Junior Ranger Activity Booklet

Passport Stamp

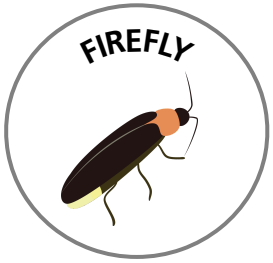
This booklet belongs to:

Cover by Stephen Chesley (photograph of a watercolor)

Welcome to Congaree!

To become a Congaree Junior Ranger:

- **Complete at least as many activities as are listed below for your age. Look for the pages with your symbol on them:**



Ages 4-7
Complete 3 activities

Ages 8-10
Complete 6 activities

Ages 11+
Complete 8 activities

When finished...

- **Write how many activities you completed here: _____**
- **Have a ranger or park volunteer review and sign your book**
- **Be sworn in as a Junior Ranger by reciting the official pledge and receiving your badge**
- **Help protect Congaree for future visitors and Junior Rangers!**

Congaree National Park

is proud to bestow upon

_____

(write your name here)

the title of

Junior Ranger

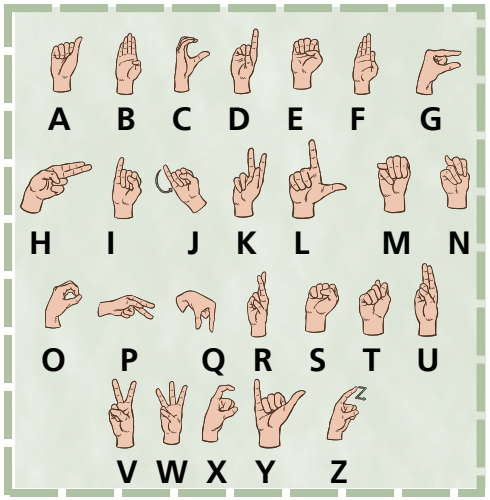
Pledge: As a Junior Ranger, I promise to protect and preserve every animal and tree, and the history of Congaree.

_____

Park Ranger/Volunteer

Enjoy and Protect your Park

Our National Parks are here for all people to enjoy now and in the future. So that we can all have the best and safest experience, it's important to follow certain guidelines.



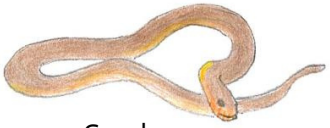
Use the sign language symbols in the box to break the code and find out how you can help.

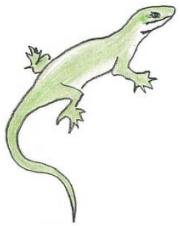
- Always carry a
- Dress appropriately for the __ __ __ __ __ __ __ and __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
- __ __ __ __ __ plenty of __ __ __ __ __
- Do not __ __ __ __ the __ __ __ __ __ __ __
- __ __ __ __ __ __ __ of __ __ __ __ __ properly
- Leave __ __ __ __ __ __ and __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

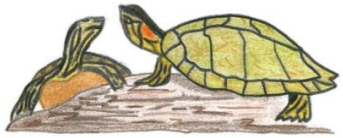
where you find them.

Scavenger Hunt

As you explore Congaree, look and listen all around you.
Circle the pictures of the things you see or hear.


Snake

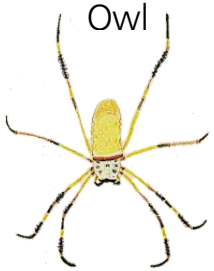

Anole

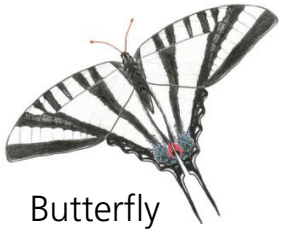

Turtle

Owl

Hawk

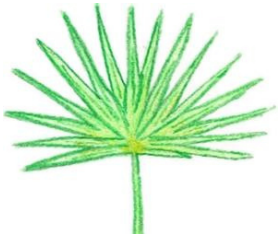
Woodpecker


Spider


Butterfly

Cypress Knee

Snag


Dwarf Palmetto

Crawfish Chimney

Illustrations by VIP Carol Gist / John Cely

How Did Congaree Come to Be?

