



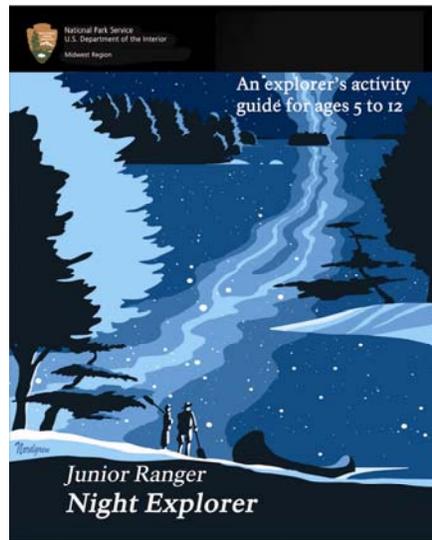
The Voyageur Messenger

Calling all Night Explorers!

In 2011, visitors to Voyageurs National Park could choose to attend a variety of naturalist-led programs. These programs included: boat tours to Kettle Falls Hotel and Dam, Little American Island, Harry Oveson's Fish Camp, Ellsworth Rock Gardens, and Hoist Bay; or paddle trips back in time aboard a 26-foot North Canoe like the voyageurs used. Each visitor had several options to experience and learn about Voyageurs National Park.

Starting in 2012, visitors to the park will have a set of new opportunities to experience the park. Along with the regular naturalist-led program schedule, visitors will also be able to attend a variety of new Night Explorer programs.

What is a Night Explorer? Thanks to Voyageurs' isolated location away from urban areas with significant light pollution, the park features some of the darkest night skies in the National Park Service. Night Explorer programs focus on educating visitors about the park's night life and skies. Each program gives visitors a chance to experience a naturally dark



Junior Ranger Night Explorer Activity Booklet, Ages 5 – 12. Available at any of the park's three visitor centers.

night at Voyageurs National Park firsthand.

Visitors will have a variety of different Night Explorer programs from which to choose. Programs range from beginner to advanced and will occur in many locations throughout the year. Winter visitors learned about night sky phenomena during a snowshoe full moon hike along the Oberholtzer Trail. Spring visitors can attend telescope viewing sessions. Summer visitors can attend solar telescope viewing sessions, night hikes, meteor shower viewing and lawn chair stargazing programs.

Just for Kids! Kids ages 5 – 12 can pick up a NEW Junior Ranger Night Explorer activity booklet at any of the park's three visitor centers.

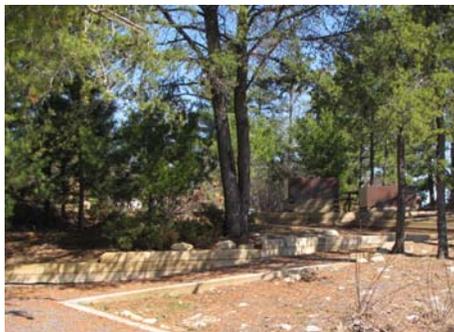
The booklet contains activities focused on the solar system, universe, and night sky. All children, regardless of whether or not they attend a Night Explorer program during their visit, can complete the booklet and become official Night Explorers and earn a special Night Explorer patch.

The booklet was designed in part and revised by Voyageurs National Park. It has become the Midwest Region's official Junior Ranger Night Explorer booklet.



Northern lights near Voyageurs National Park in March 2012. Photo by Burgess Eberhardt

Sunrise Point Accessible Campsite



Accessible entrance to Sunrise Point campsite.

In 2011, Voyageurs National Park added an accessible campsite on Rainy Lake. Sunrise Point, also known as R26, was converted from a small campsite to a large accessible campsite for visitors.

The conversion included the installation of a dock and accessible trail, a hardened core area with a picnic table and fire ring, two bear proof food storage lockers, an accessible privy, and a raised tent pad.

The campsite work was completed using both permanent and seasonal park staff. Mark Goulet, one of the park's carpenters, was the project lead. Mark led a crew of three summer seasonal staff which included Keith Stevens, Von Morgan and Derek Dowty. This crew has constructed other campsites and did an excellent job with layout and construction of this new accessible facility.

