

EXPLORATION

Volume 1, Number 3

Quarterly



John St. Leger Bequest

97-7398 VIRGINIA [1590?]

❖ We shall not cease ❖

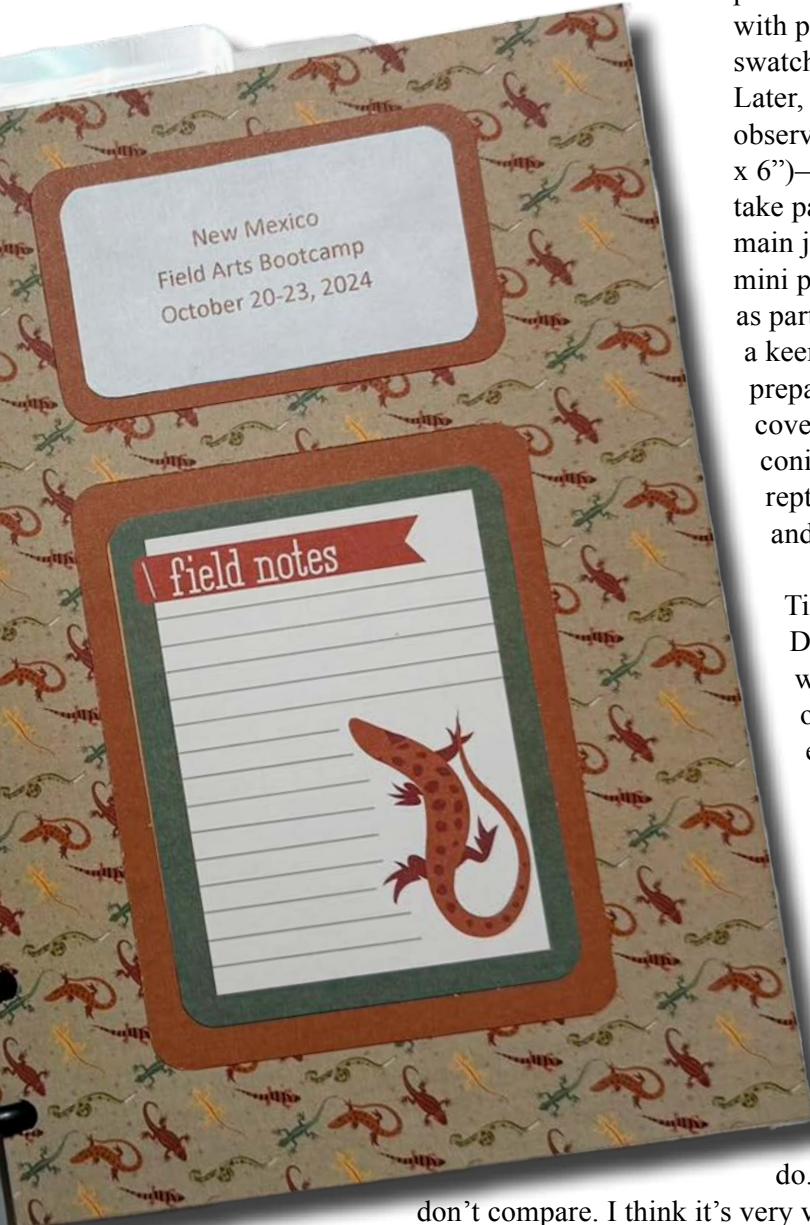


Nature journaler Tiffany Levy explores the world near and far with a cleverly designed modular field journal system that gives her plenty of room for creativity and flexibility.



Based in the Pacific Northwest, in the foothills of the Cascades not far from Mt. St. Helens, Tiffany Levy has been a journal keeper for most of her life—since she was around 10 years old. While much of that time her journals were more art-focused, about 10 years ago she decided to “get serious” about not only a regular practice but to add more nature notes and metadata. Today her journals combine three types of journaling—nature, art, and travel—seemlessly blended with creative illustrations and ephemera.

