

GRAYSON HIGHLANDS STATE PARK

JUNIOR RANGERS

Self-Guided Booklet



Did you know the possum is also
known as the Virginia opossum,
Didelphis virginiana.

Welcome to Junior Rangers!

We're excited to have you here at Grayson Highlands to become a Junior Ranger! Rangers play an important part in the Virginia State Park system. We're glad you decided to join us in this important mission.

After you've completed the activities, take the completed booklet to the Park Office, Camp Store, or Visitor Center and have a Ranger sign it to receive your Junior Ranger sticker!

To begin your adventure:

Ages 5-8: Complete 5 activities in this booklet

Ages 9-12: Complete 8 activities in this booklet

Enjoy your journey, and please remember to explore carefully to help preserve the park! Most importantly, HAVE FUN!

Leave No Trace

1. **Plan ahead and prepare** - Know the park rules
2. **Travel and camp on firm surfaces** - Hike on trails and camp in campsites
3. **Dispose of waste properly** - Pack it in, Pack it out
4. **Leave what you find** - Don't pick flowers or leaves. Do not take any natural souvenirs
5. **Minimize campfire impact** - Make sure your fire is out before you leave
6. **Respect wildlife** - Do not feed or touch the wildlife. Keep your distance
7. **Be considerate of other visitors** - Keep your voices down so everyone can enjoy the sounds of nature

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This certificate confirms that

_____ has successfully completed all the necessary activities and is now an official

Grayson Highlands State Park
Junior Ranger

Park Ranger

Date

Nature Journal

Find a quiet place in the park with lots of plants that look like they could be a good habitat for different animals and birds. Sit and observe the area for about 5 minutes. Using the box below, draw what you observe. What animals, plants, or natural features did you observe? Fill in the information below to record your observation like a true naturalist!

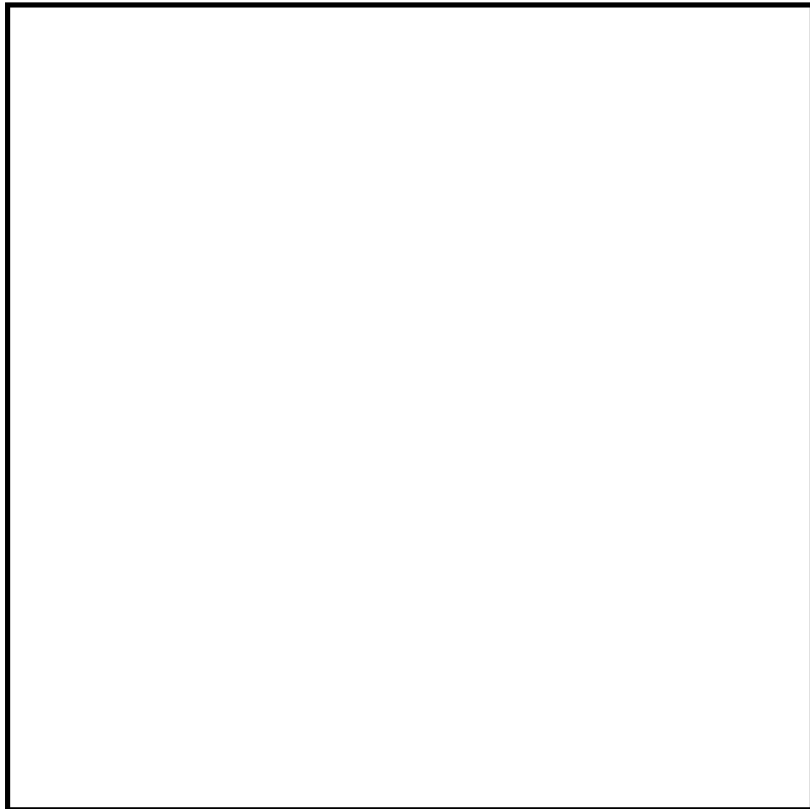
Observation Area

Location:

Date:

Weather:

Time:



Hello, My Name Is:

Ranger



What Do Park Rangers Do?

Contact Rangers welcome our park guests at entry points, visitor centers, and camp store. They are typically the first person the guests encounter and interact with.

Law Enforcement Rangers are here to help. They keep our guests safe by enforcing the rules and responding to emergencies.

Maintenance Rangers keep the park looking nice. They maintain our facilities and natural resources.

Interpretive Rangers educate park guests and lead activities that help people understand the natural, cultural, and historical resources that make Grayson Highlands special.

Safety First

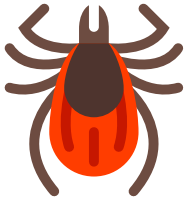
Junior Rangers need to be aware of potential dangers while exploring outdoors. Please read this page carefully so you know what to look out for.

Poison Ivy

You may run across this plant growing as a bush or a fuzzy vine. The leaves are shiny and grow in clusters of 3. They can have either smooth or notched edges. Poison Ivy contains *urushiol*, an oil that causes a serious allergic reaction or rash.



