

Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Junior Ranger Book



Welcome to Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site!

While you're here, you can:

Tour the design office with a
Park Ranger

Learn about Olmsted
landscapes near your town

Explore the
Fairsted grounds

And most important, ask lots of questions and have fun!

Book activities are in dark green lettering!

Some may have some additional questions to think about in black type.

Activities can be done with or without a tour of the design studio.

Have a question? Ask a ranger!



Check the check box next to each activity to keep track of how many you have done.

To earn your badge, find your age in the chart below and complete at least the indicated number of activities:

Age 4 and under: 3 activities

Ages 5-6: 6 activities

Ages 8-10: 9 activities

Ages 11-13: 12 activities

Ages 13 and up: 15+ activities

Are you ready?

You are now on your way to becoming a Junior Ranger!

INTRODUCTION

Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site was the home and office of **FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED**, the nation's first landscape architect.

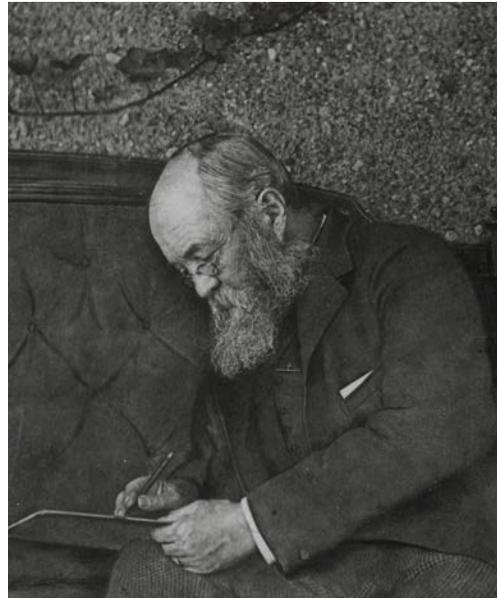


Fairsted, circa 1900. Job #00673, 673-91



Fairsted, circa 2010. Courtesy of Steven Sterbach

Meet Mr. Olmsted!



Frederick Law Olmsted in Fairsted's Plant Room

Olmsted, his sons, and their partners worked here for almost 100 years. When Olmsted lived here, he called this place **Fairsted**.

Thank you for helping us care for Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site by becoming a Junior Ranger!

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

A **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** is a person who designs outdoor places to be both useful and pleasing. Landscape architects design spaces like parks, college campuses, private homes, and neighborhoods.

When **Frederick Law Olmsted** moved to Fairsted in 1883, he worked in the North Parlor. As the office got busier, it expanded to fit more workers and equipment. Two of the people working in the growing business were Olmsted's sons, **John Charles Olmsted** and **Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.** When Olmsted retired in 1897, they continued the business. This became one of the largest and most famous landscape architecture offices in the world.



John Charles Olmsted



Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

Hi! My name is Rick. I moved to Fairsted when I was 13. I grew up and worked here. Follow my story throughout your time at my home and office! Look for some personal stories from me throughout this book.



Unscramble the letters below to discover John Charles and Fred, Jr.'s nicknames.

— — — — — — —
E R C A H I L

— — — —
I R K C

LANDSCAPE

A **LANDSCAPE** is a view of an outdoor space. It is what we see when we stand in a particular place. Some landscapes are natural and some are designed by people.



Search for some features you may find in a landscape.

Look up, down, across, diagonal, backwards, and forwards.

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

BARN

FACTORY

FARM

FLOWERS

FOREST

GARDEN

HOUSE

LAKE

MEADOW

MOUNTAIN

PLAY-

GROUND

RIVER

ROAD

ROCK

SHRUB

SIDEWALK

TREE

WATERFALL

TIMELINE

The landscape architecture office was located in Brookline for 97 years!
See how the building and business changed over time.