Read the story and find the underlined words in the word search on page 4.

Congaree National Park preserves a landscape **shaped** by water and the many people who lived in the floodplain. Named after the Congaree people who once lived in this **region**, the park was home for nomads, wilderness **explorers**, and those escaping **slavery**. People have watched this **ecosystem** grow for the past 10,000 years but, as Congaree grew, so did our nation. With the need for lumber on the rise, loggers began cutting the massive trees **you** see today. A **South** Carolina local, named Harry Hampton, **knew** this area was the last of its kind and needed to be preserved. With enough **effort** from Hampton and other activists, Congaree was designated as a **National** Monument in 1976. Being the largest remaining tract of old growth bottomland hardwood forest in the United States, Congaree is home to a wide range of critters. Recognized internationally for its biodiversity and globally important bird area, Congaree was redesignated as a National Park in 2003.

*****Unscramble the first letter of each word to reveal a mystery phrase at the end!**

Hey, Ranger!

There are all kinds of different rangers in a National Park. There are historians, accountants, law enforcement officers, biologists, photographers and more. All of them work together to protect our parks now and for future generations. **Find a ranger or volunteer and ask these questions to learn about their job.**

What kind of work do you do? _____

What is something you enjoy about your job? _____

_____

Why did you decide to work or volunteer for the National Park Service?

_____

_____

Future Rangers

Parks like Congaree will always need people like you to protect and preserve them. **What kind of ranger or volunteer would you like to be**? Read about the many hats National Park rangers wear and circle the one you might want to wear one day!

Interpretation

These rangers teach visitors about the park, give programs and tours, and help plan trips.

Wildlife Biologist

Biologist rangers study plants and wildlife to understand how to protect their habitat.

Law Enforcement

Law Enforcement (LE) rangers protect the park and visitors by investigating crimes, directing traffic, and conducting search and rescue missions.

Wildland Firefighter

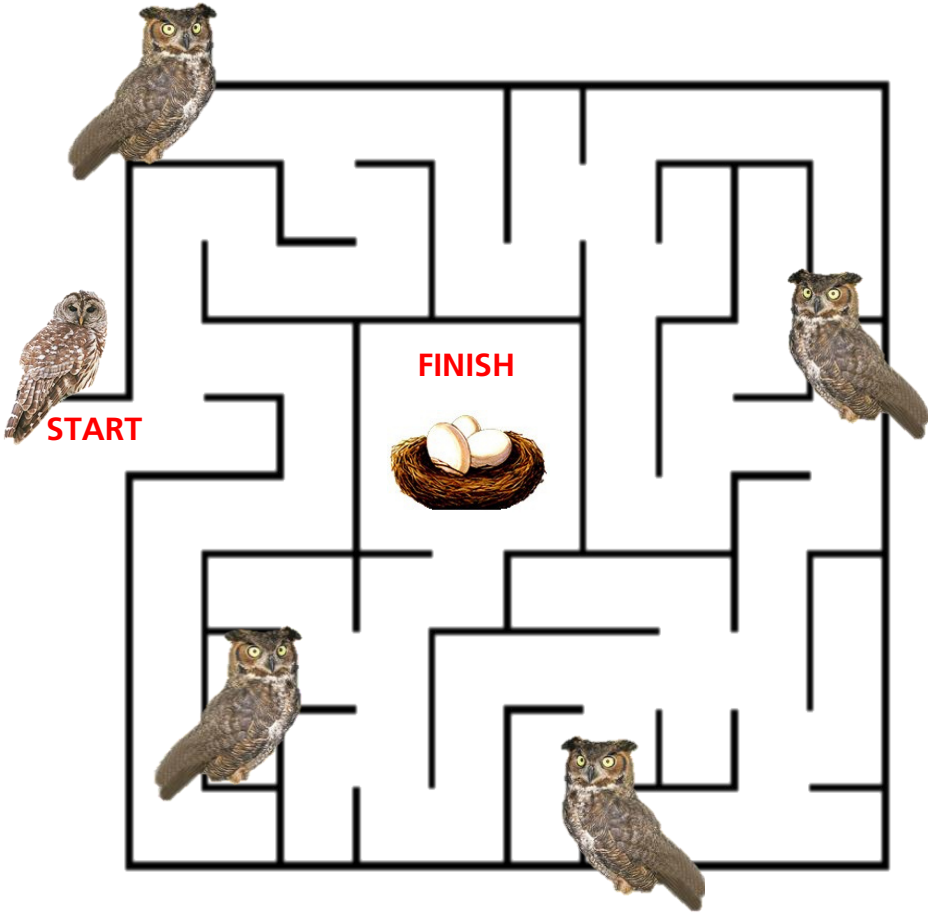
These rangers put out destructive wildfires, but they may also start controlled fires that help the park's ecosystem.

