

(http

Annalie Taylor (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/75736)

Oct 20, 2023

Arlo, your writing is so poetic, and I really enjoyed reading it. I appreciate how you have kept your entries concise, and you make every word count. You've included experiences from different times of day and weather, which is really lovely, too. Thank you for sharing.

Reply

(http

Mary Anderson (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/85884)

Oct 20, 2023

Hi Arlo,

I love the spaciousness of Waddell Creek- excellent choice for your sit spot. I think it's cool that you went there during the day and the night, your photo of the moon and the ocean is fantastic. I feel fortunate when I see a pod of dolphins- glad you got to see them.

Reply

(http

Katie Edwards (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88984)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Arlo, I really enjoyed reading your entry. That photo you captured of the ocean at night is absolutely breathtaking! I'd love to see a photo of your sit-spot early in the morning when the sun is rising and the marine layer rolls in.

Reply

(https:/

Samuel Cope (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/55547)

Oct 20, 2023

My sit spot is a bench at the top of the hill near the road halfway between Rachel Carson college and Oakes college. I thought initially about somewhere more immediately associated in my mind with nature - the Porter Meadows, or somewhere deeper in the woods, but both of those options would be far away enough to be out of comfort to get to, and I wanted the spot to be as accessible as possible. And in truth, this spot is no less in touch with nature than either of the others. It's the dry brushlands, the chaparral that so much of California's hills are covered by. The road is near, but not so near as to be a disturbance, visual or auditory. Clearly

nature is unperturbed by it - no more than 15 minutes after getting here, I can see a group of three deer to my left. Two are grooming each other, licking at each other's fur, while the other simply grazes. I wonder if one is a faun, the child of the other, but if it is it has grown enough since spring that they are indistinguishable in size. A rabbit has joined them now, sprung up from some unseen burrow, and it sits no further than three feet from its visitors, surveying its domain. I'm grateful that this somewhat well-trodden path hasn't seen any other students in the time I've been here, who surely would've chased away my company. The soil here is a ruddy orange, with streaks of a darker red in places. The stones are interesting, too - I've found agates in the similar clay of the meadows just up the road from here, after the rains last year, and here I can see glimmers of quartz peeking out from its earthen bed. I'll be sure to come here when first it rains, and see what has been etched from the soil.

In class today we went to the prayer garden in the Pogonip reserve. I'd never been before - in truth, I've been somewhat lacking in my exploration of the areas surrounding the school. I've been to the arboretum, but that's about it. I found the prayer garden to be a very tranquil place, the winding corridors between lines of stones and tall pillars stacked such that they looked as though they might fall any minute, a good place to sit and absorb your surroundings. I was glad for the coolness of the first fall air, the rain of leaves that fell with each passing gust of wind, the language that the air spoke as it passed through the trees, the sound of it like a coming rain on the horizon.

I must admit, though, that the structure of reflection upon nature in this class is not one that comes easily. There is a conflict, to me, between listening for a long time to one person speak about connecting with the cosmos and actually doing so yourself. I am no stranger to connection with nature and the world as a whole - I readily and frequently immerse myself in it. As an artist, it is my greatest inspiration. But to me, to speak of grandiose and incalculable connection, of the universe as a whole (how can one even think to attempt to summarize it, to understand it), only furthers separation. It's why spiritualizing nature has always alienated me. It seems to me that to call the earth Bodhisattva, or to call it a creation of God, to see a falling leaf and call it a response from some greater will to words spoken in one small clearing in the woods, is to see the beauty of the world around us and say, "There must be more. There must be reason, there must be order, there must be something beyond what I see before me, that ties it all together." To say such a thing in the same moment as saying that we as humans should not view ourselves as separate to, as superior to, nature as a whole, rings to me as hypocrisy, and the greatest of human urges.

I'm at my sit spot again. It's smoky today, from prescribed burns we were warned of, but the warning offers no comfort to my short breath and scratching throat. My mind is on that cycle of destruction, the fire the land here is more familiar to than we like to think. I've seen more hummingbirds today than any other day so far this year, flitting about and chasing each other with playful song. The bees and butterflies, too, seem plentiful, humming along merry breezes that bring upon them soot that glides alongside the pollinators working at their craft.

There are hawks in Australia that bring burning branches to grasslands, lighting brushfires to drive mice and other prey out of their cover, so that the predator may feast. It was thought an Aboriginal myth until only a few years ago, when the behavior was first observed. The fires sear the landscape, scouring it of weaker shrubs and bushes, the hardy trees surviving. Within a year, the blackened soil is lush with wildflowers and grasses, a biodiversity renewed where monocultures once thrived. Our own chaparrals are not so different.

And so on this smoky day, the wind bringing me the scent of burning grasses, I think of wildflowers. I watch the bees follow silken trails of nectar's scent through ashen air. I look through clouded skies to where the bay glimmers, across rolling hills of grass that is brown but not gray. And I breathe as deep as I can muster.

Reply

Olivia Trejo (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/68988)

Oct 20, 2023

Sam,
I think I understand what you mean about what you refer to as the conflict in talking about nature and the unity of all things, about how the very act of doing so reinstantiates a difference and a distance between the speaker (and listeners) and the unity that is being spoken about. I'm regret that you feel alientated by the manner in which I attempt to offer a framework of understanding that opposes the prevailing anthropocentrism of conventional forms of knowledge production that are tantamount to the colonization of nature, and to offer a way of thinking about unity that is heart-centered,rather than in the more rational/analytic mode of traditional academicism. I would like to think that my approach to offer alternative ways of understanding employs much more than words and that you are able to sense, feel, and absorb the poetry, the performativity, the conviction, the quality of being, and other qualities that are perhaps more important than the words. I would be grateful if you can share suggestions for how I can do so in a way that is more effective for your learning.

Also, I wonder if you would consider using a different word than "hypocrisy", which I understand to have a distinctly negative connotation. When I read that word in your entry, I felt that you were imposing a judgment on me and my teaching. That's completely your prerogative. However, by imposing a judgment on another being and its actions, are you not creating both a separation and a hierarchy of values? I value discernment very highly and attempt to cultivate it in myself and my students. But is there not is a difference between discernment and judgment? To observe as you did a "conflict," I consider to be an observation of discernment. To call something hypocritical goes beyond discernment to judgement. As humans, our bodies and minds have both tremendous possibilities and tremendous limitations. In part, it may be the limits of language - at least the English language - that struggles to articulate unity in a way that is not awkward and in tension with the idea itself. To attempt to do the impossible because it is seems vitally important to try is at the root of mythologies of many, if not all, human cultures. I'd be happy to discuss further with you if you like. I wonder if you would consider trying to focus more on how you feel; to place less emphasis on observing the qualities of the site and more on observing what you are feeling inside in relation to the site. Just a thought...

