



In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
Julia Colbert

will present her scientific paper

**Exploring Sustainability Literacy through
Nature Journaling in School Gardens**

Thursday, April 2, 2020
10:00am
via [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 120-437-779)

Faculty, students, and the general public are invited.

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Eileen Merritt, Co-Chair
Dr. Daniel Fischer, Co-Chair
Dr. Sallie Marston, Member

Abstract

Nature journaling in school gardens is a unique way to engage students in the natural world, providing time to notice, wonder, and observe through writing and drawing while engaging in environmental and sustainability learning. With the number of school gardens increasing in the United States, educators can benefit from understanding what students experience while participating in garden-based learning activities so they can adapt their teaching to fit the educational needs of their participants. School garden studies typically focus on measuring academic and health outcomes and nature journaling studies typically focus on educator experiences with one classroom. We facilitated a nature journaling study with four elementary classrooms in a public, Title I school in the desert southwest to explore student experiences while nature journaling in their school garden. Our findings show that nature journaling provides opportunities for students to engage in sustainability literacy by helping them to develop a sense of place in their school garden, inspire environmental stewardship, and practice systems thinking right outside their classrooms.