

Explorers Map

Early ecological explorers sailed the oceans, wound their way through jungle forests, climbed mountains and volcanos, and crossed lands completely unknown to them, often for years at a time, to make new discoveries and advance our knowledge of the natural world. [\(View a storymap about the explorations of Bougainville, Humboldt and Darwin\)](#). Their detailed observations and recordings allowed them to share information with fellow investigators and to develop theories explaining the patterns and diversity of nature.

For this exercise, you do not need to pack for a year's long sea voyage, but choose a location to spend about an hour exploring and recording. To get started, find an interesting plant, landform or other feature and make a sketch of it at a corner of your journal page. Then draw a dashed line that shows the rout to the next interesting natural feature that you come across. Make a quick sketch of that feature and move on. Along the way, record other natural phenomena such as birds flying overhead and their trajectories, animal tracks, insects, sounds, and smells. You never know what odd bit of information recorded will lead you to a great discovery later!

Your map should look something like: *Image from California Native Plant Society*