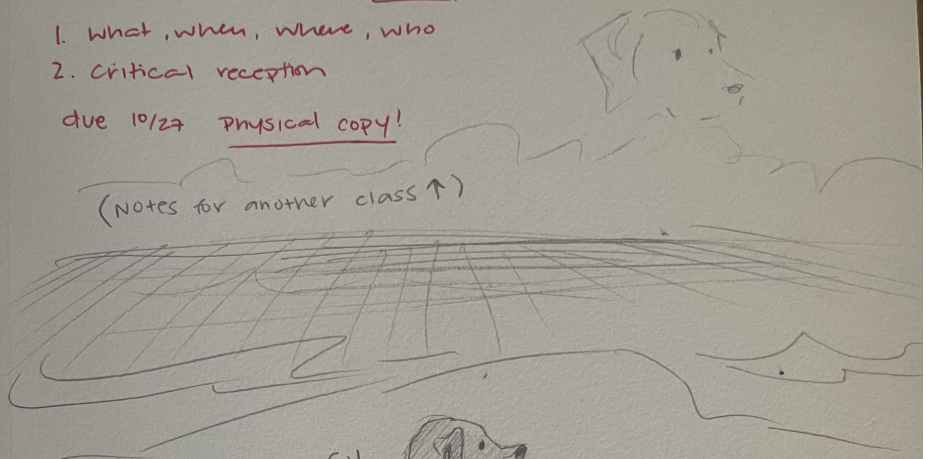
Also, I wonder if you would consider trying to focus more on how you feel; to place less emphasis on observing the qualities of the site and more on observing what you are feeling inside in relation to the site. Just a thought...

PRODUCTION HISTORY 10/13

1. what, when, where, who
2. critical reception

due 10/27 physical copy!

(Notes for another class ↑)



very quiet & peaceful for the most part

super clear day, a bit wind & cold (loved it)

10/17/23

I collected sand & rocks for project 1

Nessie found a good stick that I left for another dog

Kind of regretting bringing Nessie to the beach. There were a lot of off-leash dogs that came up to her that she had big reactions to...

Reply

Hi Oliva, I like your drawing of Nessie and what you wrote. I would like your journals to demonstrate a more consistent practice of tuning into your sit-spot and tuning into yourself. What you provided did not accomplish that.

(http

Chanel Chavira (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88486)

Oct 20, 2023

Hi Olivia,

I really enjoyed your sketches, especially of your dog. They're very cute! I know that it's always nice for dogs to also get fresh air and get to around. Were the sand and rocks useful for your project?

Edited by Chanel Chavira (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88486) on Oct 20 at 8:12pm

Reply

(http

Miku Suzuki (*she, her, her, hers, herself*) (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70368)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Olivia,

I love your sketch of your dog and the beach. The weather looks really nice, it definitely looks peaceful at the beach. You told me about your project 1 in class last week and I'm excited to see how you use rocks and sand from the beach for your artwork!

Reply

(http

Carolee Hagey (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/89269)

Oct 26, 2023

Hi Olivia,

I love the sketch of Nessie! She's so cute. My dogs also react badly to other dogs, which does not help anyone relax. Is this a beach near Davenport? It looks beautiful!

Reply

(https:/

Carolee Hagey (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/89269)

Oct 20, 2023

Day 1 - I had trouble picking one when trying to think of a sit spot. I love to Go and try and find a new place to get reset. I've done this for a while, but a vital component of this practice was always the place being new. I hadn't been somewhere, but I had to give that up for this exercise.

I had to repeatedly go back to the same spot, which is small in reality. It's easy to go to one place that you know it's harder to find a new place every time and go somewhere, and yet I try to have, for the sake of some level of comfort, always picked the new location.

So, after a lot of thought and a few different visits, I found the place where I felt the most comfortable, the most able to sit, and the most willing to be. Thanks to my friend Sarah, I now get to sit at a lovely beach near Davenport. If no one ever comes here, it's through a whole bunch of tall grass, spiky thorns, a small canyon, and a terrifying rope ladder at the end.

Day 2 - The waves were furious today. Almost no sand on the entire beach was dry. I could only sit briefly before the waves came and tried to take my blanket. But to continue the exercise, I explored the shoreline for a bit. The strong waves reshaped the sand banks quite a bit compared to last time but revealed a new selection of rocks, shells, and sea glass. My favorite of these are the shells. I found a few beautiful light pink ones. The only shells I decided to keep were ones with boring sponge damage because these are unusable to future smalls & mollusks looking for new homes. This can be seen as a pattern of holes on the sides of the shells.

Carolee, I appreciate your thoughtful observations and your sensitivity to the sea creatures who might be affected by taking their future homes. My favorite part of your journal is when you wrote, "The gray nature of the fog matches my mood today and its small coincidences that feel like little miracles. When the weather matches your mood, it makes you feel like Mother Earth is saying it's OK. It's nice to be surrounded by something else who seems to understand." To me, this is a great example of not only observing your external sit-spot, but observing your internal sit-spot and making a connection between them. I encourage you to focus on that more. Nice shell photo!

Day 3 - Today, I went to the beach later at night because I needed a quiet place to think. I didn’t go all the way to the shoreline because it was a bit too dark out, but it was still so lovely to hear the waves crash against the rocks. Even far away, the mist from the waves feels far colder at night, like everything is cast in a light shield of silver. It's been hot recently, so spending some time outside without instantly feeling a sunburn start to form was especially nice.

Day 4 - Today, everything is gray. A thick, dense fog is rolling over the sea, slowly drifting by me. It's thick enough to where I can't see it passing by, but I can feel it in the wind. The gray nature of the fog matches my mood today and its small coincidences that feel like little miracles. When the weather matches your mood, it makes you feel like Mother Earth is saying it's OK. It's nice to be surrounded by something else who seems to understand.

Reply

(http

Chanel Chavira (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88486)

Oct 20, 2023

Hi Carolee,

I really liked seeing the pictures that were connected to your writing, it provided a nice visual. Do you see people around your sit-spot area or is it mostly left alone? It was interesting to read about the shells you had found as I never knew that those tiny holes were from sponge damage and were not usable to mollusks.

Reply

(http

Miku Suzuki (*she, her, her, hers, herself*) (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70368)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Carolee,

I really enjoyed how you documented your sit spot. It was interesting for me to learn about shells because I didn't know which shells were better to keep depending on sponge damage. Were there other marine organisms at the Devonport? I also enjoyed reading your journal.

Edited by **Miku Suzuki** (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70368) on Oct 21 at 4:53pm

Reply

(http

Samuel Cope (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/55547)

Oct 22, 2023

Hi Carolee,

This sit spot seems perfect. It's got isolation, a close proximity to nature, and a vast abundance of experiences and senses it can grant. The idea of going at night is a really good one - I've only really been to my sit spot at relatively the same times, but now I

definitely want to try going at night and see what different experiences it offers me. From what you know about the shells, it's obvious too that this spot is close to things you already care and know a lot about, which I think is very important for getting into a state of mind where you're really connected to your surroundings.

Reply

Olivia Trejo (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/68988)

Oct 29, 2023

Hi Carolee, those are such cool shells you found! You have some great entries and seem to be really connected and present whole working on them. Also, I know what beach you're talking about and that rope ladder is super sketchy.

