



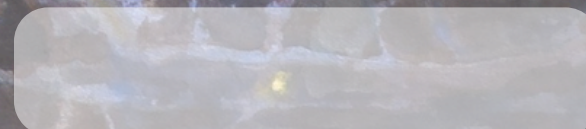
Junior Ranger



Passport Stamp

Cover by Stephen Chesley (photograph of a watercolor)

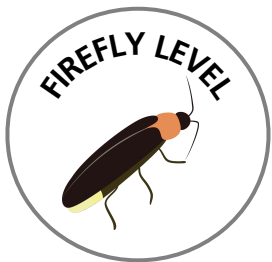
This book belongs to:



Welcome to Congaree!

To become a Congaree Junior Ranger:

- Work on the activities that best fit your abilities. Look for the animal that represents the level you chose on each page and complete the required number of activities.
 - Firefly Level (Ages 4+): Complete any 3 activities
 - Skink Level (Ages 8+): Complete any 6 activities
 - Owl Level (Ages 11+): Complete any 8 activities

☐☐☐

- Check the level you completed
- Have a ranger or park volunteer review your book and sign your certificate
- Be sworn in as a Junior Ranger and receive your badge
- Help protect Congaree for future visitors and Junior Rangers



Congaree National Park

is proud to bestow upon

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



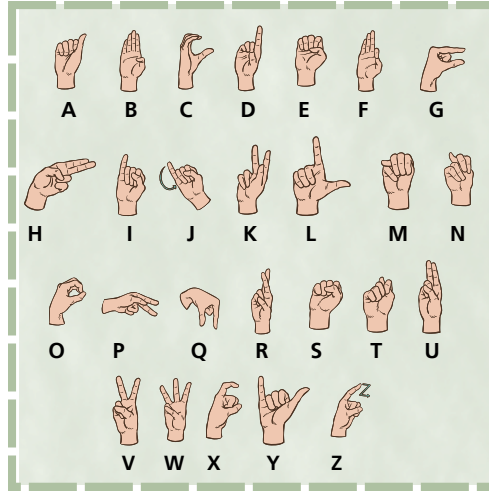
Enjoy and Protect your Park



Scavenger Hunt

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.

As you explore Congaree, look and listen all around you.

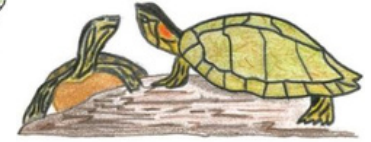
Circle the pictures of the things you see or hear.



