

DRAWING FROM NATURE
Science and Art Lessons for Kids
Los Angeles Times Kids' Reading Room Page



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[Purple sage](#) is a native plant commonly found in our Santa Monica Mountains. Its botanical name is *Salvia leucophylla* (SAL-vee-uh look-koh-FIL-uh): *Salvia* for its healing powers and *leucophylla* meaning "with white leaves." Purple refers to the color of its flowers, which typically bloom in the spring. After studying purple sage, siblings Nomi, 7, and Tom, 6, drew this colorful and fragrant plant. Then, with their parents' help, they turned their illustration into a fun jigsaw puzzle.

The children learned that purple sage is a member of the mint family and one of several species of coastal sage scrub. It is one of the largest sage shrubs native to California.

"Hummingbirds, wasps and bees really like the smell of purple sage," explains Nomi. The leaves and oils of this and other aromatic sage species are often used in seasonings and perfumes.

Nomi and Tom began by covering their work area with newspapers. They gathered colored construction paper, craft scissors, watercolor markers and white glue.

First they drew their designs on the construction paper. Then their mom used blunt craft scissors to cut out the stems, leaves and flowers.

Nomi put the pieces on the tan background and glued them into place. Using markers, she added more leaves, stems and details to the purple flowers.

Once their illustration dried, their father cut it into 12 big pieces to make a jigsaw puzzle.

"I had fun putting it back together again!" said Tom.

Great job, kids!