

What is Botanical Illustration?

Botanical illustration is the accurate pictorial depiction of plants and plant traits for a scientific reason or use. Botanical artists can draw attention to the important parts of plants using art.

Botanical illustrators use observations of living plants, pressed or dried plants, pictures, identification keys, and specimens to draw from. They can use pencils, pens, computers, tablets, cameras, and more.

If you like art and science you could become a botanical illustrator too, or you could illustrate field guides for butterflies, skulls, animals, human bodies, medicine, or more!

Did you know that you can search the Botany Collections of the Smithsonian?

<https://collections.nmnh.si.edu/search/botany/>



<https://naturalhistory.si.edu/research/botany/news-and-highlights/women-us-national-herbarium>

Marsh Plant

Botanical Illustration



Using your skills of observation, on the paper provided, draw the cardinal flower and its leaf in as much detail as possible. Include scientific information like the veins of the leaf and how many petals the flowers have.



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sloalan/22032547978/>



Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)

Ways of Shading



Stippling Highlighting Crosshatch Combination Straight lines