Snake



Anole



Turtle



Owl



Hawk



Woodpecker



Spider



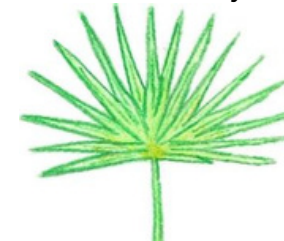
Butterfly



Cypress Knee



Snag



Dwarf Palmetto



Crawfish Chimney

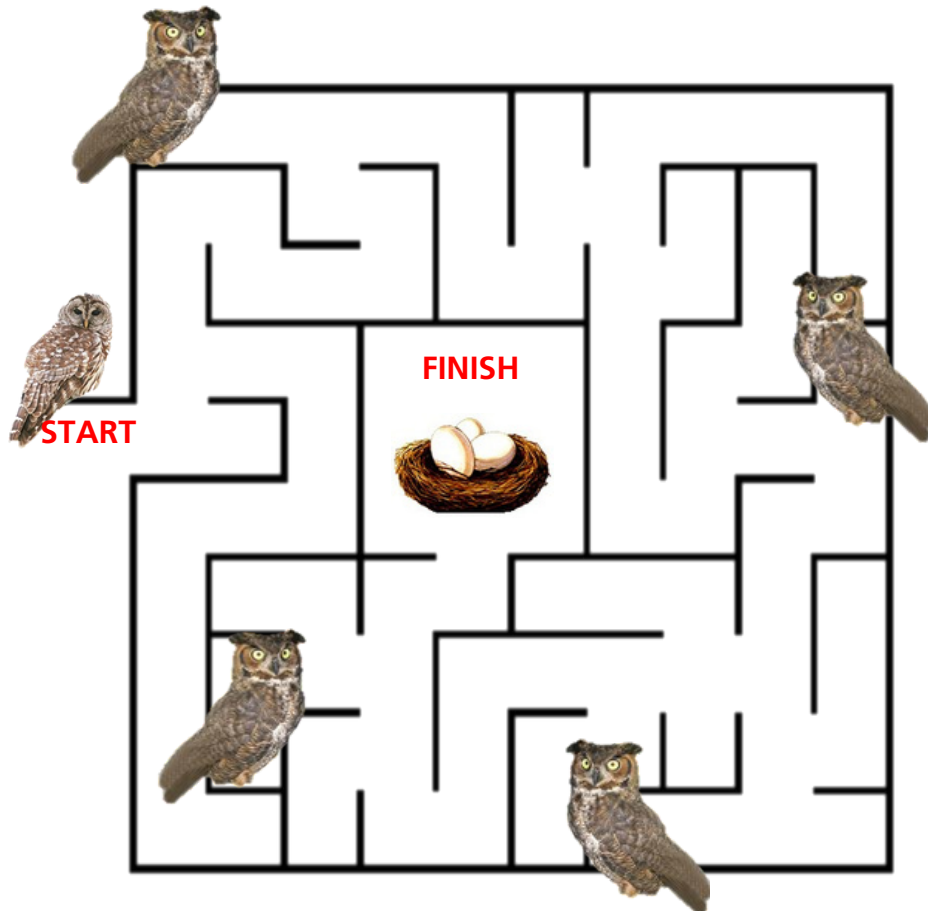


Owl Maze

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



Hey, Ranger!

There are all kinds of different rangers in a National Park. There are historians, accountants, law enforcement officers, biologists, and photographers. All of them work together to make our parks special now and for future generations. **Find a ranger or volunteer and ask these questions to find out about the job that person does.**

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 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 find out 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.



Wildland Firefighter

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





Canoe Trip

As you “canoe” through Cedar Creek, follow the way of the water and answer the questions as you go. At the end you will have traveled through Congaree’s iconic floodplain!



End

You’re safe and sound at the boat landing!

What a trip! Write one fact you learned about Congaree today.



3

You’ve overflowed into the floodplain!

Draw the what the water levels would look like on the trees during flood stage.



2

You’ve reached a portage!

Take out your canoe to go around the fallen log. While you’re on land, pick up any trash you see. Can you name one of the 7 Leave No Trace Principles?

1

You’ve reached an oxbow lake!

This water feature was formed thousands of years ago and is a great place to see wildlife. Can you draw an animal you might see in an oxbow lake?



Start

How Did Congaree Come to Be?



Read the story and find the underlined words in the word search below. Unscramble the first letter of each word to reveal a mystery phrase at the end!

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 your letters here!

One of Congaree’s most famous trees was favored by builders for bridges, roof shingles, and cabinetry. Can you guess which tree that is? The answer to this question is a hint to your mystery phrase!

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

Mystery Phrase: _ _ _ _ _





What is a Floodplain?

A floodplain is a low place near a river that stores overflowing water there is too much 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.

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 at the visitor center to complete the chart. Then read and answer the question.

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

What does this 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 Maroon Communities offered freedom 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 mountain
sequoia tree river 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 poster in the box to the right. You might choose to draw the place you have in mind or write some words about it!

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 about the adaptations of the three animals we've used throughout this book and 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

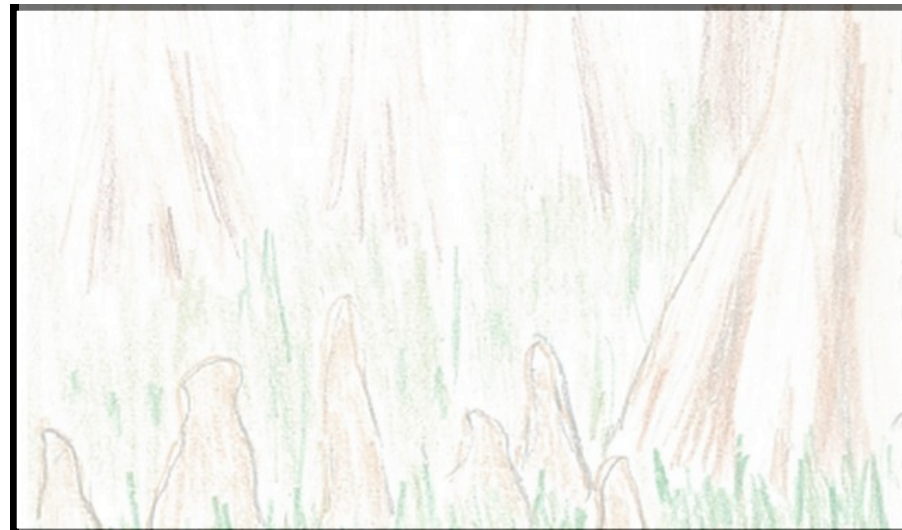
- Prefer warm and wet conditions
- Active in darkness
- Glows to discourage predators

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!