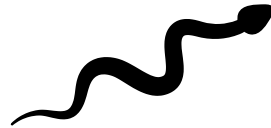
Ticks



Ticks can make you very itchy and some carry disease. If you find a tick on you, tell an adult so they can help you remove it. Do NOT burn or use oils to remove them. Use a pair of tweezers to pull them away from your skin.

Snakes

There are many snake species that can be found in Grayson Highlands, but the only venomous snakes in the park are the timber rattlesnake and copperhead. If you come across a snake, give it plenty of space and back away slowly.



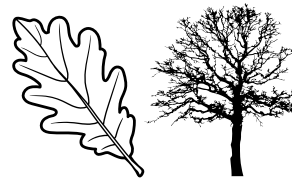
Did you know?

Venomous must bite something to release their toxin.

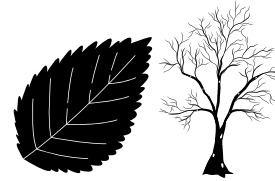
Poisonous animals must be eaten to release their toxin.

Tree Treasure Hunt

Trees are a treasure. They give us oxygen to breathe and food to eat. They supply wood for furniture and other products, as well as beauty and color to our natural world. Below are pictured leaves of some of the most common tree species at Grayson Highlands. As you are exploring the park, try to find each species.



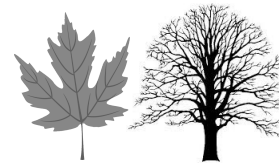
Where Did you find it? _____
Hint: Look in the picnic area
How tall is it? _____
Who lives in it or on it? _____



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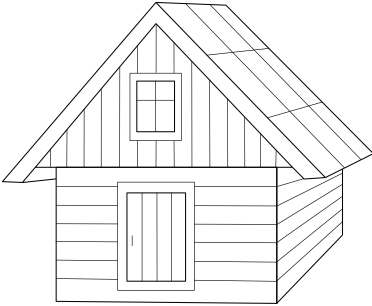


Where Did you find it? _____
Hint: Look in the picnic area
How tall is it? _____
Who lives in it or on it? _____

Homestead Area

Down in the Picnic Area of the park, you can find the historic Homestead Area. Here you can find several different buildings including cabins, barns, and a spring house arranged as they might have been by the settlers who lived here hundreds of years ago.

This region was first settled in the 1760s, and it was a tough place to live. Settlers had to live off the land and find a way to make anything they couldn't grow. The closest town was a week-long trip away and the weather here can be very unforgiving.



Walk around and imagine yourself as a settler moving into this area. How tough do you think it would be to live here?

Look inside the Weaver Cabin. Can you think of anything you have at your home that you don't see here? What do you think the settlers would have used instead?

Take a look at the Spring House. What was it used for ? What do we use today instead?

Plant Riddles

There are many different species of plants here at Grayson Highlands. Each one serves a special purpose and some are even unique to this area.

Read the clues for each plant and fill in the blanks. If you get stumped, use the code at the bottom of the page to help you out.

I am an evergreen that is usually found at higher elevations. Many people use my wood to make instruments, especially guitars. My branches make a great place for birds to make nests.

5 18 17 6 3 5 8 16 18

I am a small green plant whose leaves deer love to eat. I can be found in many fields throughout the park. If you find me with four leaves, your luck just might change.

16 25 2 9 18 5

I am a bush that grows a tasty treat. You can pick me from late July to August. Bears love to snack on me.

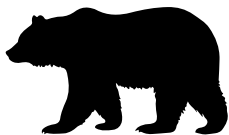
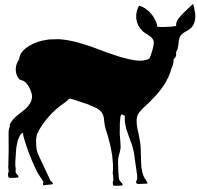
15 25 8 18 15 18 5 5 12

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Animal Tracks

Animal tracks are everywhere here in Grayson Highlands. Next time you're out on a hike, pay attention and see what animal tracks you can find. You never know who walked the trail before you.

Match the tracks to the animals that left them behind.



