



## Congaree National Park

Junior Ranger Activity Booklet  
Ages 7 to 10

This Book Belongs To:

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Red-shouldered Hawk

Welcome to Congaree National Park! You are on your way to becoming a Junior Ranger! Now is your chance to explore the plants, animals, and water that make up the old growth bottomland hardwood forest at Congaree.

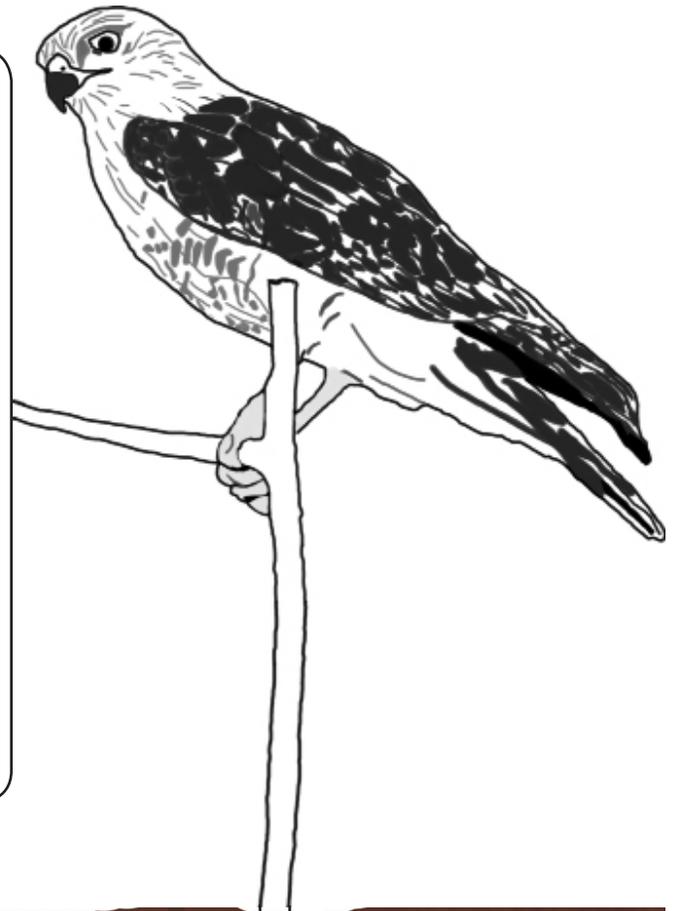
The red-shouldered hawk Junior Ranger Booklet is intended for ages 7 to 10. To become a Junior Ranger:

- 1) complete as many activities as you can in this booklet. Pages 2-4 can be completed in the Visitor Center. Page 7 can be completed on the boardwalk trail.
- 2) have a ranger or park volunteer review your book and sign your certificate.
- 3) be sworn in as a Junior Ranger and receive your patch or badge!
- 4) help protect Congaree for future visitors and Junior Rangers!

### Who is the Red-shouldered Hawk?

I am the most common hawk found in woodland swamp environments. I eat frogs, mice, rats, insects, snakes, lizards, and fish. I have an orange barred breast and shoulders. My upper wings are black with white spots. I also have a black tail with thin white bands, and a hooked beak.

I have a noisy call that sounds like "kee-rah." When I hunt, I perch above my prey before diving and snatching it up with my sharp curved talons.



# Floodplain Explained

A floodplain is a low place near a river that gets wet when there is too much water for the river to hold. Congaree National Park lies in the floodplain of the Congaree River. Sometimes, the Congaree River floods, and the nutrient-rich water spills over its banks and into the floodplain. The creek within the park, Cedar Creek, can also flood when the Congaree River floods.



As you can see in the pictures, the water level can rise as high as or higher than the elevated boardwalk trail.

Be a Junior Ranger scientist! Use the weather data at the visitor center front desk to complete the chart below. Then read and answer the following questions.

Today's Date	
Congaree River Water Level	
Cedar Creek Water Level	



A river or creek's **threshold** is the highest water level before the water overflows its banks. The Congaree River's threshold is about **15 feet**. Cedar Creek's threshold is about **8 feet**.