She favors a two-journal system—inspired by British nature journaling instructor Alex Boon: her small one (6 1/2" x 4 1/2") fits in a pocket and is for quick



don't compare. I think it's very valuable to be inspired by people, but the minute you start comparing it's going to be bad. Stick with it, enjoy the process, no matter the outcome. Whatever you put down is the perfect thing!"



notes, messy sketches, jottings, and impressions. This takes the pressure off so she can focus on just being present, not fussing with perfect sketches and color—though she might make color swatches or describe colors and take photographs with her phone. Later, back at home, in camp, or a hotel, she refines her thoughts, observations, and sketches into the larger “main” journal (8 1/2" x 6")—see above, at work at a lodge in Alaska. Often she will take pages from the small journal to add as interleaves in the main journal (shown on pages 72–83). She adds photos from her mini printer, and ephemera such as leaves and flowers as well as parts of maps, brochures, menus, and other memorabilia. As a keen traveler as well as a lover of lists and organization, she prepares her journals ahead of time with matching customized covers for each journal (her Alaska journal covers feature coniferous trees, while her New Mexico journals, at left, sport reptiles). You will often find a table of contents, species lists, and things she wants to see / journal / do (see pages 72–83).

Tiffany designed her unique modular journal around the Discbound daily planner system, accessories for which are widely available from office supply stores and premium online stores like Levenger.com (see page 69). Pages are easily added or moved, and you can insert any type of paper you want, using a Discbound-system-specific hole punch.

Tiffany's creativity is apparent in her fascinating journal pages. As you flip through them, you will be diving deep with her into explorations of a place through a delightful mix of words, pictures, and numbers. If you would like to hear more about her practice and kit and advice, please enjoy the video interview on page 71.

I asked Tiffany what advice she would give to beginner journalers: “Be kind to yourself. It's a hard thing to do. But don't be judgemental about yourself or your work,



Main Kit: The Messenger Bag

This is Tiffany's main go-to bag for everyday journaling as well as for travel. All of her essentials live in this unique hand-made messenger bag (with room for snacks and a water bottle), and to its side is strapped an accessory pouch (see above and right) in which she packs the bare essentials for a mini standalone kit.

Watercolor is her preferred color media now, and she favors Daniel Smith (though she has handmade paints from Art of Soil and Beam). Her smallest palette is a minimalist: Quinacridone Rose, Hansa Yellow Medium, Phthalo Blue (RS), Ultramarine Blue, Cerulean Blue Chromium, Indanthrone Blue, Burnt Umber, and Raw Sienna. Her extended palette includes Quinacridone Rose, Aureolin, Sap Green, Phthalo Blue (GS), Ultramarine Blue, EF Brown Iron Oxide, Pearlescent Shimmer, Buff Titanium, Permanent Alizarin Crimson, New Gamboge, Perylene Green, Manganese Blue Hue, Cobalt Blue, Indanthrone Blue, Carbazole Violet, and Burnt Sienna.

A – Messenger bag is the Somanya Sling by Ethnotek, an online retailer that features travel bags made from water-resistant PET made from 100% recycled plastic bottles paired with ethically sourced traditional handmade textiles from Ghana, Guatemala, and Asia. See video, page XX, showing the relative size and zippered opening. 14" x 9.5" x 5" (35 x 24 x 12 cm); 1 lb (0.4kg), empty. Ethnotek.com

B – Accessory pouch (see below, right) is also by Ethnotek—the Pindah Phone Pouch. 4.8" x 7.6" x 2" (12cm x 19cm x 5cm). Ethnotek.com

C, H – Paint palette, mini, is the Demi Palette by [Art Toolkit](#) while the larger palette is Art Toolkit's Pocket Palette.

The metal cup clips to the stiff easel board (see D). DickBlick.com

D – Easel/palette board is a Discbound tabbed divider that Tiffany reinforced with stiff book board. She added adhesive-backed magnet strips to both sides of the board (to attach the paint palette). See video, page XX. Staples.com, Office Depot.com, Levenger.com

E – Clear plastic goniometer; doubles as a ruler. This is a physical therapy tool that can be used as an angle protractor for drawing and measuring objects in the field. Amazon.com

F – Journals: large (8 1/2" x 6"), small (6 1/2" x 4 1/2") using the Discbound planner binding system and accessories. Tiffany makes her own covers—often themed for a specific trip—and protects them with clear plastic. The insides are customized with tabbed dividers and a palette board for holding her paint palette (see D).

The discs are solid and come in different sizes (from 3/4" to 2") to accommodate different journal sizes. They also come in a huge array of colors and finishes (including metallic and tortoise shell). A Discbound "mushroom-hold" paper punch is required. The huge advantage of this system is you can create completely custom journals with your papers of choice, and change out papers and accessories very quickly. You can also combine multiple journals by removing smaller discs and putting all of the journal pages onto much larger discs. Staples.com, Office Depot.com, Levenger.com

G – Raymay Pencut scissors (folds to size of a pen). JetPens.com

H – Paint palette, larger—see C.