R26 is now a reservation only campsite. Visitors who have a disability may reserve the campsite by calling the Rainy Lake Visitor Center at 218- 286-5258. The site is free, but a free overnight permit is required. The park can provide a mechanical lift at the visitor center and at the site. If visitors are in need of a lift, please notify park staff when making a reservation. Lifts are only available upon request.

Reservations can be made 7 days in advance of a stay starting Saturday, May 19, 2012 and going through Sunday, September 30, 2012. The Rainy Lake Visitor Center is open Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Environmental Education at the Park

The National Park Service recently released its *A Call to Action* plan. Within this plan, Environmental Education is a fundamental part of the strategies and goals the park service wants to further implement.

Since 1996, Voyageurs National Park has had an Environmental Education program. Today, it continues to be a growing program within the park. For the past three years Kim Reich has served as the park's Education Specialist. She has been in the education field more than 13 years and started with Voyageurs in the fall of 2009. Kim not only conducts programs from January through May, and for two weeks each September, but also writes education curriculum; oversees the handling of the park's education trunks; manages the National Park Week celebrations and Kids Art Contest; coordinates the night sky special speaker series; and staffs the Rainy Lake Visitor Center front desk.

Kim has had some interesting and fun encounters while working with children. "Being able to see the kids year after year is such fun," said Kim. She relates a time when she was in International Falls this past winter and a student came up to her and asked if she worked at Voyageurs National Park. Kim replied, "Yes, I do." He then went on to tell her about when his class was at the park and how the visit was something he will always remember.

This statement, in itself, tells us to continue to do what we do.

Kim's biggest challenge is getting the schools to the park. Funding for school transportation can be a concern for teachers and parents alike, so when the park receives travel grants for education, the number of students participating increases. In 2011 and 2012, Voyageurs National Park

Association (VNPA), along with the Donald Weesner Foundation, provided \$8,000 in travel grants for schools to come to Voyageurs and experience a national park.

Since 2009, the park has seen more than a 55% increase in the number of students attending Environmental Education programs. For National Park Week alone, participation in the Kids Art Contest has increased more than 90%.

What's Up and Coming?

The newest project that the park's interpretation division is excited to introduce is the Ethnobotanical Garden at the Rainy Lake Visitor Center. The garden is a 0.25-mile accessible walk through native plants, trees, and shrubs. The trail winds through a field where reed canary grass used to grow. Volunteers and park staff have replanted the area with native vegetation the Ojibwe Indians used in their daily lives. The trail leads to an Ojibwe camp where visitors can enter an authentic Ojibwe lodge, see a drying rack and sit by an open fire. At one point the trail follows an unimproved path along one of the park's geological features – a rocky outcrop – and out to the Oberholtzer Trail. Education programs and naturalist-led tours will be given in the garden starting summer 2012.



Parent chaperone helping students on a map quest at the Rainy Lake Visitor Center in Voyageurs National Park.

New Bookstore Products Focus on the Park

In 2005, Voyageurs National Park staff wrote a Long Range Interpretive Plan. The plan identifies educational materials completed to-date and a wish list of projects to develop over the next five to ten years. The plan also includes the park's six official interpretive themes. These themes are extremely important to park officials as they direct park staff when working on visitor service projects for the public. In short, they are: geology, voyageurs and the fur trade, people, scenery, water, and plants and animals.

In 2009, Jefferson National Parks Association (JNPA) partnered with Voyageurs to begin operating the bookstores at all three visitor centers within the park.

JNPA is a non-profit organization that brings money back to parks for interpretive and educational purposes. For example, when a visitor buys a book, a percentage of that purchase goes back to the park. Since the partnership began, big changes have occurred in the stores. JNPA is working with park officials to bring the six park interpretive themes to life.

Over the last year, park officials have

chosen to apply returning funds towards the development of publications that will facilitate visitor understanding and knowledge of the park and its resources.

