



## Creating a Project for the New Year

Each year, we talk about following one or more plants throughout the months or seasons.

Working on a particular theme helps to keep our work focused especially when our time is limited. It is a way to expand our knowledge base, build competence, and gain confidence in our work.

I took a workshop with Dorota Haber-Lehigh two years ago in January and she asked us to gather six or more conifer samples and draw them. That involved finding and identifying and discovering the trees in my neighborhood. I found it very educational and enjoy seeing those same trees every day when I take my walk.

Having a focus can also help develop our ability to plan if we are doing a project geared toward an end, like a finished painting, an exhibit, a florilegium.

- ❖ Think about a project for the new year
  - Follow one specific plant through the seasons
  - Focus on a single subject- oak trees, leaves, roses
  - Study a habitat, your garden, your neighborhood, the Laguna watershed.
- ❖ Find a subject that really fascinates you and makes you want to learn more. Something that can excite you.
- ❖ Dedicate a sketchbook to that subject and/or keep a file of information and sketches, etc.
- ❖ Do research and create study pages
- ❖ Consider including companion plants animal life, pollinators.
- ❖ Enjoy the process!



*Each new year is a surprise to us. We find that we had virtually forgotten the note of each bird, and when we hear it again, it is remembered like a dream, reminding us of a previous state of existence. How happens it that the associations it awakens are always pleasing, never saddening, reminiscences of our sanest hours. The voice of nature is always encouraging. ... Henry David Thoreau*