I – Metal ruler (6"), and circle templates from Artist Loft, small and large (cut in half). Michaels.com

J – Graph paper sticky notes; compass circle-drawing tool by Hand2Mind, and clear plastic viewfinder (from the book Nature Journaling for a Wild Life). ExploringOverland.com

K – Zebra mechanical pencil 0.5; Pentel Hybrid Technica 0.3 pen; Pentel Clic eraser; Uniball Signo white gel pen; Sharpie Sharpie Ultra Fine Permanent Marker.

Niji Waterbrush; [Tom's Studio](#) Lumos Pro - Duo (refillable/replaceable tips/interchangeable tips; Platinum fountain pen (shortened); TWSBI ECO fountain pen, extra-fine nib.

Below is Tiffany's selection from the main kit that makes up her "on the fly" mini kit clipped to her messenger bag.

Mini Kit: The Pouch





Extended Kit: The Backpack

When space allows, this kit includes special field arts tools for wild paint-making, bookbinding, weather-reading, close-looks, and printing mini photos.

A – Backpack is the Aya Pack 25 from Ethnotek. 11.5" x 18.5" x 7.5" (28 x 46 x 18cm); 1.5 lbs (0.7kg), empty. Ethnotek.com

B – Triplet Jewelers Loupe (10X) with leather case; [Skybasic Digital Microscope](http://Skybasic.com) w/connection to phone for photos.

C – [Canon Ivy printer](http://Canon.com), Mini Zink paper (adhesive back). See upper right, page 71, showing the printer at work on a layout for journal pages from a New Mexico field arts workshop. Final results shown pp. 72–83.

D – Leather Pouch with paint-making supplies (limited edition from ExploringOverland.com):

- Plastic palette knife

- Vial w/Schminke watercolor binder
- Mini mortar and pestle for mixing pigment and binder
- Strainer for filtering pigments with paper coffee filter (not shown)
- Tin paint palette with empty paint pans

E – UV light/flashlight for enhanced night-time explorations—many insects and a surprising number of mammals glow under UV (aka “black”) light.

F – [Kestrel 3000](http://Kestrel.com) portable weather station.

G – Leatherman Squirt multi-tool (model retired, but a similar one is the [Micra](http://Micra.com)).

H – Antique pencil tin with bookbinding supplies:

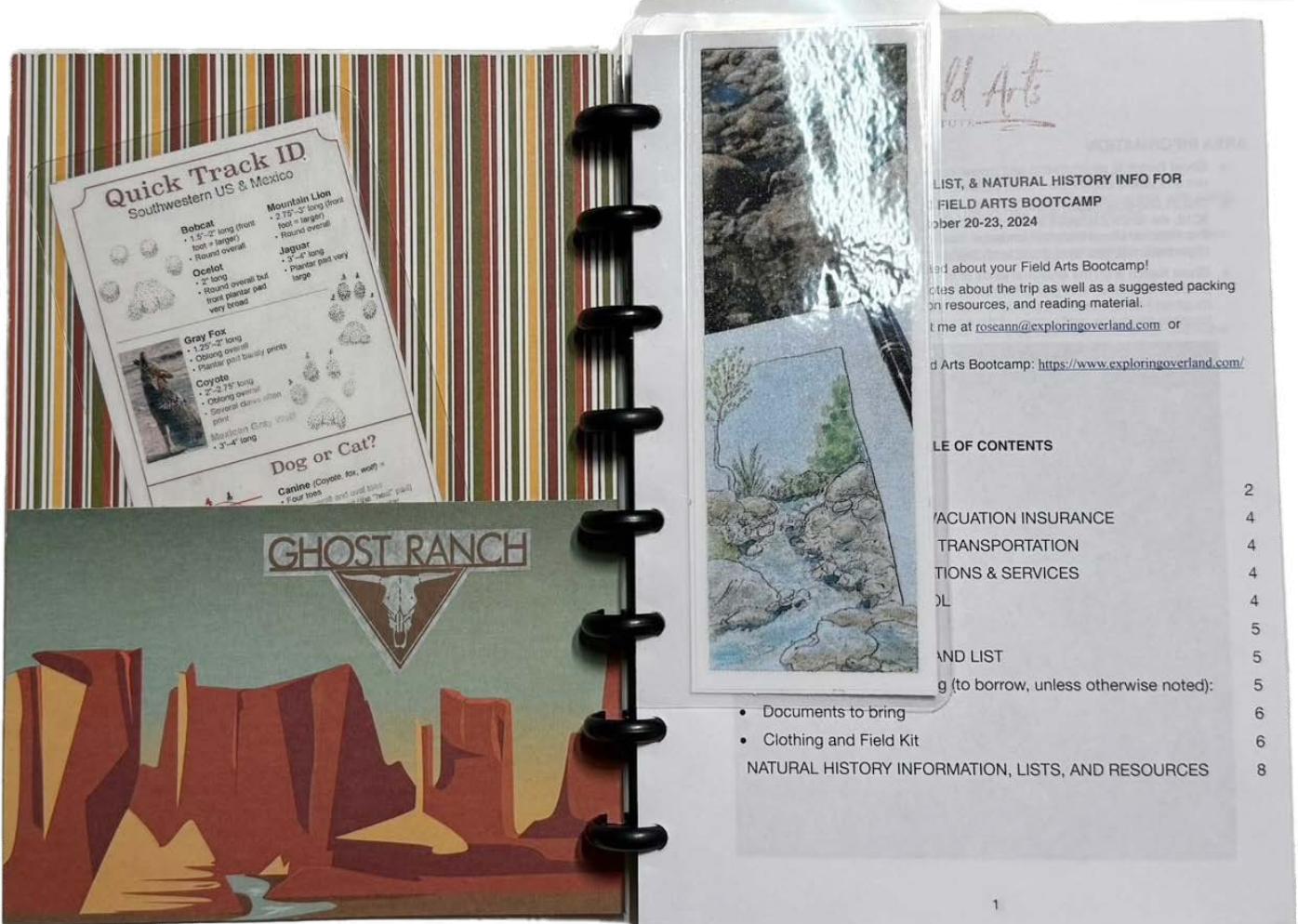
- Waxed linen thread and needles
- Hand2Mind circle drawing compass
- Bone paper folder
- Clear ruler
- Glue brush
- PVA glue in small tube
- Awl/hole punch
- Scalpel with cover

