

# Leaf Artistry

**Parent Notes:** This activity takes only your child's imagination (and maybe yours too 😊) to complete. While it is geared for younger children, the creativity in this activity is fun for all ages. It can be a fun family/group activity. Complete this in your own back yard, a designated picnic area or campsite. There is no clean up or supplies to carry which makes it a perfect activity while exploring.

**Considerations:** Stay on the trail to complete this activity, not only for your safety but to protect wildlife and their habitat. **Leave No Trace (LNT) Principles - Travel and Camp on Durable surfaces, Leave What You Find and Be Considerate of Other Visitors.** Dress for the weather, check the area for poison ivy first and check for ticks when you are done. (Windy days may not be the best for this 😊!)

## Let's Begin:

- Find an area where leaves from several different types of trees have fallen. This is a great way to start tree identification or learn about different forest types. Are you in a Beech Maple Forest? An Oak Hickory Forest? Maybe there is a very diverse group of trees that contains poplars, maples, sweetgums, hickories etc.
- Have your child describe the shape and texture. Leaves can be elliptical, star shaped, oval, heart shaped, lobed, serrated or toothy, hairy, smooth or round.
- Once you have found a location with lots of leaves on the ground it is time to create! Choose leaves and create pictures by arranging them on the ground. Create individual items such as a fox, rabbit, house, bike etc. Or you can create a complete scene (i.e. a person catching a fish, playing a sport, walking a dog). Use a phone or camera to take pictures of your creations and remember to **LNT - Leave What You Find**. Scatter the leaves when you are done so it looks like no one was there.

## Extension:

- Leaf Man by Lois Ehlert, can be read at home. Have your children write their own story about their leaf artistry.
- Take a photograph of your leaf creation, print it and frame it as a keepsake.
- If you would like to create a more permanent piece of art, collect leaves at home, arrange and glue them onto poster board or heavy paper. **REMEMBER: Leave What You Find at the park for others to enjoy.**