Is the Congaree River water level above or below its threshold?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is the Cedar Creek water level above or below its threshold?

\_\_\_\_\_

What does this tell you about the floodplain right now?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Fill in the Blanks

with information found in the visitor center exhibits.

## Exhibit Name

## Information

### The Earliest Visitors

People have lived around the Congaree "Swamp" for the past \_\_\_\_\_ years.

### Francis Marion

During the Revolutionary \_\_\_\_\_ Francis Marion organized a small group of men and trained them in \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ tactics (surprise attacks) to harass British troops.

### Sanctuary

After the \_\_\_\_\_ War, many newly freedmen remained nearby. They supported themselves by sharecropping, tenant farming, fishing, and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Early Logging

Early in the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>th</sup> century, loggers began harvesting the largest baldcypress \_\_\_\_\_ from Congaree.

# Fill in the Blanks

with information found in the visitor center exhibits.

Exhibit Name

Information

Harry Hampton

He was a conservationist, writer, and

\_\_\_\_\_

6

7

They Came To Protect:

Of Jim Elder, it was said, "if not for Jim, Congaree would be a field

of \_\_\_\_\_ instead

of a field of \_\_\_\_\_."

8

2

To reveal the secret message, place the numbered letters from your previous answers in the same numbered blanks below:

YO\_\_\_\_ R\_\_\_\_ H\_\_\_\_LP\_\_\_\_N\_\_\_\_

1

2

3

3

4

5

\_\_\_\_O C\_\_\_\_NS\_\_\_\_ V\_\_\_\_

6

7

3

8

3

C\_\_\_\_N\_\_\_\_R\_\_\_\_!

7

5

2

3

3



## Let's Move!

The coolest way for Junior Rangers to see their National Parks is through recreation! How can you recreate at Congaree?



Recreation is any outdoor activity that gets your body moving, your heart pumping, and helps you stay healthy.

Find the following words in the Recreation Wordsearch. They can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards, and backwards.

ADVENTURE

BIKE

BREATHE

CAMP

CANOE

EXPLORE

FISH

HIKE

KAYAK

OUTDOORS

VIEW

WILDLIFE

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



### Ranger Challenge:

Complete the activity about hiking safely on the next page. Then, explore the boardwalk trail at the park!

# Hiking

Unscramble the following sentences about hiking safely:

hiking good for

Wear \_\_\_\_\_ shoes \_\_\_\_\_ .



stay water bring

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ hydrated .



on hiking stay

\_\_\_\_\_ trails.



ivy out eye

Keep an \_\_\_\_\_ for poison \_\_\_\_\_!

Remember: Leaves of 3, let it be!



litter find up

Pick \_\_\_\_\_ any \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_  
in the park.



animals not

Do \_\_\_\_\_ feed \_\_\_\_\_.



future you protect fun your

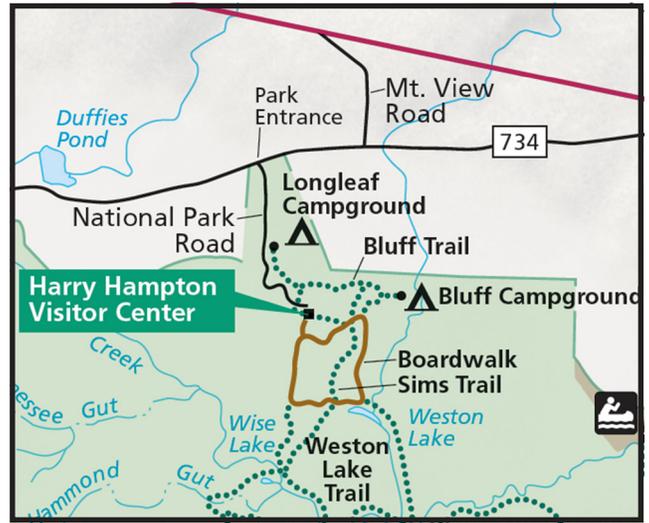
Have \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ help \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ park for \_\_\_\_\_ generations!