I – Tweezers with curved tip.

J – Carson portable microscope with slides.



VIDEO FEATURE: Roseann Hanson chats with Tiffany Levy about her decades-long journaling practice, her unique journal style, and her favorite tools. (Click above to view video within the flip-book; if you have downloaded the PDF, the video is available on the subscriber's portal, Vol. 1, No. 3 page.)



Day 1 - Arrival @ Ghost Ranch!

Sunrise 7:17am Sunset 6:21pm

Waning Gibbous



The drive was beautiful - full of dramatic skies, rain, lightning & RAINBOWS

First Impressions -
The desert is beautiful
in the Fall, especially
after a big rain storm -
The skies were dramatic
the cottonwoods were
glowing and contrasted
beautifully

with the red rock cliffs -
demonstrating why Georgia
O'Keeffe was so inspired by
this landscape!



The group met at the Ghost
Ranch Welcome Center at 11:00am
for a group orientation, follow-
ed by free time to explore before
group lunch at the dining hall...

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cottonwood 10-20-24
Linen Ranch WC

My first impression
was of...
Georgia
O'Keeffe was so inspired by
this landscape!



The group met at the Ghost
Ranch Welcome Center at 11:00am
for a group orientation, follow-
ed by free time to explore before
group lunch at the dining hall...

Day 1 - at Casa del Sol

36°20'24"N 106°29'52"W

Ghost Ranch
elevation 6500'

58°F
@12:00

My first impression
was of...

The road was
that drove
the Visitor
back to the



the beauty
of the golden cottonwoods
against the deep red cliffs

blue sky, puffy clouds, breezy 10-20-24



Day 1 - at Casa del Sol

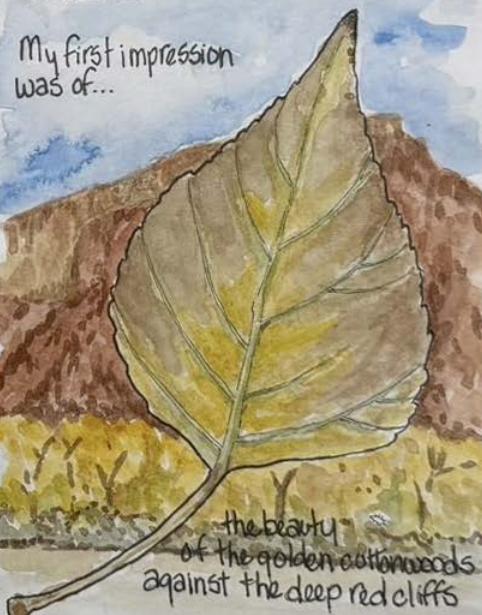
36°20'24"N 106°29'52"W

Ghost Ranch
elevation 6500'

58°F
@12:00

My first impression
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The road was
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the beauty
of the golden cottonwoods
against the deep red cliffs

blue sky, puffy clouds, breezy 10-20-24



Day 1 - Arrival @ Ghost Ranch!