Reply

Chanel Chavira (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88486)

Oct 20, 2023

Day 1:

Sitting down on the dry, tall grass I've already come across a few organisms. I've seen some bugs that are the size of a dime hope from one blade of grass to another. I've seen a couple of flies flying by my face. And I had just seen three small coyotes walking along the paved road in the distance. I hear birds making sounds in the distance as well, but to the north west of me. Further than that, I hear the sounds of motorcycles and cars on the roads. Sounds of bicyclists as they zoom down that same path that the coyotes were on. Some chattering is taking place to the slight left of me. I hear them but they're not in my sight. I hear the hardness and the lumpiness of the dirt ground I'm sitting on.

I really like your sensitivity not only to the visible aspects of your sit-spot but also to its sounds. I wonder if you would consider trying to focus more on how you feel; to place less emphasis on observing the qualities of the site, which you've done well, and focussing more on observing what you are feeling inside in relation to the site.

Day 2 (around 5p):

I return to my sit-spot, but instead of sitting in the dry grass/weeds I'm sitting on the dirt (with a paper bag underneath me). I'm just a few feet away from where I was sitting last week. Although I'm not on the grass/weeds I still see small insects crawling around on the dirt. Today, the air is hazy with the smell of heavy smoke. I could smell it strongly even when wearing a mask (not a N95). Tiny specks of white matter are in the air (ashes?). Music plays in the distance, to the left of me, somewhere in the woods area. They're popular songs I'm familiar with. Meanwhile, I see the heaviness of the smoke in the air just to the left of me, towards the

Monterey Bay. It floats just above the trees, carrying more thickness towards the middle of the woods and then dispersing out where the trees stop.

Day 3 (around 5p):

It's a hot day, but luckily I'm sitting in the shade. The dry grass/weeds still surround me. I hear the buzzing of bees passing me by. I see some dark gray thin bugs crawling around in the dirt. The ground is hard and I may be sitting on an even surface. Faint sounds of bird(s) in the distance. I smell and taste the saltiness of my sweat. I also smell the dirt. There's people gathered around a table just a few yards away from me. I could hear their conversations. In the far distance, I see the Monterey Bay. Big, blue, and vast with tiny sailboats floating around. I now smell smoke. I see cyclists speeding down the narrow road. While on my sit-spot a bicyclist asks me what that chirping-like noise is (referring to the bird sound I had first hear earlier), thinking that it was some kind of alarm.

Edited by Chanel Chavira (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88486) on Oct 20 at 7:52pm

Reply

(http

Annalie Taylor (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/75736)

Oct 20, 2023

Chanel, it sounds like your sit spot is busy and bustling with so much life and energy. How special that you saw coyotes on your first day. I can clearly envision the place by your detailed descriptions and how you tuned into all the senses.

Reply

(https:/

Katie Edwards (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88984)

Oct 20, 2023

My sit-spot is over on West-cliff overlooking the ocean under a large Monterey Cyprus tree

It feels a lot colder out today than it has been for the past few weeks

The leaves are starting to change colour as fall slowly creeps into my surroundings

I hear a seagull cawing nearby as the waves violently smash against the rocks

I feel content in this moment as the cool breeze brushes against my skin

A roar of laughter echoes in the distance from a family strolling on the sand

I feel enveloped by the beauty of the ocean and it's vastness

I find great solace in knowing I can always return to this spot where the waves will accompany me

Katie, I especially appreciate how you describe how you are feeling, how you join both keen observation of your external sit-spot and sensitive observation of your internal experience,and make a connection between them. I encourage you to focus on that more. I'd also like to see a demonstration of your sit-practice as a regular practice, with more than one entry.

Reply

Miku Suzuki (*she, her, her, hers, herself*) (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70368)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Katie,

I love how you wrote your journal entry. I thought it was beautiful how you described your surroundings and how you felt while doing the sit spot. I can definitely get a sense of how you felt at the moment though your journal. Is there a specific reason why you chose the Monterey Cyprus tree as your location rather than the beach itself?

Reply

Samuel Cope (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/55547)

Oct 23, 2023

Hi Katie,

West Cliff and the area around it is a great choice for a sit spot! Especially under a tree, I feel like there's a great diversity of forms of the natural world to be experienced, between the ocean and the trees and everything else around. I get the feeling that you were really paying attention to the experiences from all your senses in this sit spot session. How has your experience of the area changed as you've continued the sit spot practice?

Reply

Carolee Hagey (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/89269)

Oct 26, 2023

Hi Katie,

I love the poetic feel of your writing, and you do a great job of expressing the moment. The description extending to multiple senses helps complete the feeling. I connected with the idea of finding solace in a place. The consistency of a space when so much else is changing is quite comforting. I was wondering what you find the most drawing about this location.

Reply

Annalie Taylor (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/75736)

