

The Hidden Folk

DISCOVERING THE TINY
KEEPERS OF THE WILD

With Katrina Koltes

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Hello beautiful souls,

Welcome to ***“The Hidden Folk - Discovering the tiny keepers of the wild”***

In this lesson, we begin to open our eyes to the quiet magic of nature—learning to notice the small, often-overlooked wonders all around us.

As we attune our gaze to nature’s rhythms and patterns, something begins to shift. The artist within awakens, and we start to perceive the subtle presence of the little beings that live beside us—just beyond the edge of ordinary sight.

With this shift in perception, a magical portal opens. The hidden realms reveal themselves, and an entirely new dimension begins to unfold before us.

I hope you enjoy creating with me, and I can't wait to see your work of art! If you have any questions don't hesitate to reach out to me in the Facebook group.

Much love & light,
Katrina

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1. Gathering Inspiration & Creating from Nature

Now it's time to step outside and take a walk in nature.

Let your gaze soften and attune to textures, shapes, and patterns..
the delicate veins of a leaf, the spiral of a shell, the way sunlight dances across
tree bark.

Follow your curiosity, and allow the fairies to whisper clues about their world—how they might appear, what they wear, and the places they call home.

As you walk, notice what stirs within you. Pay attention to any feelings, words, images, or impressions that arise. These subtle messages may be part of the magic.

Gather little treasures from nature that speak to you—they may become part of your fairy's story.

And don't forget to bring your phone or camera to capture close-up details that inspire you along the way.

Here are the little treasures I discovered on my own walk.
While I encourage you to take your own wander through nature, if now's not the
time, you're most welcome to follow along and use my findings to spark your
imagination and create with me.



Here are the royalty-free images I found on Unsplash.com that look just like the squirrel and butterfly I encountered on my walk





Supply List

- A4 or A5 watercolor or mixed media **sketchbook**
- **Watercolors** (I used some earthy colors from Daniel Smith) & some metallics from Coliro
- A few different sized **watercolor brushes**
- **Color pencils**
- **Pencil & eraser**
- **Salt**
- **Water jar** and **napkins**
- A **pen** to write with
- **White gel pen** or **gouache**

2. Creating a Nature Library Page

Begin now to create a visual record of your discoveries.

On the left side of your notebook, sketch 4–7 natural elements you find intriguing.

This becomes your personal library of inspiration for your nature spirit.



2.Imagining the invisible

Using your gathered shapes and textures as ingredients, begin to dream up a magical being inspired by nature.

There are no limits! Let your imagination lead.

Do you notice any features or forms emerging in the elements you sketched?

Look closely—do the curves of a leaf resemble wings?

Do the textures of bark hint at scales or feathers?

Now imagine...How might this creature look? What shapes or colors would it borrow from its surroundings?

What might it wear—petals, moss, crystals, cobwebs? How would it move—flutter, slither, leap, or drift like a seed on the wind?

Let its habitat guide you. The forest, sea, sky, or stone might shape its entire being.

3.Story weaving & getting to know your creature

Develop a short story or backstory for your nature spirit. This deepens your connection and gives shape to your vision.

Ask questions like:

- **Where does it live?**

Deep in a forest? High in the clouds? Beneath the waves? Inside a flower? Is its environment peaceful, mysterious, dangerous, magical?

- **What time of day does it feel most alive?**

Dawn, twilight, midnight, midday? Is it a creature of sunlight, moonlight, or starlight?

- **How old is it?**

A young and curious spirit? An ancient being full of wisdom and stories?

- **What kind of personality does it have?**

Playful and mischievous? Quiet and observant? Fierce and protective? Gentle and nurturing?

- **What emotions does it carry or bring to others?**

Joy, comfort, awe, mystery, courage, melancholy?

- **What kind of energy surrounds it?**

A shimmering glow? A swirling wind? A warm hum? A trail of petals or fireflies?

- **How does it move?**

Slowly and gracefully, like falling leaves? With quick flickers, like a darting dragonfly? Floating, flying, slithering, dancing?

- **Does it make a sound?**

A chime, a whisper, a roar, a rustle, a purr?

- **What colors and textures belong to it?**

Are they soft and earthy, bold and fiery, translucent and glowing?

- **What role does it play in its world?**

A guardian, a trickster, a healer, a dream-weaver, a messenger?

As you begin to weave the story of your creature, something magical happens—it starts to take shape.

A personality emerges, a presence stirs. Is it ancient or newly born? Bold or bashful?

With each detail you imagine, with every whisper of its world, your creature begins to breathe. It may dwell in moonlit forests or coral caves, sing in the rain or dance with fireflies.

Let your heart guide you. The more you listen, the more it will be revealed.

This is where art and story meet—where your creature comes alive, not just in paint or pencil, but in spirit.

Here's a traceable sketch you can use if it feels more comfortable, like a gentle guide as you bring your fairy to life.



4. Bringing your sketches to life with color

Now it's time to bring your creature fully to life with watercolor.

You can use colors that reflect the natural elements you've drawn inspiration from—mossy greens, ocean blues, earthy browns, or petal-soft pinks.

Or, you can let your imagination take the lead and shift into a more whimsical, fantastical palette.. glowing purples, shimmering golds, or unexpected bursts of color. Let the story you've created guide you.

Think about where your creature lives, what kind of energy it carries, and what makes it unique. Your colors can whisper its personality... or sing it out loud.

Stay loose. Don't worry about staying inside the lines.

In fact, the more spontaneous and freer your brushstrokes are, the more character your creature will have.

Magic lives in imperfections. Let the paint wander, let the colors mingle. You're not just coloring in—you're breathing the soul into your creation.



5. Adding depth & detail

Adding a second watercolor layer brings more depth and contrast to your creature. Once it's dry, you can also use colored pencils to highlight certain areas and make details pop.

These finishing touches help your creature come alive even more—layer by layer, it reveals its magic.



In your free time, begin building your own reference library—a treasure chest of ideas and sketches you can return to again and again.

These exercises are meant to be fun and exploratory, not perfect! Create as many little creatures as you like, inspired by nature finds. Use real objects, photographs, or even your imagination. Think variety—day vs. night creatures, young and old, male or female, playful or wise.

Keep it loose, playful, and expressive. You're not just practicing—you're gathering magical tools for your future creations.

And here is the final painting of Bernie, the wild child
Full of mischief, magic, and a spirit as untamed as the wind!

Bernie 'is a Wild-child.

He's never still for long, and
he knows every inch of the hillside
like the back of his hand.

His best friends are squirrels, which
he rides recklessly through the fields.

He lives for the wind & sunlight,
his carefree spirit reminds
us that the world is still full
of wonder, for those who
dare to play.

Bernie loves hopping about

the sunflowers, and when
pesty little critters try to sneak
in, he blows his trumpet and
charges in, just to stir up some
fun.



I hope you've enjoyed this journey with me...

Wandering through nature's wonder, tuning in to the whispers of the unseen, and letting curiosity lead the way.

May this process reconnect you with the quiet magic that lives within - the gentle place where imagination stirs and your inner world begins to bloom.

I can't wait to see what magic unfolds on your own page—and all the hidden folk who line up, eager for their very own portrait.

With love and fairy light,
Katrina

Continue your journey with me:

Paint with me in-person: <https://katrinakoltes.com/retreats/>

Paint with me online: <https://katrinakoltes.com/96-2/art-workshops/>

Collect my Artwork: <https://katrinakoltes.com/shop/>



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