Sunrise 7:17am Sunset 6:21pm Waning Gibbous
2:05pm 60°F Full clouds and thunder & Rain

The weather is ever changing today - rain, clouds, blue sky, wind, still, Thunder, and back to rain

First Impressions

The desert is in the Fall, after a big rain. The skies were the cottonwoods glowing and beautiful!



For a group orientation, followed by free time to explore before group lunch at the dining hall...

Day 1 - at Casa del Sol

36°20'24"N 106°29'52"W
6530 feet elevation

at 2:45pm we all shotted to Casa del Sol. The road was still pretty muddy. Once we unloaded, the people that drove (and were not camping), took their cars back to the Visitor Center parking area. Then Jonathan drove us all back to the Casa.

enjoyed meeting new people and reconnecting with people I'd met before! So many familiar faces!

It was too cloudy to do any star-gazing, but the clouds made for a beautiful sunset - closing out our first day @ Ghost Ranch.



The Heart Labyrinth

@ Casa del Sol

est 8.31.2007

In a place filled with beautiful places, I think this place may have been my favorite (of this trip, at least)! A quiet place that I visited often over the 4 days at Casa del Sol. Although it was a very short walk from the Casa and within sight, I always found myself alone there. I observed both sunrises and sunsets, and the night sky full of stars... This place will remain a special place for me in large part to the quiet, peaceful times I shared it... quietly talking and comfortably silent while watching the evening settle over the desert -



Casa del Sol @ Ghost Ranch - Day 2

6530 ft elevation

36°20'24"N 106°26'52"W

7:50 am

explore and

find tracks

rain yesterday

ste - although

rainy

despite

The Heart Labyrinth

@ Casa del Sol

1st & 21. 2007

In a place fill
place may have
3 quiet place
Casa del Sol.
from the Cas
Self alone th
sets, and th
will remain i
the quiet, peace
and comfortab
settle over th



Casa del Sol @ Ghost Ranch - Day 2

6530 ft elevation

10-21-24 - Monday

early (ish) morning walk along the road to explore and look for animal tracks

36°20'24"N 106°26'52"W

43°F @ 7:50 am

lots of mud from all the rain yesterday
and the day before

also found scat - likely coyote - although
there is a pet dog in the area,
and the rain had really
masked the true shape
and size

Jack rabbit?
Yes!



clear track - mule deer?
is this mule deer range?

really
washed
out from
all the rain

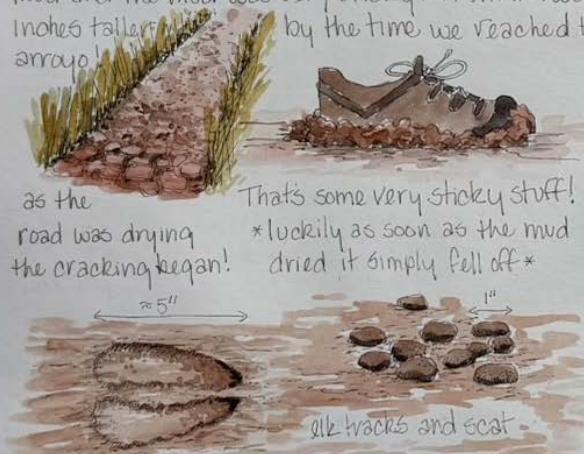
Golden Eagle!

There was a lot of
evidence of fast moving water
from all the recent rains. It
is interesting to see the
'mini arroyos' to see imagine
how that translates to a
bigger scale

Day 2 - Morning Walk to the Arroyo

10:00 am 49°F October 21st clear/sunny - cool

With all the rain in prior days, there was a lot of
mud and the mud was very sticky... I think I was
inches taller by the time we reached the
arroyo!



I've seen elk along the California coast, in the redwoods
& in Washington, etc, but am surprised to see (evidence
of) them in the high mtn desert of New Mexico.

- Spotted towhee
- raven
- darkling beetle
-

- tarantula - Grand Canyon Black
- ant hill/ants - Western Harvester Ants

Walk to the arroyo - continued

Casa del Sol to The Arroyo

October 21, 2024

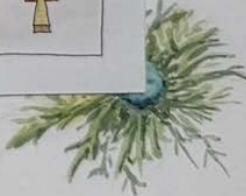


over the
with the
of muddy
mighty,



Oak

Prickly Pear



Day 2 - Morning Walk to the Arroyo

10:00 am 49°F October 21st clear/sunny-cool

With all the
mud and the
inches tall
arroyo!

