Growing Patterns

Fibonacci Numbers in Nature

Sarah C. Campbell

Photographs by
Sarah C. Campbell
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—*S.C.C.*

A seed grows into a plant.
When it is all grown up, it might be
a tuft of grass, a daisy, or a tree.
The seed has built-in instructions for how
the plant will grow.
What shape will it be?
What size?
What color?

This peace lily has white flowers—
always with one petal.
The number of petals on a flower and the
shapes and patterns they make come from
two things: the plant's instructions and its
growing conditions.

This is a crown of thorns.
Count the petals.

This is a spiderwort.
Count the petals.

This is a flowering quince.
Count the petals.

This is a cosmos.
Count the petals.

The numbers go higher and higher,
always following the same rule.
The number after 8 is:
5 plus 8, which equals 13.

1 + 1 = 2
1 + 2 = 3
2 + 3 = 5
3 + 5 = 8
5 + 8 = 13
8 + 13 = 21
13 + 21 = 34

5 + 8 = 13