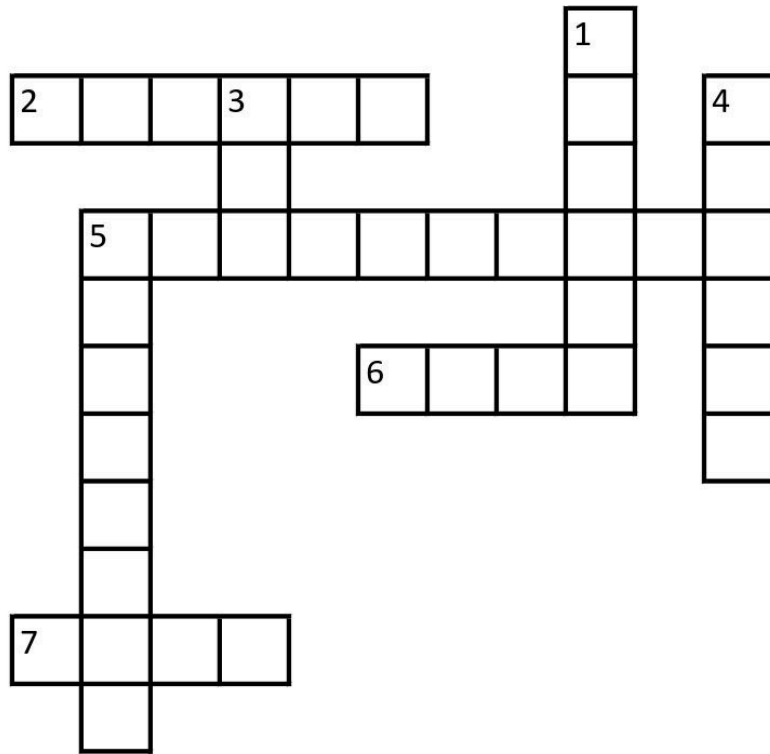
Post Card

If you were going to send a postcard to a friend with your favorite activity at Grayson Highlands, what would it look like?

A rectangular postcard template. In the top left corner is a postage stamp area with a scalloped border, containing two circular postmark designs and wavy cancellation lines. To the right of the stamp are four vertical lines for an address. A horizontal line is positioned below the address lines, separating the address area from the message area.

Animal Crossword

Use the clues to fill in the crossword of animals you may spot in the park



Across







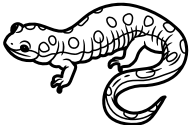



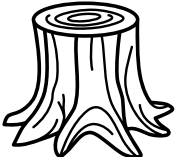





2. You might think I'm a wolf when you hear me howling at night
5. Looks like a lizard but has moist skin
6. Large mammal black in color
7. Commonly seen in fields in the evening. Adult males have antlers

Down

1. Insect with 8 legs that makes webs
3. Bird of prey that hoots at night
4. Large bird that makes a gobble sound
5. Climbs trees and stores acorns for winter

Nature Scavenger Hunt

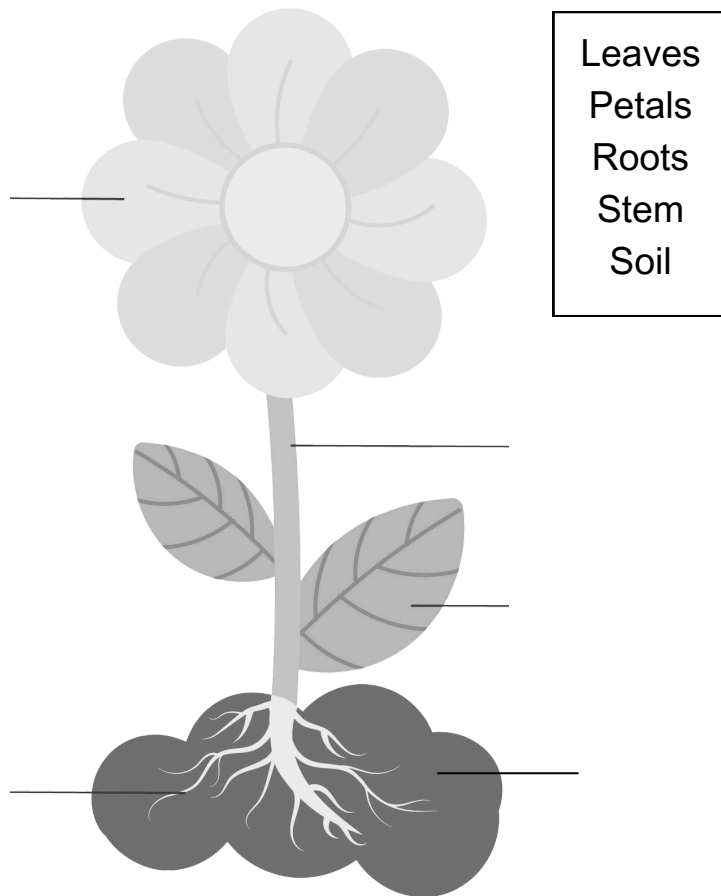
Mark off what you find while exploring the park

 Mushroom	 Bird	 Wildflower	 Squirrel
 Animal Tracks	 Butterfly	 Salamander	 Spider
 Pinecone	 Creek	 Tree Stump	 Scat
 Clover	 Cloud	 Bench	 Appalachian Trail

Label a Flower

Photosynthesis is the process where plants transform light energy into chemical energy. Plants use this energy to make their own food. The light energy they captured is used to convert carbon dioxide, water, and minerals into oxygen.

Label the parts of the flower using the word bank below



Aquatic Anagram

Did you know there are many streams and creeks in the park where you can fish? One of these places is Wilson Creek, easily accessed from the campground, where you can find native brook trout. These graceful fish need clean, cold waters to live in, so they are excellent indicators of how healthy the stream is.

Unscramble the letters in these aquatic related anagrams

dryogyloh _____

nisoser _____

hsif _____

erkec _____

hrsef rteaw _____

amdranlsae _____

rfy _____

aftlrawle _____

ramets _____

okrbo otutr _____

Fresh Water, Brook Trout, Creek, Stream, Fish,
Waterfall, Salamander, Erosion, Fry, Hydrology