Fairsted



View of the house from the South Lawn around 1900

- 1883 Olmsted and his family move to Fairsted
- 1891 The lower drafting room is built
- 1897 Frederick Law Olmsted retires
- 1898 John Charles and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. take charge of the office
Firm changes name to Olmsted Brothers
- 1901 The vault and "planting wing" are built
- 1911 An upper drafting room is added
- 1920 Fred, Jr. becomes the principal of the firm
- 1961 Artemas Richardson and Joseph Hudak take charge of the office
Firm changes name to Olmsted Associates
- 1979 National Park Service acquires Fairsted, which becomes Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site



Design Office Scavenger Hunt

As you go through the design office, circle the items you see. Put an X through the items that don't belong in the historic space.

When you're done, color in the objects!





PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD ROOM

The firm stored photographs in the **PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD ROOM.**

The firm took photographs to show how landscapes changed over time. There are more than 65,000 photographs in our collection today.

Our sister, Marion, loved to take pictures. She would go out and photograph landscapes. For our work, photos could record places before and after our designs. But it wasn't easy. Check out this photo of photographs being taken in 1892.



Taking Pictures in Franklin Park, Boston, MA. Job #00918-61B



What do you use to take pictures today?

In the years since the Olmsted moved to Fairsted in 1883, many people have photographed the house and landscape. As camera technology advanced, so did the way the photographs looked. What clues might help you find out which pictures are older and which are newer?

Look for color, image sharpness, plant size, and notes on the photographs!

Can you tell which photograph is the oldest? Using clues in the photographs, put them in the correct chronological order, from oldest to most recent.

A



C



B



D



E



Oldest
(1900)

Newest
(2005)

Where at Fairsted were these pictures taken?
Find the spot and take a picture of yourself there!

ENGINEERING OFFICE

The **ENGINEER** designed the hardscape of a park. The hardscape is everything that is not alive. It includes sidewalks, roads, bridges, and drainage systems. The engineer also figured out where to move dirt to change the elevation to make hills and valleys.

Look at the tools in the engineer's office. Think about how these tools would help design the hardscape.

Match the historic tools, their names, and their definitions

Transit



Water bottle

Plumb bob



Tool used by a surveyor to measure both vertical and horizontal angles

Light Table



A piece of lead or heavy metal that hangs from a string to make a vertical reference line

Drafting pen and ink well



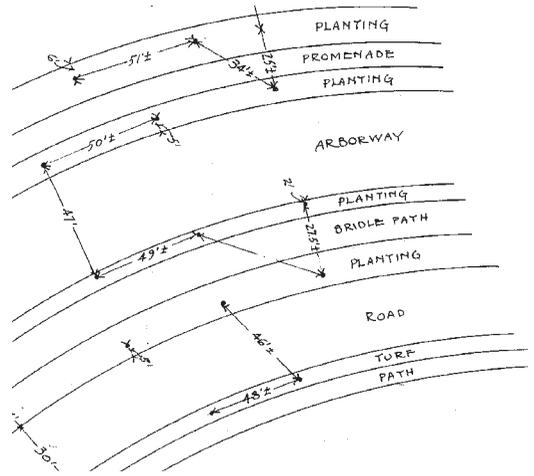
A horizontal table with a glass top with a light behind it, used for drawing or viewing transparencies

Canteen

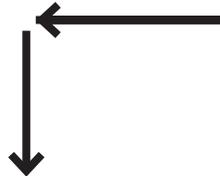
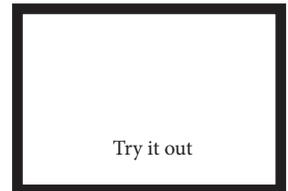
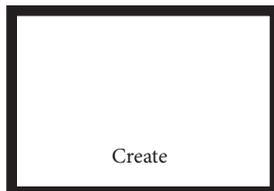
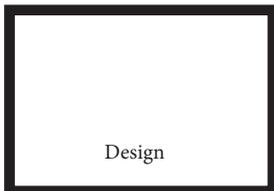
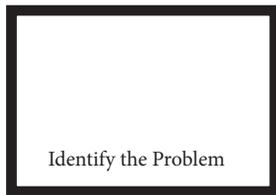


A writing tool used with a nib dipped in ink

Engineers had many problems to solve when designing landscapes including circulation (the way people move). Olmsted's parks were so popular, people walking, on bikes, on horseback, and in carriages (later, cars) all wanted to use them. The plan of the Arborway shows one way to solve this. Problems can be solved in many ways, and engineers can use a design process to help them out. You can use this process too!