# I Spy!

Explore the boardwalk trail at the park and look for the things listed in the I Spy checklist. Put check marks in the boxes next to the things you see. Then answer the questions out loud with an adult.



Fallen Tree

Who might call this home?

Sunlight

Do you see more sunlight or shade?

Shade

Mammal

What traits do all mammals share?

Snag

Cypress Knees  
(on the next page)

What do cypress trees probably use their knees for?

Bird

A tree taller than  
your house

How many feet tall do you think the tree is?

Spider



# Treenatomy

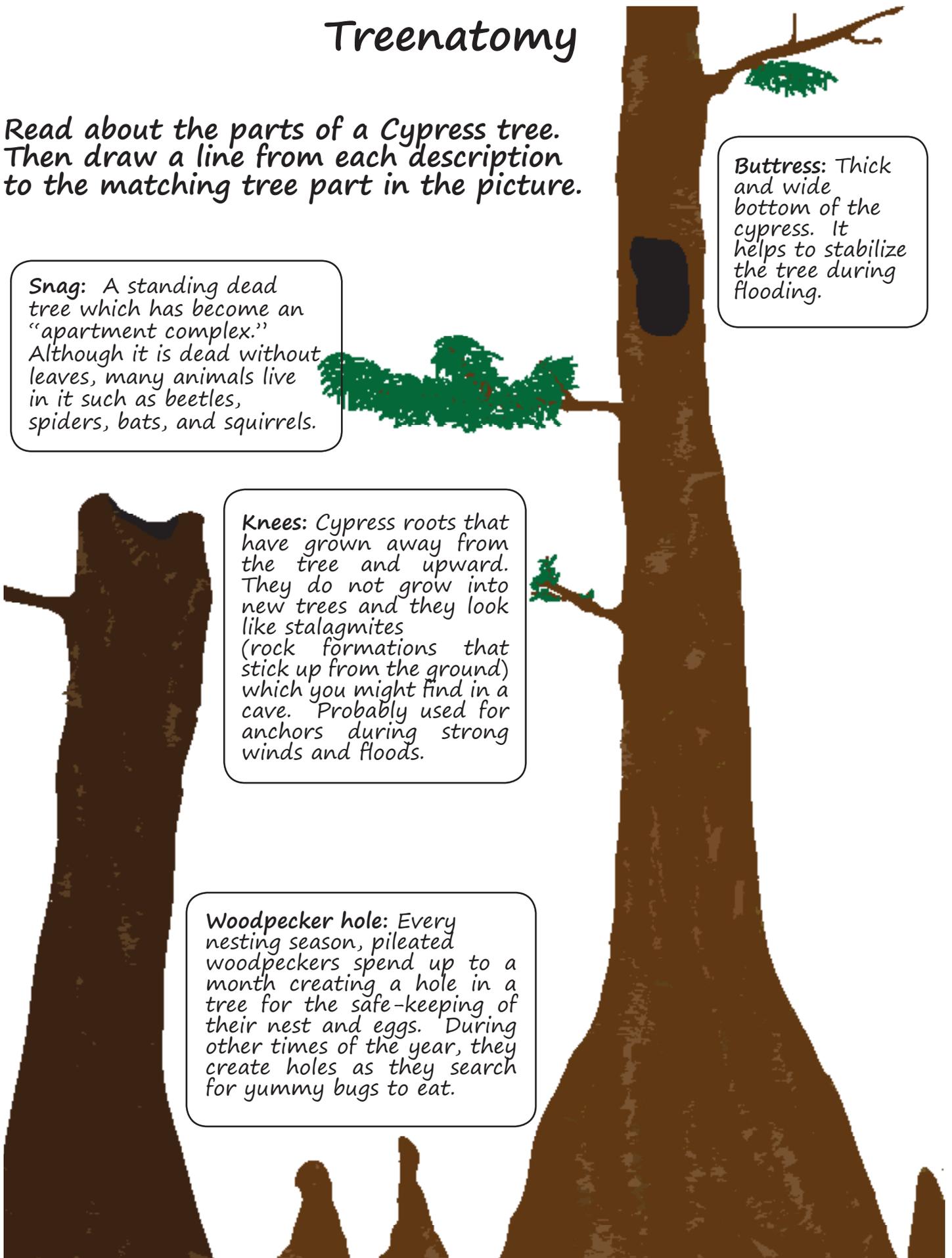
Read about the parts of a Cypress tree. Then draw a line from each description to the matching tree part in the picture.