Oct 20, 2023

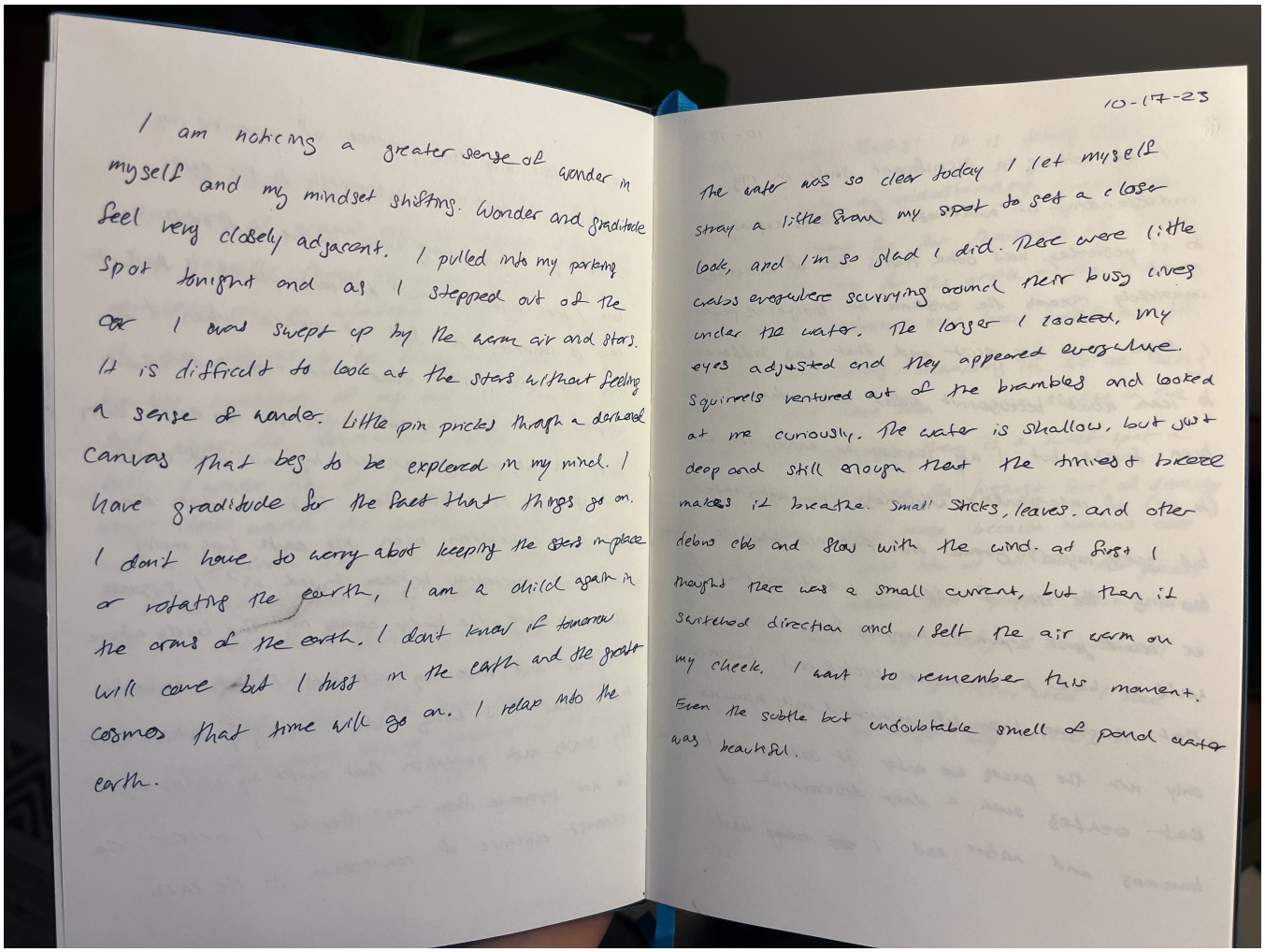
10-07-23

Sit Spot Day 1

After a good while of searching, walking in the heat, I have found my spot. It seems it is impossible to find a section unpolluted. From where I sit I can see one wad of toilet paper (gross) down the slope from me. To my left I see a plastic produce bag tucked under a low bay branch. Further back the greenery is overwhelmingly blackberry. Some sort of lottery ticket or advertisement peeks from between sharp thorns. It is bright pink and makes me sad. I am cradled in the above-ground roots of a beautiful bay tree. I wonder if it knows the difference between me and the trash. I hope so. As I study perception and the human senses, I am reminded of my studying plant senses. I think it would be great to read "What a Plant Knows" this quarter and gain some insight on comparisons to how we and plants perceive this world.

10-19-23

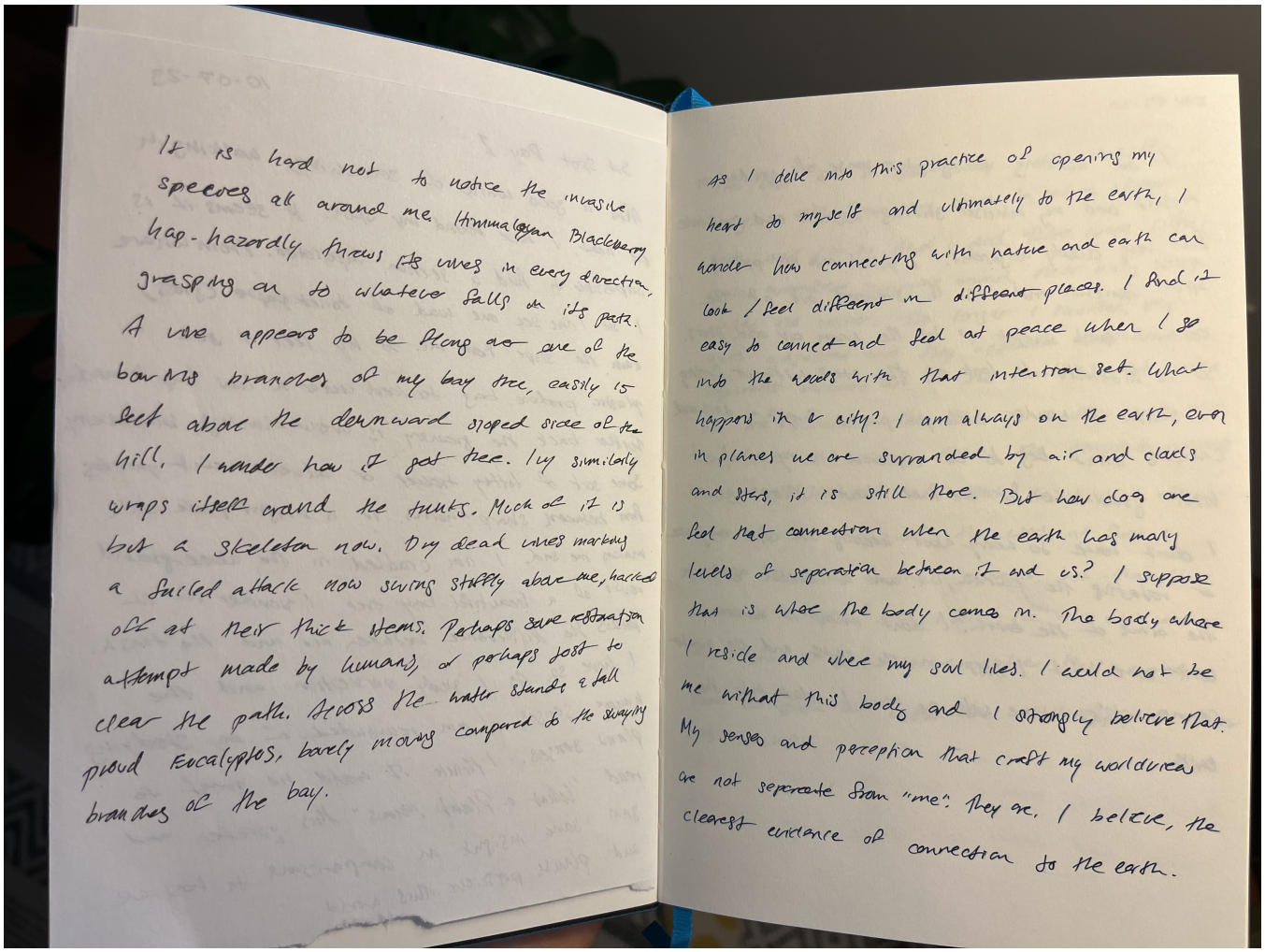
I am noticing a significant shift in my understanding of wilderness. Rick Flores explained to us yesterday how John Muir's idea of wilderness completely ignores the existance of indigenous people. I knew Muir was racist and that was saddening to learn about because it didn't matter what I had been taught, but I am learning an entirely new way (to me) of understanding "wilderness." I'm embarrassed but giving myself grace and patience because I am learning. The idea of wilderness I had was that if we could just separate humans from a place it would go back to the natural cycles and balance, that things are better left untouched and humans only ruin the places we enter. It saddens me because that creates such a deep disconnect of humans and nature and I ~~was~~ ~~being~~ had these conflicting "truths." It is taking me some time to shift my understandings. Coastal prairies have been cared for for thousands of years and in return care for the people on the land. Since native Californians have been forced out of this land and caring / stewarding it, we are losing biodiversity and have seen massive shifts in the landscape. Rick explained there is a sweet spot of human "intervention" where the highest level of diversity thrives. It only makes sense because humans ~~are~~ come from nature just like all of the other plants and creatures. We weren't just plopped down out of nowhere (at least in my belief.) I am thankful for an open mind and to realize where I have learned "truths" I no longer fully believe.