Complete this diagram by writing the number that matches best with each step of the design process on the flow chart.



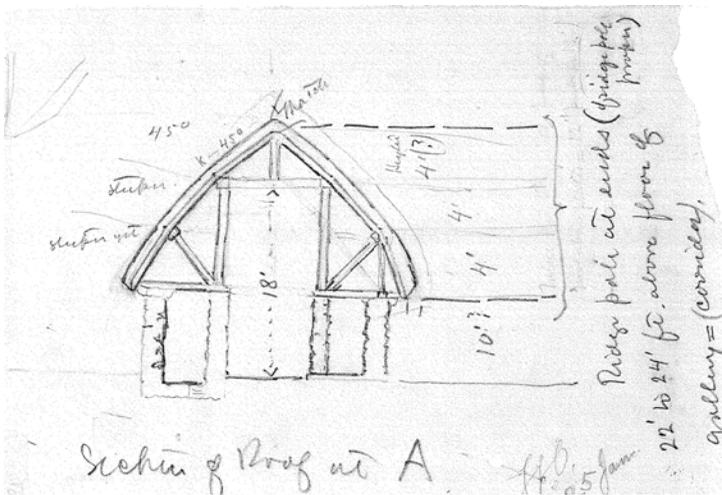
1. Make your solution.
2. Describe the challenge to be solved, including limits and constraints.
3. Research what others have done. Discover what materials are available.
4. Test your solution.
5. Evaluate how the solution worked and think of how to improve your design.
6. Use your knowledge and creativity to come up with many solutions. Choose one idea and draw or make a model of it.

DRAFTING ROOM

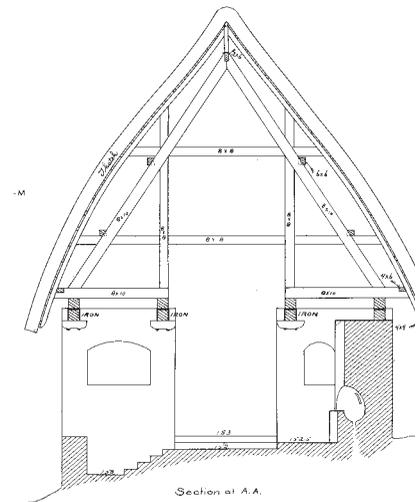
After the engineer figured out how to design the hardscape, the **DRAFTSMAN** reworked the original sketches to come up with the final landscape plan. The plan was the “recipe” for the people building the landscape.

Take a look at the drawings of the shelter on Schoolmaster Hill in Franklin Park (Job #00918).

Sketch



Plan



Compare the sketch with the final plan.

List two things that are the **SAME**.

-
-

List two things that are **DIFFERENT**.

-
-

Look at the 1900 postcard of the shelter on Schoolmaster Hill.