**Snag:** A standing dead tree which has become an "apartment complex." Although it is dead without leaves, many animals live in it such as beetles, spiders, bats, and squirrels.

**Buttress:** Thick and wide bottom of the cypress. It helps to stabilize the tree during flooding.

**Knees:** Cypress roots that have grown away from the tree and upward. They do not grow into new trees and they look like stalagmites (rock formations that stick up from the ground) which you might find in a cave. Probably used for anchors during strong winds and floods.

**Woodpecker hole:** Every nesting season, pileated woodpeckers spend up to a month creating a hole in a tree for the safe-keeping of their nest and eggs. During other times of the year, they create holes as they search for yummy bugs to eat.



# Skeleton Matching

The hawk skeleton is highly adapted for flight. It doesn't weigh much but is strong enough to withstand the stresses of taking off, flying, and landing.

Read about the hawk bones below. Can you match the bone definitions with the diagram numbers on the next page? Write the correct diagram number in the blank next to each definition.

sternum - the large breastbone where flight muscles attach. \_\_\_\_\_

cranium - upper part of the skull which attaches to the jawbone (mandible) \_\_\_\_\_

phalanges - the toes of a bird's foot; also the "fingers" found in the bird's wing. \_\_\_\_\_

caudal vertebra - bones that make up the tail \_\_\_\_\_

tibiotarsus - the large bone in the middle of the 3 bones making up the leg of a bird (below the femur and above the tarsometatarsus) . \_\_\_\_\_

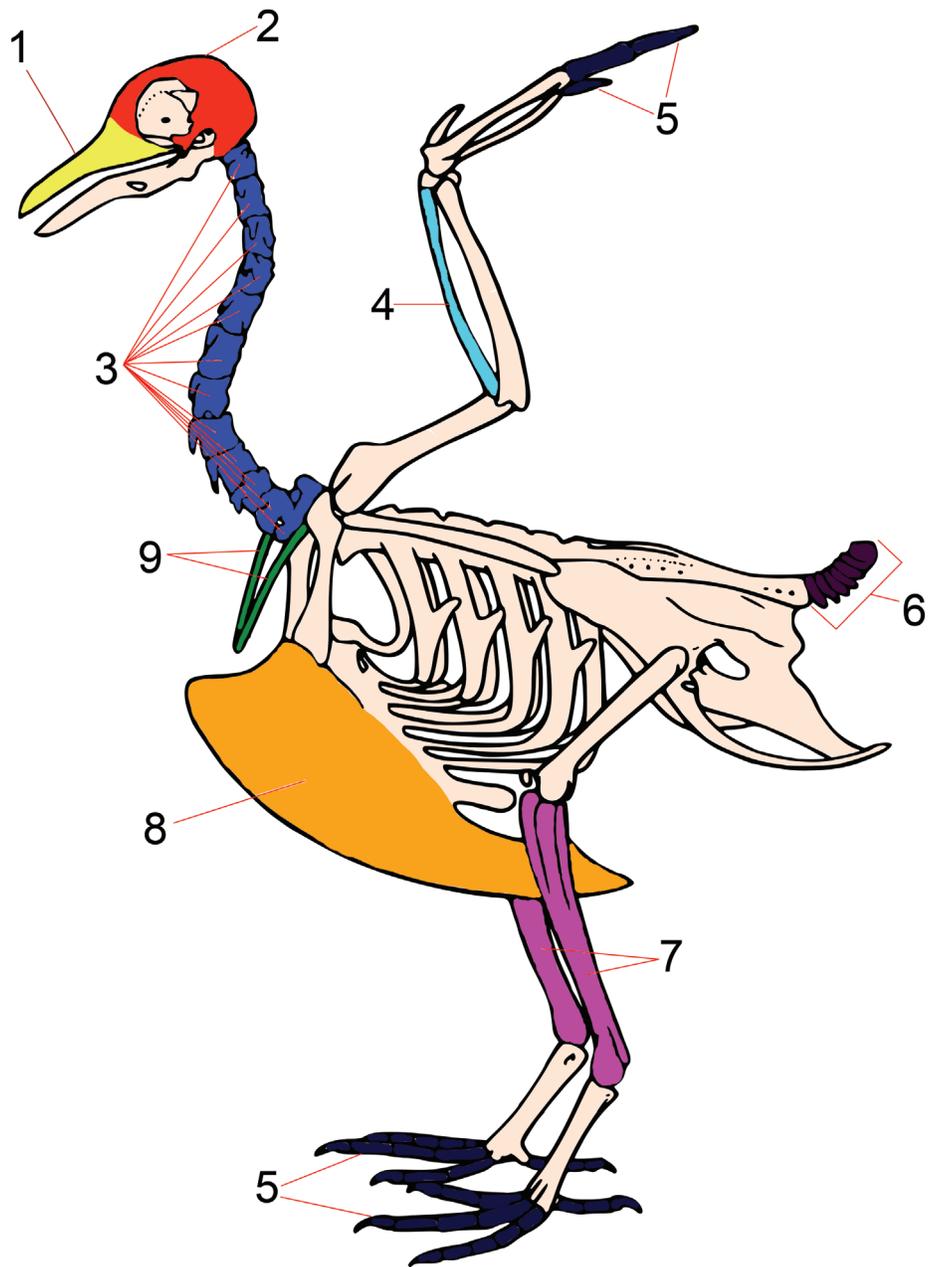
furcula - also known as the wishbone, it is forked and is where the collar bones meet; strengthens the bird's upper body skeleton for flight. \_\_\_\_\_