Owl Maze

Betty the Barred Owl has been out hunting tonight. The Great Horned Owls are out hunting for smaller owls, like Betty, and for owlet eggs.

Help Betty find her way through the maze and to her nest safely by avoiding her predators.

Draw a line showing the route she should take.



How Did Congaree Come to Be?

L	T	A	B	U	E	D	E	W	Z	N	P	K	U	K	T	Q	B
C	E	H	T	O	F	C	X	P	P	W	P	U	C	J	G	R	E
W	X	T	G	C	F	Z	P	H	R	W	E	C	N	Y	J	D	C
R	C	S	P	T	O	B	L	G	E	G	S	U	A	W	R	A	O
G	D	O	D	E	R	U	O	W	S	Y	L	C	T	N	E	X	S
Q	M	K	N	X	T	G	R	Y	E	J	A	T	I	R	G	U	Y
V	K	P	U	G	V	L	E	D	R	Q	V	Y	O	U	I	R	S
G	C	W	S	B	A	V	R	O	V	U	E	P	N	K	O	Y	T
F	I	H	U	L	K	R	S	P	E	V	R	T	A	I	N	O	E
I	C	M	G	L	K	N	E	W	S	S	Y	M	L	S	T	Q	M
K	O	F	K	S	H	A	P	E	D	S	H	K	N	V	Z	V	Z
U	J	P	V	S	G	C	Y	U	C	J	X	S	O	U	T	H	D

Unscramble your letters here!

One of Congaree's most famous trees was favored by builders for bridges, roof shingles, and cabinetry. The name of this tree is part of your mystery phrase!

Mystery Phrase: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

What is a Floodplain?

Congaree National Park lies in the floodplain of the Congaree River. Sometimes, the Congaree River floods, and the water spills over its banks and into the floodplain, covering most of the park in its nutrient-rich moving water. The creek within the park, Cedar Creek, can also flood when the Congaree River floods.

A river or creek's threshold or flood stage is the highest water level before the water overflows its banks. The Congaree River's threshold is about 15 feet, and Cedar Creek's threshold is about 8 feet. The water level can rise high enough to cover the elevated boardwalk!

Be a Junior Ranger scientist by using the data **posted outside the visitor center** to complete the chart. Then read and answer the question at the bottom.

Today's Date:	Water Level	Above or Below its flood stage?
Congaree River		
Cedar Creek		

What does this data tell you about the floodplain right now?

_____

Your Life, My Life

Compare and contrast how the Congaree Indians and Maroon Communities lived by answering these questions.

Where did they live? _____

_____

_____

How did they get their food? _____

_____

_____

What problems did these two groups face?

_____

_____

What are some differences between how you live and how the Congaree Indians and Maroon Communities lived?

_____

_____

_____

Cultural History

Congaree National Park did not always appear as it does today. The first known residents of the area, the Congaree Indians, lived in houses made of sticks and clay in a small village on the bluffs, across the Congaree River from what is now the park. They used the floodplain for hunting and fishing, often crossing the river. They raised crops such as corn, beans, and squash. The number of Congaree declined in the late 1600s and remaining members joined the Catawba in the early 1700s.