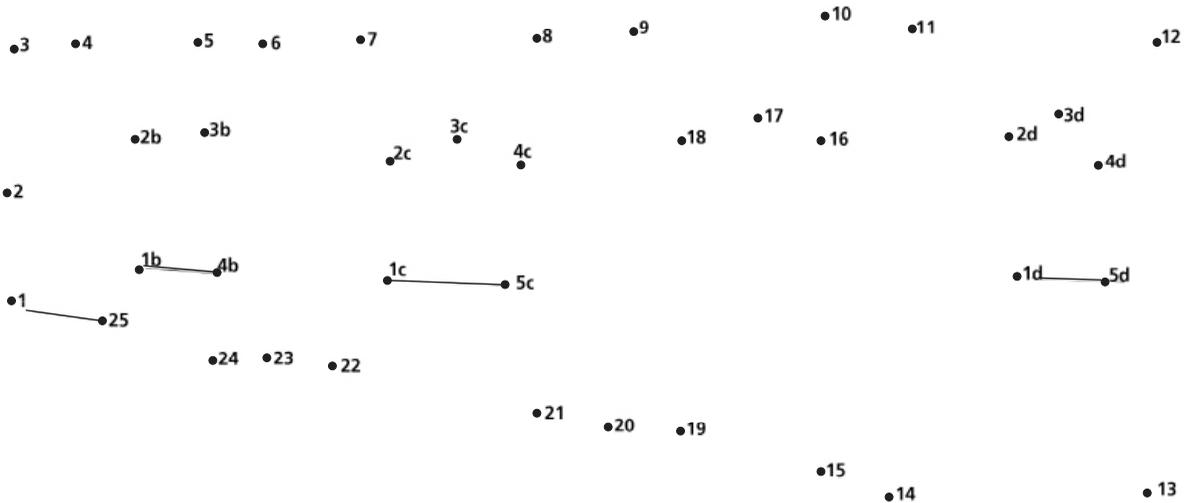


Wondering what this place looks like today?

Next time you're in Franklin Park, stop and explore Schoolmaster Hill, or:



Connect the dots to see what remains of the shelter today.



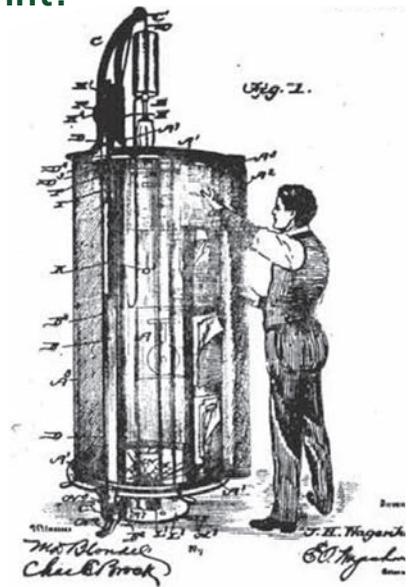
PRINTING DEPARTMENT

The **PRINTER** made copies of the plans. They sent copies to clients and construction teams for review.

Listen to the ranger and watch how copies were made.

Why did they call the copy a blueprint?