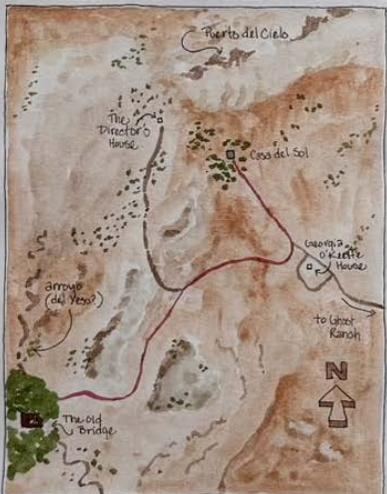
as the
road was dry
the cracking

I've seen elk
in (washing
of) them in

- Spotted
- raven
- darkling beetle
-

Casa del Sol to the Arroyo

October 21, 2024



Walk to the arroyo - continued

As with the elk, once to the old bridge over the arroyo, I was surprised to see oaks! With the recent rains, the arroyo had a small flow of muddy water, but there was plenty of evidence of mighty, fast moving water.

Does this arroyo have a name? Possibly arroyo del Yeso?

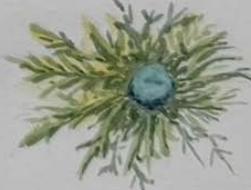
I was also a little surprised that there was still flowers to be found, and not just one variety, but several different varieties. Not a lot and not everywhere, but enough to take notice.



Oak



Juniper



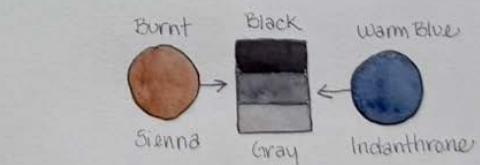
Prickly Pear

Color Theory Basics

- the true primaries: cyan
yellow
magenta
- what colors can be used as cyan - manganese/phthalo Blue
yellow - Cobalt Yellow (Aureolin)
magenta - Quinacridone Rose
- In theory it should be possible to mix every color with these primary colors - including the traditional red and blues 'primaries'
- a couple of added convenience colors can be very helpful - including: burnt Sienna
Indanthrone blue
- other convenience colors might include: siennas, buff titanium and/or specialty palettes for skies, etc
- the best blacks and grays are always mixed and the best mix is: burnt Sienna
Indanthrone blue
- to make great grays for clouds, I often use:
Enviro Friendly Brown Iron Oxide + Ultramarine Blue
- all three primaries mixed together will make Brown

Day 2 - Casa del Sol - afternoon workshop
October 21, 2024 2:00 pm

Color Theory & Mixing





Day 2 - The Night Sky - Oct 21, 2024

after the first night's cloudy skies, tonight was clear and perfect for star (and comet) gazing! Most sources suggested the comet would be visible 45 mins after sunset, it was a little late, but at around 7:30pm it was streaming across the sky with Venus

Sunset 6:20pm

Day 2 - The Night Sky - Oct 21st
moon phase: waning gibbous ☽

Ghost Ranch

36.53916°N 106.49789°W

The milky way, Venus & Tschinshan-Atlas

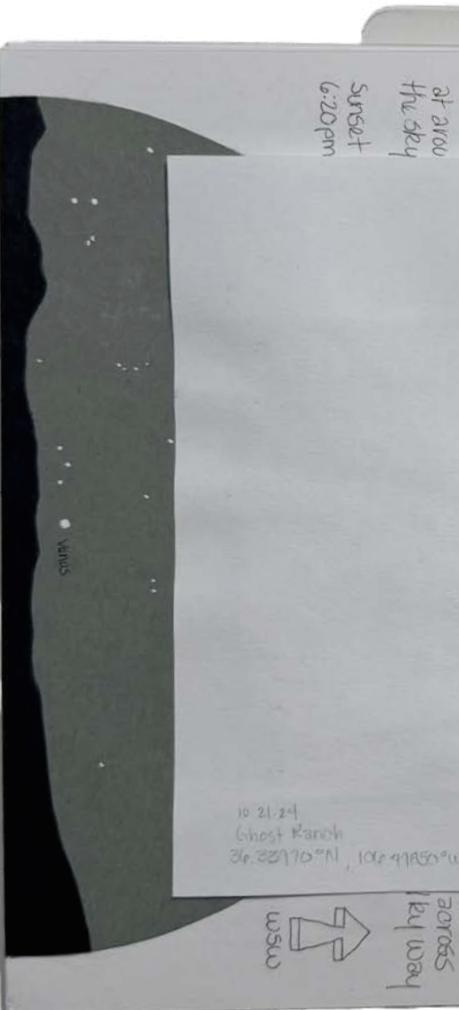


Comet Tschinshan-Atlas (C/2023 A3)
'once every 80,000 years'



