



# Nature

*Nature is the greatest place to heal and recharge.* - Unknown

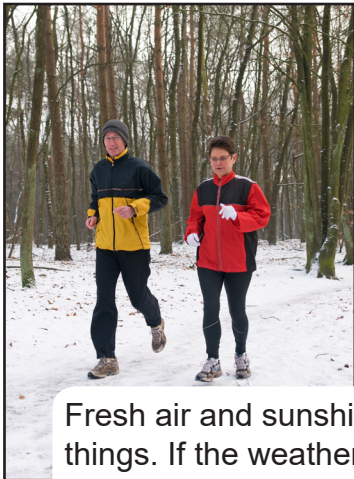
There are many benefits of nature that can help people, especially during this pandemic.

Nature can:

- Improve your mood;
- Reduce stress;
- Help you take time out and feel more relaxed;
- Improve your physical health.

Many people report that they feel better in a variety of ways when they connect with nature. Hiking, walking, gardening, bird watching, outdoor sports, and camping all benefit mental health.

Here are several ideas of ways that people can connect with nature. Find some ways to share these activities with someone who may be lonely – virtually or at a safe distance of course!



Fresh air and sunshine are both important things. If the weather is good, **bundle up and head outside for a walk**. Head to a nearby park where they keep the trails cleared. If you have mobility issues, **put a chair outside** so that you can sit and enjoy the day. Use this time to **journal outdoors**, take **pictures of natural wonders**, or just use the time to process your thoughts and feelings. Many people enjoy walking poles and there are so many health benefits to walking.

If you have few natural spaces around, you can bring nature inside.

- Buy some house plants and start container gardening.
- Arrange for a florist to deliver a house plant to someone who is lonely to get them started, or drop one off at their door.
- If you have a porch or a deck, make a little outdoor sanctuary with plants, bird-feeders, or a mini-fountain for a water feature.
- Fairy gardens and terrariums are also popular and are a lot of fun to make.





**Birdwatching** can be a great pandemic pastime. In spring, summer, or winter, folks can enjoy it. Purchase a bird book



to help you identify the various birds in your area and buy a copy for someone who is lonely so you can compare notes on what birds you have observed. There are so many to choose from but Peterson Field Guides by Roger Tory Peterson is excellent and Saskatchewan Birds by Alan Smith is also very good. Make sure the books cover birds in your region of Canada. Perhaps you can help someone set up a bird feeder or several depending on the birds you want to attract. If you are able to, put it by a window so that they can watch from inside as well. Keep track of the kinds of birds and when they come. The best way to understand the birds is to observe them. It's one of the most calming activities you can enjoy.

There are many different apps with birds and the sounds they make. Try out Merlin – Bird ID Help for 7,500 + species.

Making your own suet can be a fun thing to do. Some birds are picky or only eat specific seeds. Look for bird food recipes online or in bird books and make the mixture for the birds in your area that you would like to attract.