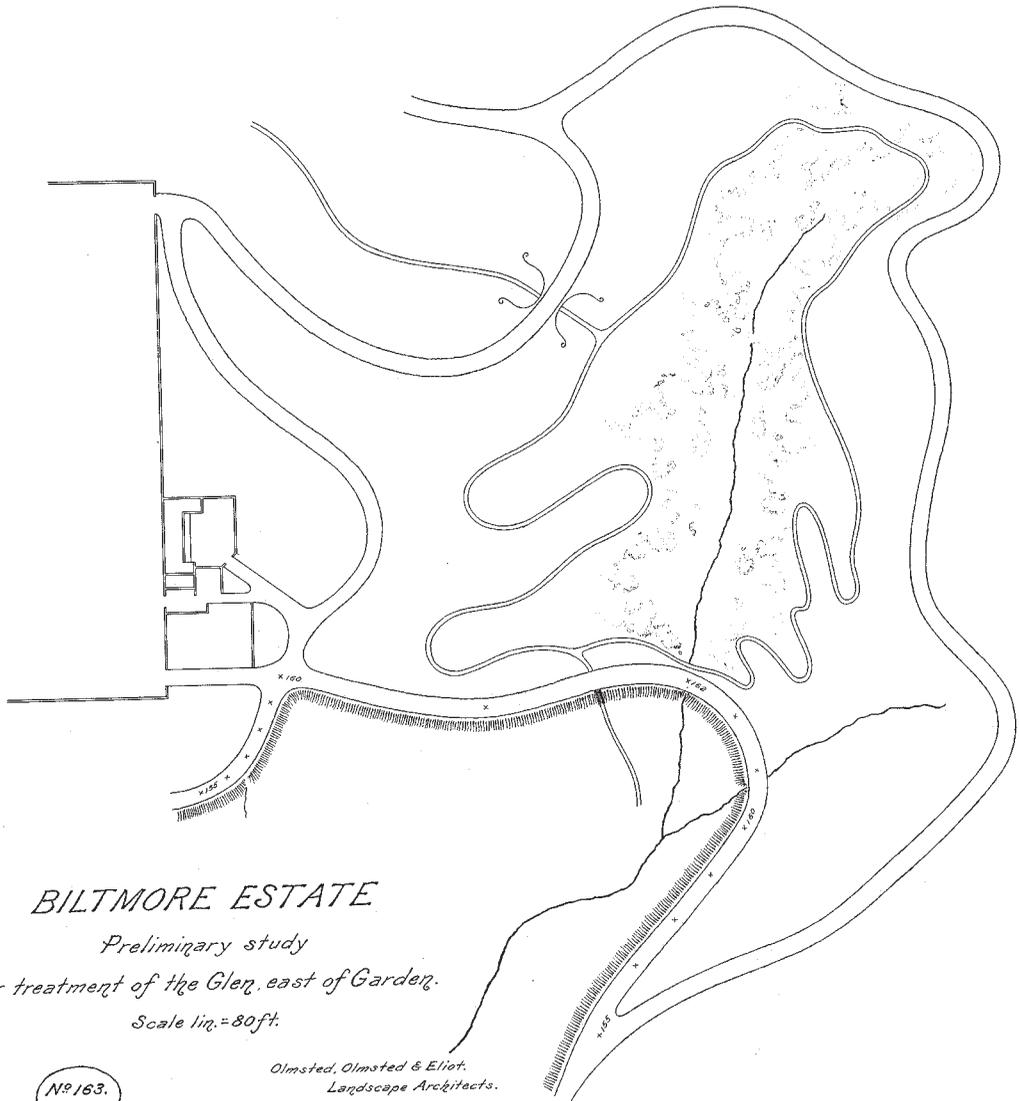
Why were the Olmsteds eager to buy a Wagenhorst for the office?



How do you think landscape architects make copies today?



Trace a plan like a printer! Use this tracing paper to create your ready-to-print plan.



BILTMORE ESTATE

Preliminary study

for treatment of the Glen east of Garden.

Scale 1 in. = 80 ft.

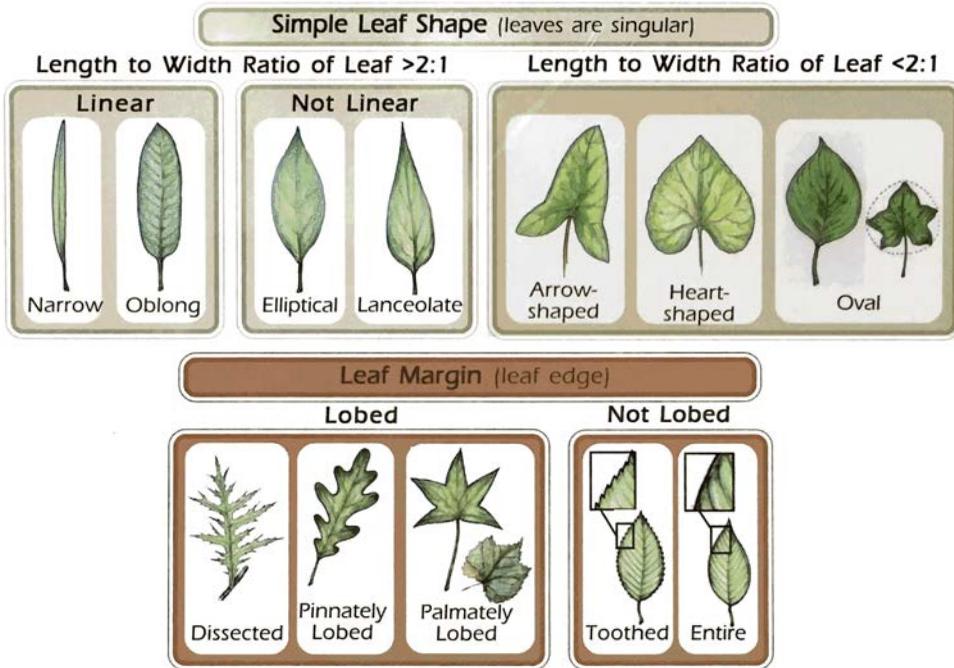
*Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot.
Landscape Architects.*

No 163.
Sep 21-93

PLANTING DEPARTMENT

Remember the hardscape, designed by the engineer?
The **PLANTERS** designed the softscape of a park. The softscape is everything that is living. It includes trees, shrubs, flowers, vines, and grass.

