

Themes & Plans for April 2016

April brings the primrose sweet, scatters daisies at our feet ...



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April also brings us (at long, *long* last), the first true Spring days: mild, soft, fresh and alive with sound and color. Nature is finally shrugging off its Winter shawl, and showering us with a warm and friendly welcome.

It feels *so* good to open the windows again, and to leave the house with just a sweater - or none at all! There are so many joys to explore with our children this month, and what follows is but a sampling, just my own thoughts for the season. As always, I'd love to hear yours! But for now, please join me as I consider ...

~ Themes and Plans for April ~

Nature

- Crocus are now in full bloom.
- Skunk cabbage grows in marshy areas.
- Bears are waking in the (deep) woods.
- Daffodils are in their full glory.
- The skies are gray one minute, blue the next ...
- ... and so rainbows are quite possible.
- Forsythia is bursting all over.
- At night we hear the spring peepers.
- Mourning cloaks are the first butterflies we'll see.
- Returning ~ thrush, phoebe, mockingbird and catbird.
- The smell of wild onions is in the air.
- There could be a light flurry or two.
- We'll have rainy days; the rivers will swell.
- Warm days are more frequent now.
- Juncos leave; chipmunks re-appear.
- Humpbacks are migrating back north.
- Time to check for ticks again.
- Dandelions are plentiful underfoot.
- The Full Pink Moon rises on April 22nd.
- There are buds on the cherry tree ...
- ... which the sparrows love to nibble.
- Bluebells appear along the wood's edge.
- The grass is greening.
- The goldfinches are brightening.

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Folklore

- Gem: diamond
- Flower: sweet pea
- Saying: *April showers bring May flowers.*

Food

- chives
- new potatoes
- asparagus
- fiddlehead ferns
- dandelions
- radishes
- spring lamb
- pasta primavera
- snap peas
- artichokes
- spinach
- sorrel
- goat cheese tart
- rhubarb grunt

Faith

- April Devotion ~ The Blessed Sacrament
- Liturgical Season: **Easter (Paschaltide)**
- Divine Mercy Sunday (3)
- The Annunciation (4)
- St. George, Patron of England (23)
- St. Mark (25)
- St. Catherine of Siena (29)
- Walpurgisnacht (30)

Household (& Garden)

- Take outdoor furniture out of storage.
- Rent de-thatcher; aerate lawn.
- Harden tender seedlings.
- Plant trees and/or shrubs.

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- Clean out potting shed.
- Establish new garden beds.
- Prepare containers; purchase new ones.
- Purchase summer blooming bulbs.
- Organize garden tools.
- Prune flowering bushes after blooming.
- Visit the nursery for spring plants, garden structures.
- Rake and compost leaf litter/debris.
- Spread fresh mulch.
- Spring cleaning (if not done before Easter).
- Have lawnmower serviced if necessary.
- Family meeting re ~ summer plans.
- Turn off fireplace.
- Turn on outside faucet.
- File taxes by 4/15.
- Organize financial files.
- Clean dryer vents and hoses.
- Spiff up the bikes.

Life

- [National Autism Awareness Month](#)
- National Poetry Month
- National Keep America Beautiful Month
- National Aquarium Month
- April Fools Day (1)
- [Light it Up Blue! Autism Awareness Day](#) (2)
- Hans Christian Anderson (2)
- National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day (2)
- Washington Irving (3)
- [Find a Rainbow Day](#) (3)
- No Housework Day (7)
- National Siblings Day (10)
- Red Sox Home Opener (11)
- 100th Day of the Year (9)
- Thomas Jefferson (13)
- Tax Day (15)
- [The Jungle Book](#) opens (15)

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- National Librarian's Day (16)
- National Animal Crackers Day (18)
- [Swan Boats](#) return to Boston (16)
- [Patriot's Day](#) (18)
- Boston Marathon (18)
- Earth Day (22)
- [William Shakespeare's 400th Anniversary](#) (23)
- William and Kate's Anniversary (29)
- Arbor Day (29)

Book Basket

- [*The Secret Garden*](#)
- [*The Wind in the Willows*](#)
- [*Old Turtle*](#)
- [*Days with Frog and Toad*](#)
- [*St. George and the Dragon*](#)
- [*Make Way for Ducklings*](#)
- [*The Story of the Root Children*](#)
- [*Our Big Home: An Earth Poem*](#)
- [*The Whole Green World*](#)
- [*Compost!*](#)
- [*The Tale of Jeremy Fisher*](#)
- [*The Tale of Jemimah Puddle Duck*](#)
- [*The Magic School Bus Makes a Rainbow*](#)
- [*Down Comes the Rain*](#)
- [*From Tadpole to Frog*](#)
- [*Spring Story*](#)
- [*The Brook Book*](#)
- [*Humpback Goes North*](#)
- [*On Noah's Ark*](#)
- [*The Flower Fairies of the Wayside*](#)
- [*Sky Tree: Seeing Science through Art*](#)
- [*Franklin Plants a Tree*](#)
- [*My Favorite Tree: Terrific Trees of North America*](#)
- [*Joseph and Chico: The Life of Pope Benedict XVI as Told by a Cat*](#)
- [*From Caterpillar to Butterfly*](#)
- [*Sam the Minuteman*](#)

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Field Trips & Outings

- A Spring Woods Hike
- A Vernal Pool Visit
- [Butterfly Place](#)
- [Minuteman Park](#)
- [The Boston Public Garden \(Make Way for Ducklings\)](#)

Crafts & Activities

- Make [wilding sticks and nature bracelets](#).
- Clean up litter in a local park.
- Prepare field bags for spring.
- Begin new nature journals.
- Hang a hummingbird feeder.
- Paint a butterfly house.
- Catch tadpoles at the pond.
- Conduct a [rainbow experiment](#).
- Paint rocks for garden markers.
- Dig in the dirt.
- Set up a nature table at home.
- Make tissue paper butterflies.
- Color [a butterfly guide](#).
- Befriend a tree; start a notebook.
- Re-enact St. George & The Dragon.
- Build a bluebird house.
- Look for nests before leaves come in.
- Update our [Bird List](#).
- Prepare May baskets.

Well, I think I'd better stop there, as my lists are getting rather lengthy! I do hope this post gives you some ideas for the month of April, though. I keep this outline in my home keeping binder, (alongside [the others](#)) and hope that I remember to notice, savor or do *some* of these things - but I never expect to get to them all!

April is fleeting - so make the most of it, my friends! *Happy Spring!*

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*"The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day.
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
a cloud come over the sunlit arch,
And wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March."*

- Robert Frost