adjusted to

We were well past viewing Szechuan-wei, in the dark, high altitude sky, it was amazing! At first difficult to see seen with peripheral vision, then using a laser pointer to point where to it got darker easily visible.



10.21.24
Ghost Ranch
36.32970°N, 106.91850°W



star visible, but across Milky Way

024

Day 2 - The Night Sky - Oct 21st
moon phase: waning gibbous ☽

While waiting for the comet to appear, Jonathan had found Saturn in the spotting scope. It was really quite incredible. I was surprised at how yellow it appeared. I was also fascinated by how fast it was moving and how often the scope needed to be adjusted to keep it in view!



although we were well past the best viewing of the Tschinshan-Atlas comet, in the dark, clear, high altitude, desert sky, it was amazing! At first it was difficult to see and best seen with your peripheral vision, so Jonathan was using a laser pointer to show everyone where to look. As it got darker it became easily visible.

Day 3 - October 22, 2024

Low 41°F - but others said colder, including frost on car windows
High 68°F - Sunny
moon phase: ☽

Our last full day - the time always goes by so quickly! I started the day with a pre-sunrise walk down the road and then watching the sunrise over the labyrinth.



While the group did a walk to look for animal tracks, I stayed back. It was the perfect time to have a mini lesson on the features of my new Kestrel 3000 portable weather station! I was very grateful Graham had the knowledge and willingness to guide me through the features and capabilities! yay!

While out, the group found a trail of coyote tracks. Roseann demonstrated how to set up and pour a casting.



Day 3 - October 22, 2024

Low 41°F -
High 68°F -
moon phase:

updated

Species List

Our last full day - I started the road and then

- Jackrabbit - Black-tailed
- Golden Eagle
- House Finch
- Mule deer - tracks
- Western Bluebird
- Dark-eyed Junco
- Townsend's Solitaire
- Lesser Goldfinch
- Mtn Bluebird
- White-crowned Sparrow
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Canyon Towhee
- Raven
- Spotted Towhee
- Western Scrub Jay
- Bewicks Wren
- Coyote
- Least Chipmunk
- Little Striped Whiptail
- Mule Deer
- Jerusalem Cricket
- Desert Fence Lizard
- Curve-billed Thrasher
- No. Flicker
- Robin
- Tarantula
- Raven



While out, the group found a trail of coyote tracks. Roseann demonstrated how to set up and pour a casting.

Some of the Cutters @ Casa del Sol and beyond

Cerro Pedernal, @ Ghost Ranch elevation: 9,853'

10.22.24



rounds when I first hit the arroyo, ranc holes in base, not as expected - it!



beetle, not the same, reminded me of the 'stink bugs' in the Carson Valley -

atus
Arizona, CO and Texas.
35 Northern
Grows to 1.5 in length.
with yellow
striping.



Some of the Cutters @ Casa del Sol and beyond

ants and their mounds
I was surprised, when I first saw a mound at the arroyo, that the entrance holes were at the base, not the top, as expected - different!



Little Striped Whiptail - *Aspidoscelis inornatus*

found in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, as well as Northern Mexico. Grows to 6.5 to 9.5 inches in length. It is typically black with yellow or white striping.

Grand Canyon Black Tarantula

One of four different types of tarantula found in New Mexico



Darkling Beetle
These, although not the same, reminded me of the 'stink bugs' in the Carson Valley -



Roseann mulling paint



what should we name it?

Waiting
for
swatch of
the last
color

an empty pan,
waiting for the
last paint
sample

everyone got to take home paint
samples! I asked Roseann to fill
my metal mini pans from art
ToolKit, so I could add them to
my pocket Palette



Blops!