I am noticing a greater sense of wonder in myself and my mindset shifting. Wonder and gratitude feel very closely adjacent. I pulled into my parking spot tonight and as I stepped out of the car I was swept up by the warm air and stars. It is difficult to look at the stars without feeling a sense of wonder. Little pin pricks through a darkened canvas that begs to be explored in my mind. I have gratitude for the fact that things go on. I don't have to worry about keeping the stars in place or rotating the earth, I am a child again in the arms of the earth. I don't know if tomorrow will come but I trust in the earth and the great cosmos that time will go on. I relax into the earth.

10-17-23

The water was so clear today I let myself stray a little from my spot to get a closer look, and I'm so glad I did. There were little crabs everywhere scurrying around their busy lives under the water. The longer I looked, my eyes adjusted and they appeared everywhere. Squirrels ventured out of the brambles and looked at me curiously. The water is shallow, but just deep and still enough that the tiniest breeze makes it breathe. Small sticks, leaves, and other debris ebb and flow with the wind. At first I thought there was a small current, but then it switched direction and I felt the air warm on my cheek. I want to remember this moment. Even the subtle but undoubtable smell of pond water was beautiful.



Reply

Jasper Lusebrink (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/62004)

Oct 20, 2023

I thought I had my sit spot all figured out before even the first class ended. Turns out that while beautiful, it stinks like crazy. I sat there drawing for another class's assignment and I learned that sitting on a manhole cover overwhelms your sense of smell so you can't focus on anything else. My sit spot lies elsewhere.

While waiting for a class to start, I decided to lie down near some trees. I didn't expect to see woodpeckers, but there were at least four of them in my vicinity. The weather was pleasant with a nice breeze.

I like the spot I was at last time. It was unintentional, but I think I found a peaceful spot. It has a nice view, the occasional wildlife, and relatively low foot traffic compared to other places on campus. Well, at least until the tour group showed up. Why did I not see woodpeckers this

time? Was I not looking in the right places? Was it the wrong time? Was the temperature too hot or too cold? I hope I see them next time.

Reply

(https:/

Mary Anderson (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/85884)

Oct 20, 2023

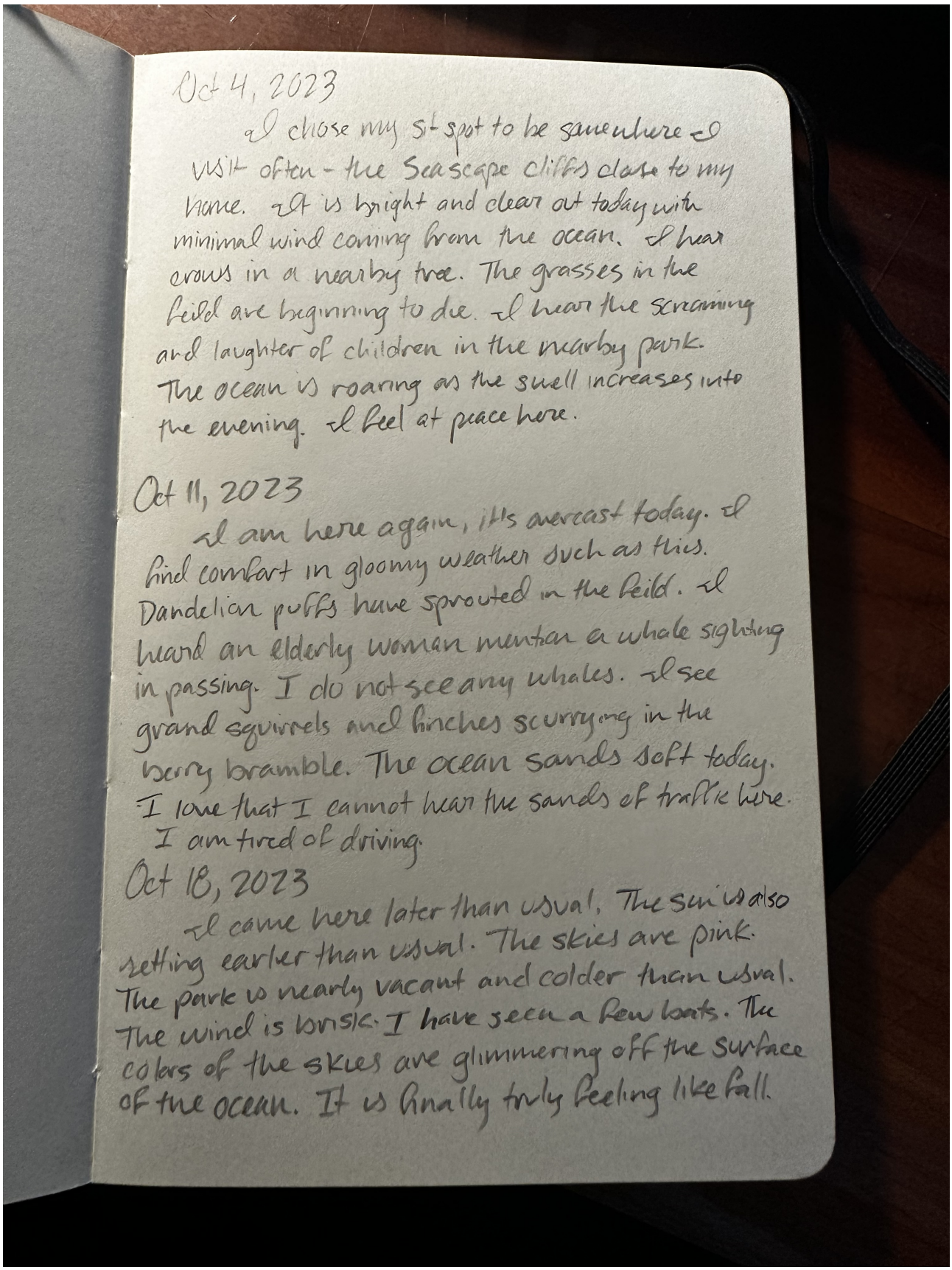
1697865130.4347072.jpg (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/files/7939676/download?download_frd=1&verifier=8UZ51V1BW4zQ61zy4A5EL7Udx3bYDinayDxpMPsD)

Reply

(http

Edward Shanken (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/7743)

Oct 23, 2023


Oct 4, 2023
I chose my sit spot to be somewhere I visit often - the Seascape cliffs close to my home. It is bright and clear out today with minimal wind coming from the ocean. I hear crows in a nearby tree. The grasses in the field are beginning to die. I hear the screaming and laughter of children in the nearby park. The ocean is roaring as the swell increases into the evening. I feel at peace here.
Oct 11, 2023
I am here again, it's overcast today. I find comfort in gloomy weather such as this. Dandelion puffs have sprouted in the field. I heard an elderly woman mention a whale sighting in passing. I do not see any whales. I see grand squirrels and finches scurrying in the berry bramble. The ocean sounds soft today. I love that I cannot hear the sounds of traffic here. I am tired of driving.
Oct 18, 2023
I came here later than usual. The sun is also setting earlier than usual. The skies are pink. The park is nearly vacant and colder than usual. The wind is brisk. I have seen a few boats. The colors of the skies are glimmering off the surface of the ocean. It is finally truly feeling like fall.