Whether visitors have all day, half a day, a few hours, or 15 minutes to visit the park, they can enter any one of the three visitor center bookstores and leave with a sense of knowing why the park was established. The bookstores reflect Voyageurs National Park and its significance.

What's New?

A Pocket Guide to the Plants and Animals of Voyageurs National Park.

A small, 12 panel, waterproof guide that visitors can take along as they explore the park.

Kettle Falls: Crossroads of History

The park revised and redesigned this book with a less expensive price tag, so visitors can better afford to learn about the history and people of the area.

Night Sky Posters & Postcards

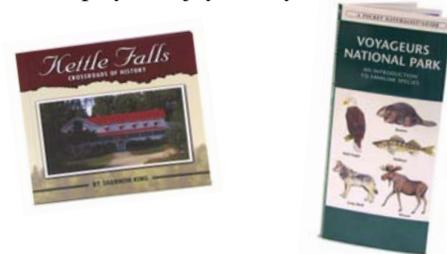
Two night sky images are available as posters or postcards. One image reflects the winter night sky and the other reflects the summer night sky. The images will prompt visitors to think about the value of the dark skies over Voyageurs.

What's Coming?

Geology of Voyageurs National Park

This book informs visitors about the geologic formation of Voyageurs National Park and the surrounding area and the geologic features you will see when visiting the park, as well as its importance to you and your life.

The park acknowledges JNPA staff for all their hard work and all park visitors for having an interest in the park and purchasing products in support of the park. We hope you enjoy what you see and read!



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Voyageurs National Park was authorized by an Act of Congress on January 8, 1971 (84 Stat. 1971) "to preserve, for the inspiration and enjoyment of present and future generations, the outstanding scenery, geological conditions and waterway system which constituted a part of the historic route of the Voyageurs who contributed significantly to the opening of the Northwestern United States." The park was established in 1975.

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Newsletter Title: During the fur trade, the Hudson's Bay Company transported mail in packet boxes from London by ship and then overland to fur trade posts. **Messengers** – often a voyageur – distributed the packets from fur trade posts to their destination.

Did You Know?

The Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, once had a summer campus on Rainy Lake. Camp Marston, as it was called, was located at Brown's Bay from 1923 to 1938. The location was picked by Professor John ("Jack") Dodds for his civil engineering students to study and practice practical field training. Brown's Bay met his criteria of remoteness, availability of clean fresh water and large areas of public land. The first twenty-five students, all male, were brought to the camp in 1923. By 1930 their tents were replaced by five sleeping cabins, a mess hall, and an instrument and drafting cabin.

In 1937, a national surveying conference was hosted at Camp Marston to establish standards for civil engineering. In early 1939 a change in administration at Iowa State led to the decision to close the camp. To save time and money the campus was moved to Wirt, Minnesota, later that year. Eventually, the cabins were leased to private individuals by the State of Minnesota. These leases continued until 1988.

Today, the only building remaining is the Polaris cabin. The remains of the large stone fireplaces of the other cabins are visible from the lake.

Voyageurs National Park will develop Camp Marston as a Visitor Destination with day-use facilities and interpretive media.



Polaris cabin on Rainy Lake.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Voyageurs National Park
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The Voyageur Messenger is produced bi-annually by the staff of Voyageurs National Park.

What's coming in the Fall/Winter Issue?

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 Park Research

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Night Explorer Series 2012

Starry, Starry Night: Life and Death of the Stars

May 18, June 15, July 20

Partial Solar Eclipse

May 20

Transit of Venus

June 5

Star Light, Star Bright, First Star...

June 23, July 28, August 25

Solar Viewing

July 13, August 17

Full Moon Hike: Night Sights and Sounds

August 3

Night Sky Wonders

August 10

Meteor Showers over Voyageurs

August 12

Lawn Chair Stargazing

August 24

Blue Moon Hike

August 31

Check the park's website for details on times and locations.

www.nps.gov/voya

Programs sponsored by
 Voyageurs National Park Association