Maroon Communities of enslaved people seeking freedom lived in floodplains, like Congaree, and swamps throughout the South. These areas, often unexplored due to flooding, wildlife, and even cypress knees, were a relatively safe hiding place. Living on high ground in structures made of available materials, the residents raised crops such as corn and rice. Hunting plentiful fish and wildlife contributed significantly to their diet. Although enslaved people were provided freedom in Maroon Communities, there were still threats to their safety and the longevity of their settlements.

The Arrowhead

The National Park System includes over 400 units in the United States, and just like Congaree National Park, they are all unique and special places. These areas include national parks, monuments, military parks, seashores, historic sites, recreation areas, and numerous others.

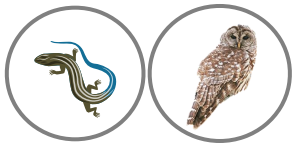
All of these special places belong to YOU to explore and enjoy.

The arrowhead on the right is the emblem of the National Park Service. Each symbol in the arrowhead represents something the National Park Service protects and preserves. Fill in each blank below with a symbol from the word bank:

The _____ represents all plants.
The _____ represents all animals.
The _____ represents the human history of our nation.
The _____ and __ represent all landscapes and water resources.

Word Bank

bison	river	mountain
sequoia tree		arrowhead



(*Your Park*) Action Now!

In the visitor center museum and in the *How Did Congaree Come to Be* activity you can read about Harry Hampton and the grassroots campaign to preserve the Congaree floodplain. Stories like this remind us that ordinary people can make a difference.

Think of a place that's special to you. If you were campaigning to preserve that place as a part of the National Park System, how would you describe it? What do you think makes that place special? _____

_____

_____

Now design your own campaign poster in the box to the right.
You might choose to draw the place you have in mind or write some words about it!

_____
(your park name)
ACTION NOW!

(Your Animal) in the Floodplain

Now that you know a little more about floodplains and the animals that live in them, it's time to **create your own animal** with traits that would help them survive in Congaree!

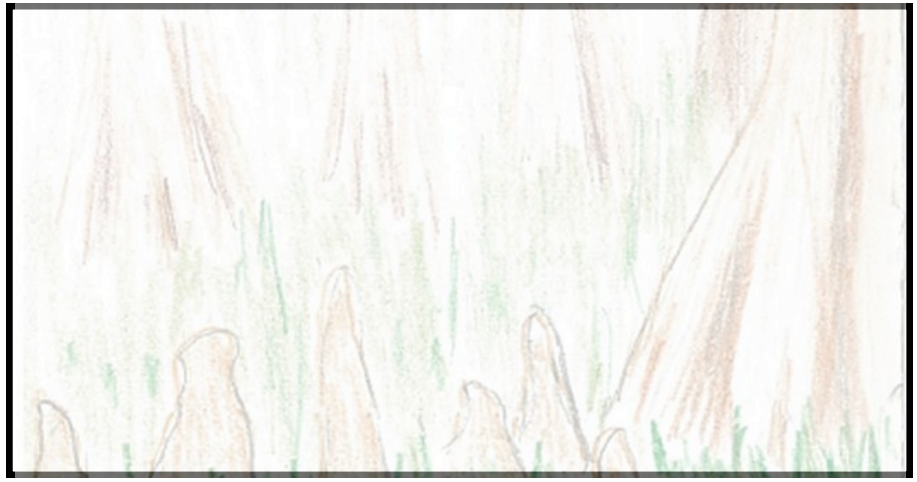
Read below about the adaptations of the three animals we've used throughout this book. Use the space below to combine traits from each of them to create a new animal that is adapted to life here. Will it be a flying feathered skink that glows in the dark? Or a reptilian owl the size of a firefly?

+ +

Firefly Adaptations
- Likes warm and wet weather
- Active in darkness
- Glows to discourage predators

Skink Adaptations
- Cold-blooded
- Muscular tail to help them move quickly
- Bright colors to discourage predators

Owl Adaptations
- Soft feathers for silent flight
- Night vision
- Excellent hearing



Draw your new animal here!