Reply

(https:/

Miku Suzuki (*she, her, her, hers, herself*) (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70368)

Oct 20, 2023

18/10/2023

My sit spot is inside the forest near Rachel Carson College. I lived in the RCC apt last year close to the forest so I wanted to come back to a place I was familiar with and private enough to do my sit spot. I remember how the sunlight was shining on all the trees and leaves in the forest. I could also see things that I usually didn't pay attention to like insects slowly moving on the ground and spider webs across the tree branches that was shining from the light. I reached to feel the texture of a tree, it was rigid and surprisingly cold to touch. I can see people walking in far distance, but they don't notice me. The air that I breathed in was fresh and clean. I smelled the leaves above me and the soil beneath my feet. I thought that this earthy scent I was smelling was specific to ucsc. It made me reminisce about my freshman year and how I now finally feel at home with the scent.

20/10/2023

Today, the cold breeze took my attention. The wind was hitting my face, making it cold, and then I realized the rushing sound of trees around me. The wind got louder and stronger at times. I looked up at the sky to see it was completely gray, it was foggy and misty, and I already missed the sun. Once the wind calmed down, I could hear the chirping of birds. I see a squirrel. It jumps around the leaves and disappears into the forest. I can feel the tips of my fingers are cold. I breathe in to let the cool air inside me, and I let out a breath of relief.

Edited by **Miku Suzuki (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70368)** on Oct 20 at 11:05pm

Reply

(http

Astrid Chevallier (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/101816)

Oct 21, 2023

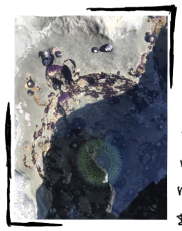
Hi Miku,

It's great that you went back to a familiar place. And it's great that you are perceiving it in a new way, with more sensations and more connection.
I like how you use your senses to really tune in into the place!
Maybe places can also help us make sense of time?

Reply

Alex Liang (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/71598)

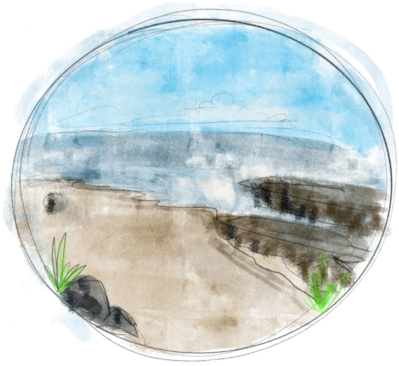
Oct 20, 2023



Day 1
Arrived at my sit spot near the coastal campus. It is quite the walk but it is worth it considering the great view I get of the ocean. Today is quite breezy. The seagulls flock constantly and the sound of crashing waves fills my senses completely. I notice some animals in the nearby tidepools. There are sea urchins & anemones which I thought were quite fascinating. The sun is bright but it is not too overwhelming. I really feel connected with the ocean.

Day 2
Headed to my sitspot today. Though it was a bit hotter than the prior days. The heat today is overwhelming me and I realize how much I hate sweating. Noticing less animals today. There are still mussels around but most of the life in the tidepools has mostly vanished for some reason.

Day 3
Not going to write much today. Trusted more of breathing practice as well as appreciation for the surrounding ocean. Focus on drawing as well as how feeling this spot gives me. Thankful for breathe and feeling.



Day 4
Today near the tide pools I spot a starfish. It is quite out of place, almost half out of water. I can draw many analogies of the starfish & myself. Sometimes. I feel I am burning up. similar to the starfish. It is fairly windy today. Thankfully it helps counteract the outrageous amount of hot weather we've been having recently. More birds than usual! Thankful for nature!

Day 5
* Sickness I didn't get to attend my sit spot *
:(

Day 6
Same as Day 5.

Reply

Katie Edwards (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/88984)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Alex! I hope you're feeling better. I like the way you organized your entry, especially with the water color painting for day 3. What kind of breathing practices do you do there? One of my favorites is the 4-7-8 method which helps alleviate anxiety and stress.

Reply

Ash Mojica (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/57320)

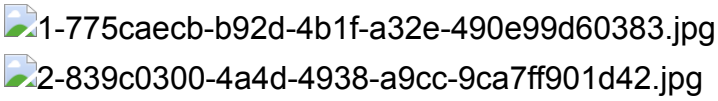
Oct 21, 2023

Hey Alex! I love the drawings you added. I would have loved to see the images of the animals you saw. That sucks how you got sick, I hope you feel better! Is there anything you wanted to explore more in your sit-spot?

Reply

Rei Jin (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/43773)

Oct 20, 2023



Reply

Astrid Chevallier (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/101816)

Oct 21, 2023

Hi Rei,

I really enjoyed reeding your journal.
The design is nice, and so are the illustrations.
I think you're asking a very interesting question when you wonder: "does nature also have emotions like us?"

Edited by Astrid Chevallier (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/101816) on Oct 21 at 7:41pm

Reply

Ash Mojica (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/57320)

Oct 21, 2023

Hey Rei! I absolutely love the illustrations that you included, especially the ducks! I really enjoyed reading your insights, especially the way you describe what you see and feel was nicely written. I'd love to see how the river's appearance changes throughout the year based on the rainfall. I wonder about the theory of how water holds memory. Do you think the riverbed holds memory as it goes through changes?

Reply

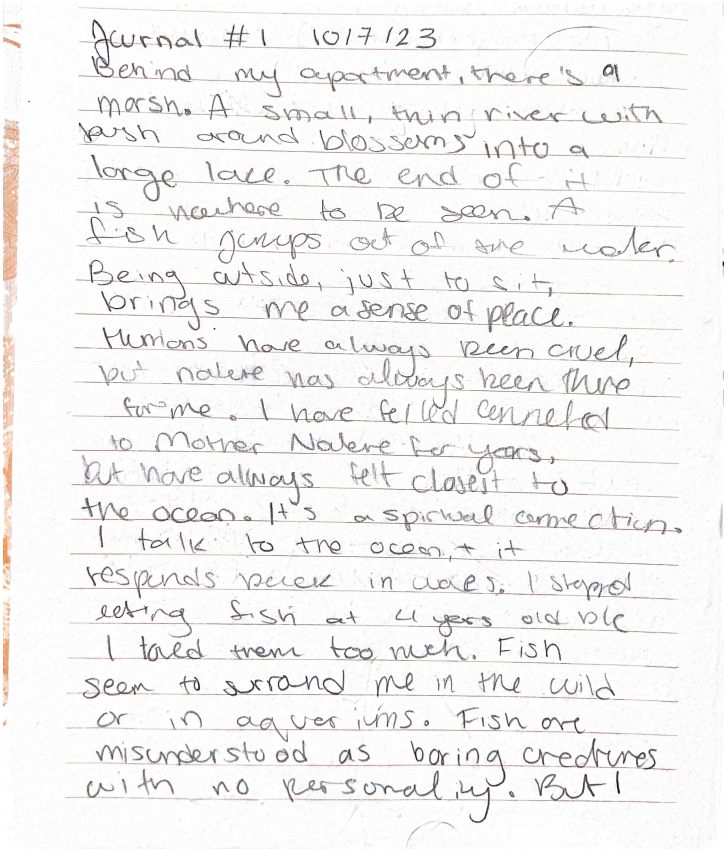
(https:/ Chance Billick (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/70414)
Oct 21, 2023