upper mandible - the upper half of the bone inside the beak. \_\_\_\_\_

radius - one of two large bones in the bird's wing adapted for flight. \_\_\_\_\_

cervical vertebrae - the vertebrae right below the skull \_\_\_\_\_





# The Arrowhead

The National Park System includes almost 400 areas 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, battlefields, lakeshores, seashores, historical parks, historic sites, memorials, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails, and the White House.

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

Find an arrowhead, the symbol of the National Park Service, in the park.

Draw the missing parts of the arrowhead in the outline below:

The Sequoia tree represents all plants.

The bison represents all animals.

The arrowhead outline represents the human history of our nation.

The mountain and river represent all landscapes and water resources.





# What Do Rangers Do?



Rangers work on teams called divisions, based on the jobs they do:

**Administration Rangers** – Purchase equipment, pay bills for the park, solve office problems, hire rangers.

**Interpretation Rangers** – Assist and educate visitors, and present programs such as guided walks and canoe tours.

**Law Enforcement Rangers** – Make sure the park is safe for plants, animals, and people by enforcing rules and helping visitors in need.

**Maintenance Rangers** – Keep the park clean and safe for visitors, plants, and animals by helping to fix problems in the park.

**Resource Management Rangers** – Study and keep track of living and non-living things and natural and cultural resources. They help to protect resources such as trees, creeks, rivers, and historic structures.

**Superintendent** – In charge of all of the divisions. Makes sure rangers are doing their jobs well, resources are protected, and the public knows about the park and its resources.