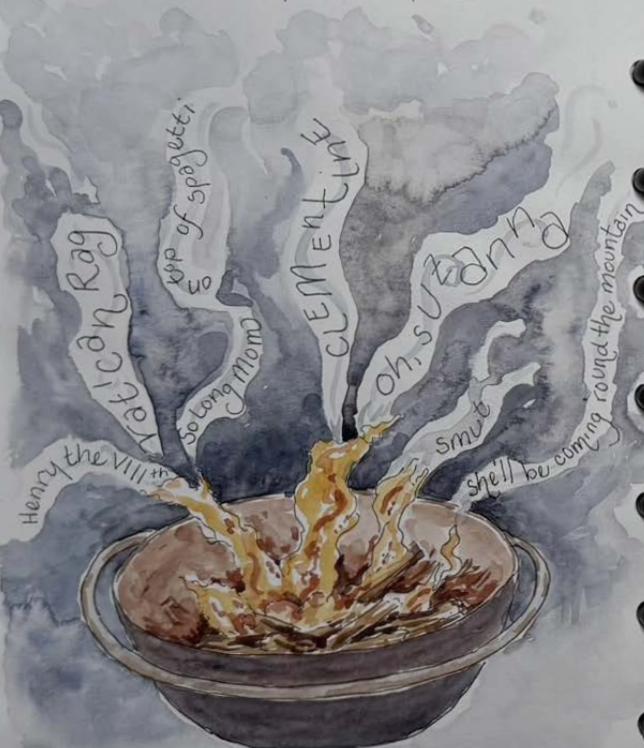
- We were not allowed to collect soil samples on the Ghost Ranch property, so Roseann and Shannon went off-property to collect soil/pigment samples.
- They brought back three different soils - red, grey and a deeper, darker, purple leaning red.
- Roseann processed all three samples, but only made two into paint - the red and the grey.

■ RED 36.3342 - 106.4933
■ GREY 36.33032 - 106.4874
□ DARKER RED 36.3149 - 106.4815

@approx elevation
of 6590 ft



Day 3 - An evening spent singing by the campfire



10.22.24

Day 3 - evening - October 22, 2024

after dinner, the fire was started in preparation of making s'mores... while the fire got hot and then the marshmallows were toasting, the group shared stories (of adventures old and new, of childhood memories, and of family traditions) and sang songs (also old and new, and some so funny everyone was laughing as much as singing)... it was the perfect ending to a perfect day!

I don't normally eat s'mores, they are just too sweet and too rich, but they always look so yummy! And, although I didn't this time, I will occasionally enjoy toasting marshmallows!



What's your perfect toasted marshmallow color?



Day 4 - October 23, 2024 - The Last Day
Low 44°F moon phase - last quarter ☽



I was awake at 3:45 am and, since I couldn't sleep, went for a stroll... I was rewarded with a lovely view of the big dipper over Puerto del Cielo.

This was our last day, and only a half day at that - I was not ready to say my good-byes to NM, Ghost Ranch, Casa del Sol, or friends - old and new... So, I wanted to take full advantage of the time left. Not only did I go out in the very early morning, after breakfast I went on a short walk looking for tracks... I found a lot, a trail of them - Coyote - on the road behind Eric & Shannon's and Graham's camps. Seemed even the coyote was saying good-bye -



TWSBI - Eco

Day 4 - October 23rd
the Schedule

- 9:00 Planning meet - checking-out details
- 9:15 Bushcraft Knives - by Jonathan
- 9:45 Sketching tips & techniques
- 10:30 luggage packed and in the court yard
- 11:00 shuttle to pick up cars parked at the visitor center
- 11:30 loading and leaving Casa del Sol
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch at the Ghost Ranch Dining Hall
- lastly, time to say good-byes - until next time!

h got a
cal is that?!
rs were EF.
to using a
mals. We
cleaning,
I cant
en!



Day 4 - October 23, 2024 - The Last Day
Low 44°F moon phase - last quarter ☽



TWSBI ECO Fine Nib Platinum Carbon Black Ink

- 1 minute
- 2 minute
- 3 minutes
- 4 minutes
- 5 minutes

This was our last day. I was not ready to leave Casa del Sol to take full advantage of the time left. So, I wanted to go out in the morning, after breakfast I went on a short walk looking for tracks... I found a lot, a trail of them - Coyote - on the road behind Eric & Shannon's and Graham's camps. Seeming even the coyote was saying good-bye -



TWSBI - Eco

Fountain Pen - F

In our 'goodie bags' we each got a TWSBI fountain pen! How cool is that?! Some were F nib, while others were EF. What an awesome introduction to using a fountain pen in our nature journals. We talked pen types, nibs, inks, cleaning, cautions, papers and more. I can't wait to get to know this pen!



Platinum Carbon ink
is a waterproof ink that
works well in this pen.