You can still hear the sounds from the generators nearby, wind is blowing and leaves are falling off trees. There is a fallen branch which makes for a great seat to sit and take in the environment.

Once in still in the environment bugs start landing on me. The smell of fire is in the air and I can see some faint remains of smoke. Even though my sight is blocked by redwoods i can still hear voices as they walk up the hill.

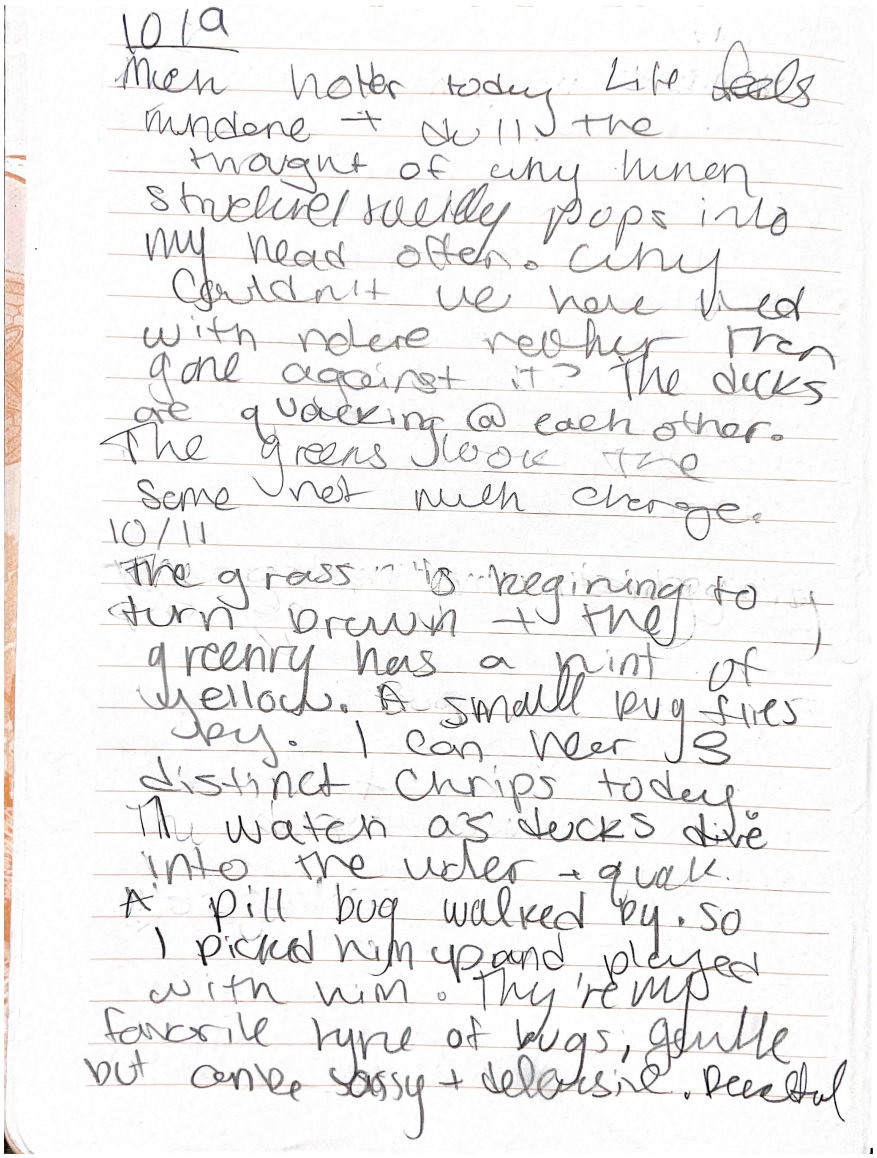
Reply

(https:/ Naomi Weiss (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/89428)
Oct 21, 2023

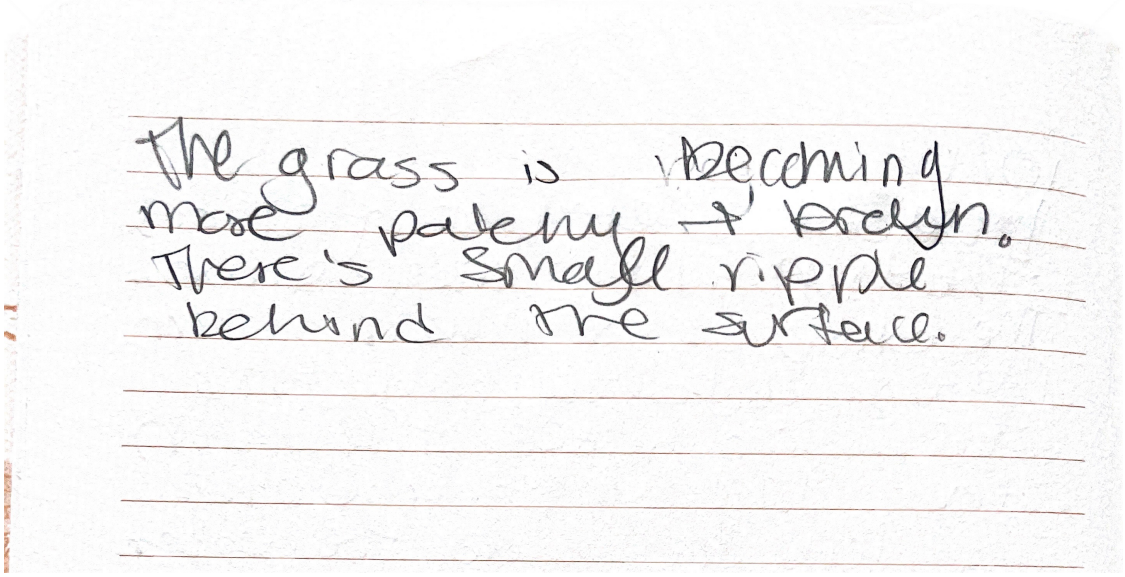


Journal #1 10/7/23
Behind my apartment, there's a marsh. A small, thin river with bush around blossoms into a large lake. The end of it is nowhere to be seen. A fish jumps out of the water. Being outside, just to sit, brings me a sense of peace. Humans have always been cruel, but nature has always been there for me. I have felt connected to Mother Nature for years, but have always felt closest to the ocean. It's a spiritual connection. I talk to the ocean, + it responds back in waves. I stopped eating fish at 4 years old b/c I loved them too much. Fish seem to surround me in the wild or in aquariums. Fish are misunderstood as boring creatures with no personality. But I

disagree. You just have
interact + pay attention. They
can be sassy, shy, aggressive
just like any other animal or
pet. I consider the ocean
an entity, as well as the
forest, who I refer to as
mother nature. I think that
they are both misteken as
unforgiving when often both their
actions are justified. They are both
sensitive, + need tender love + care
just like we as anyone else.
The brush is green with a tint
of brown. Deers scamper
in + out. There's 3 or 4
different type of birds chirping.
The water is slow + gently
flows to the right. After a hot
day, there's finally a chill in
the air. Each bird has a
distinct chirp.