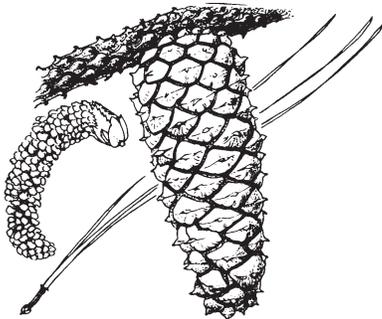
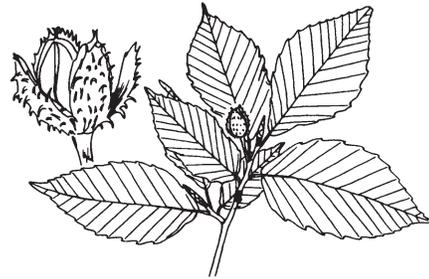
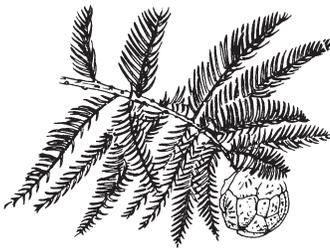
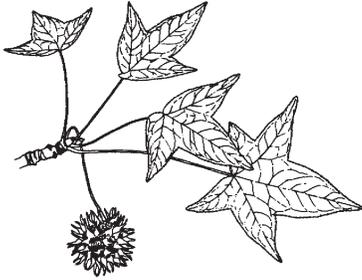
**Read about what rangers do at Congaree.**

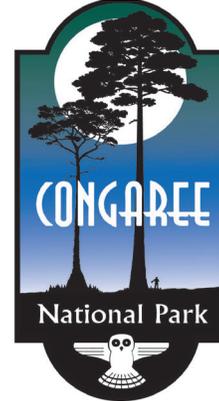
**Write the correct division next to the ranger jobs below:**

- 1) A tree has fallen on one of the hiking trails.  
Marcus safely uses a chainsaw to remove the hazard. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Jessica plans the budget for the new year. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) A visitor is driving dangerously in the park.  
Ronaldo pulls over the visitor and writes him  
a ticket to keep the road safe. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Carol leads a group of Junior Rangers on a  
canoe tour. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Jamil studies the butterflies at Congaree  
to see if the ecosystem is healthy. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Lou speaks about Congaree National Park  
at a city council meeting. \_\_\_\_\_

# Bonus

Congaree is a diverse habitat with almost 90 species of trees and 700 other plants. Ask a park ranger or volunteer at the front desk for the tree identification brochure. Write the tree name below each picture.





# Congaree National Park

*is proud to bestow upon*

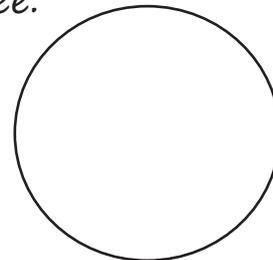
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*the title of*

## Junior Ranger

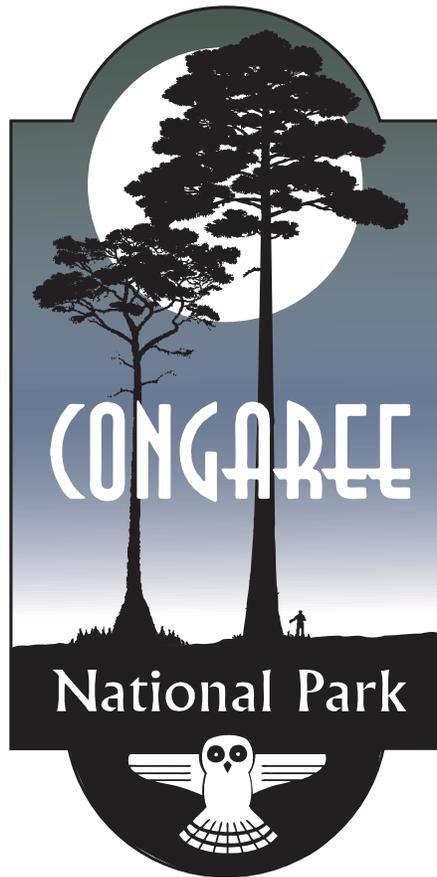


*Pledge: As a Junior Ranger, I promise to protect and preserve every animal and tree, and the history of Congaree for all to see.*



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Park Ranger/Volunteer



Created by SCA Junior Ranger Ambassador, Hailey Corthell, 2012

Student Conservation Association  [www.thesca.org](http://www.thesca.org)