10/9
Men hotter today. Life feels mundane + dull + the thought of any human structure really pops into my head often. Why couldn't we have lived with more reality than gone against it? The ducks are quacking @ each other. The greens look the same not much change.
10/11
The grass is beginning to turn brown + the greenery has a hint of yellow. A small bug flies by. I can hear 3 distinct chirps today. I watch as ducks dive into the water + quack. A pill bug walked by. So I picked him up and played with him. They're my favorite type of bugs, gentle but can be sassy + delicious. Peaceful



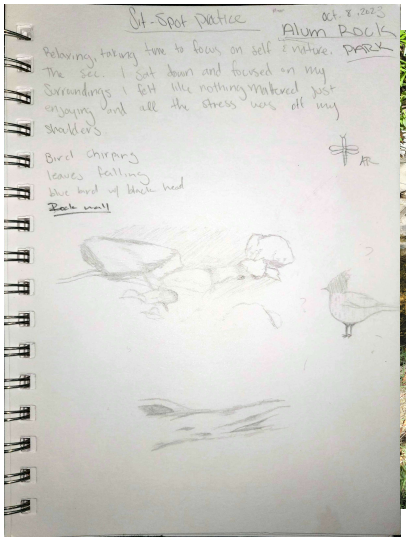
The grass is becoming more patchy + brown. There's small ripple behind the surface.

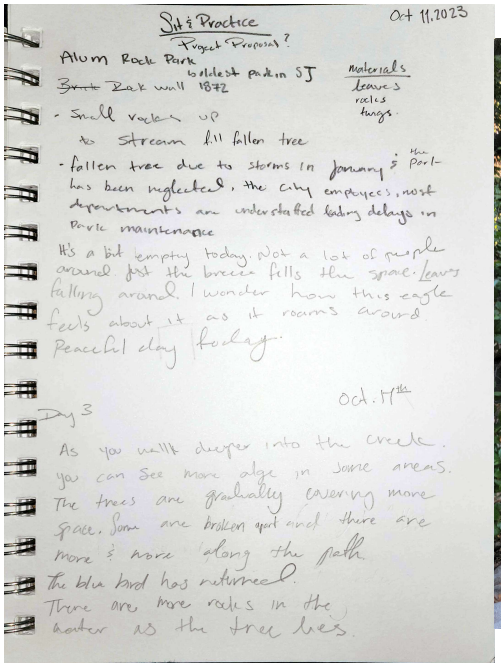
↩ Reply

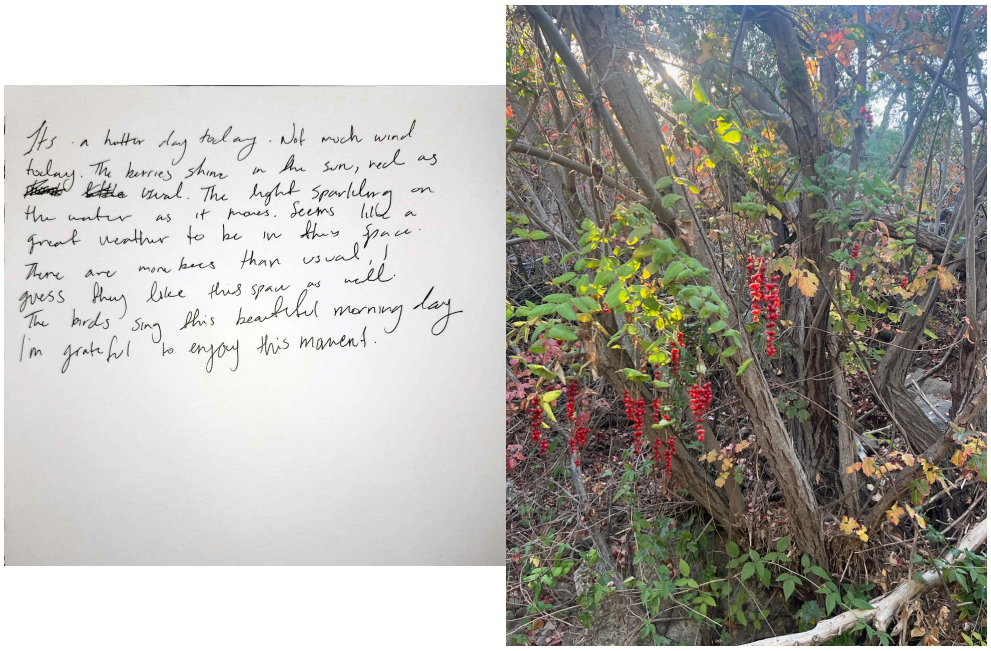
(https:/

Ash Mojica (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/57320)

Oct 21, 2023







Reply

(http

Rei Jin (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/43773)

Oct 22, 2023

Hi Ash! I love how you documented the journal. Especially the drawings you made and the precise description of the bird's appearance. I think I've seen those kinds of birds with blackheads as well all around the campus. This is also the place you did your project 1 if I remember correctly.

Reply

(https:/

Veyd Yewle (https://canvas.ucsc.edu/courses/65871/users/56382)

Oct 22, 2023

I find my sit spot to be very peaceful. When I am there, I feel like I am at a middle point, sitting by the intersection of Santa Cruz, and as close to houses and civilization as I am to the beach and water. People pass, but I am usually alone here. I sit atop a big rock extending out to the beach that I can rest into within its many dips and bumps along its form. It is windy and foggy, which is the weather I usually think of when I imagine this place. I hear the ocean, I hear cars, I hear people on the beach, and I hear the Boardwalk. I can divert my focus to each of these things, make small turns to see each of these things, and my experience here changes, influenced by the nature of what I choose to focus on. Sometimes I am able to feel more

present and just feel the peacefulness of where I find myself. I tend to focus more on my thoughts and feelings when I'm here, as opposed to my surroundings, and sometimes wish I didn't have so many to cloud my mental when I want to relax. Next time I hope to focus more on what's around me, and look at the little things more as opposed to focusing on myself as much.

Reply