The Planters were experts at identifying different types of trees and shrubs by their features.



While we learned a lot from our dad, our experiences, and our education, we didn't know everything. In fact, in 1909, Charlie wrote: "For a landscape architect, I am extraordinarily ignorant as to garden flowers. I am often ashamed to be in a garden with people who assume that I know everything."



Use the key on page 17 to describe the shape and edges of the leaves below:

This leaf is from an American Elm tree.

Shape of this leaf:



Edges of this leaf:

Ulmus americana

This leaf is from a Cucumber Magnolia tree.

Shape of this leaf:



Edges of this leaf:

Magnolia acuminata

THE VAULT

To protect the valuable papers stored in the vault, the National Park Service keeps the temperature at about 65 degrees and the humidity at about 45 percent. This climate controlled environment preserves the plans and drawings, photographs, letters, and other office documents.

Most of the office wing is built of wood, but not the vault.

What is it made of?

Why?

The Olmsted office stored original plans and drawing in the **VAULT**. The National Park Service still stores plans inside the vault. There are almost one million pieces of paper in the Olmsted collection.



FAMILY LIBRARY



Use the index in “The Master List of Olmsted Landscapes” to figure out if there is an Olmsted designed park in your town!

The people who worked in this office created landscapes across the United States and even internationally! Frederick Law Olmsted, his sons, and their partners worked on about 6,000 landscapes from 1857-1979. These design projects are listed in **THE MASTER LIST OF OLMSTED LANDSCAPES.**

No parks? How about another type of landscape?
No landscapes in your town? How about a place nearby?

Your town/city:

Type of landscape:

Name of landscape:

Job Number (#):

Have you visited this landscape?



**Color in all the states where there is an
Olmsted designed landscape.**



Estimate or count how many Olmsted designed landscapes are in your state? (It may be a huge number!)

FAIRSTED LANDSCAPE

Welcome to the **FAIRSTED** landscape. Olmsted and his sons designed this place when they moved to Brookline.



Explore the landscape, and as you go, pay attention to how each place makes you feel.

The Rock Garden



The Hollow



Which of these areas was your favorite?

Why?

The South Lawn



We didn't just work at Fairsted with our dad, we lived here with our mom, Mary, and sister, Marion. We enjoyed our landscape year round. Here are some of our family pictures.

Charlotte, daughter of Rick and Sarah, on the South Lawn



Olmsted Sr. writing in the Hollow



Mary, Marion, and friends on South Lawn
Courtesy of Loeb Library



Charlie, Marion, and Rick in Rock Garden
- Courtesy of Loeb Library

Sarah and Charlotte - Rick's wife and daughter



The Olmsteds designed each section of the landscape for a different use. They had to think about where each plant was planted and how the paths were created, so their visitors could have a variety of experiences, just like in their parks.

Choose one activity to do on the South Lawn:

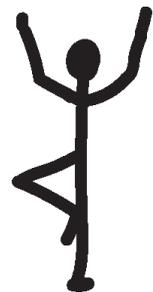
1. Run or walk around the edge (the perimeter) of the South Lawn. Does the edge feel natural or designed?



2. Animals also enjoy the South Lawn! Many animals are active here, including rabbits and hawks. Rabbits dash away from their predators and hide under bushes and trees. **Sprint across the lawn in a zig-zag pattern until you find a tree to hide behind.** Hawks soar in circles while they look for prey below them. **With outstretched arms as wings, soar around the South Lawn 3 times.**



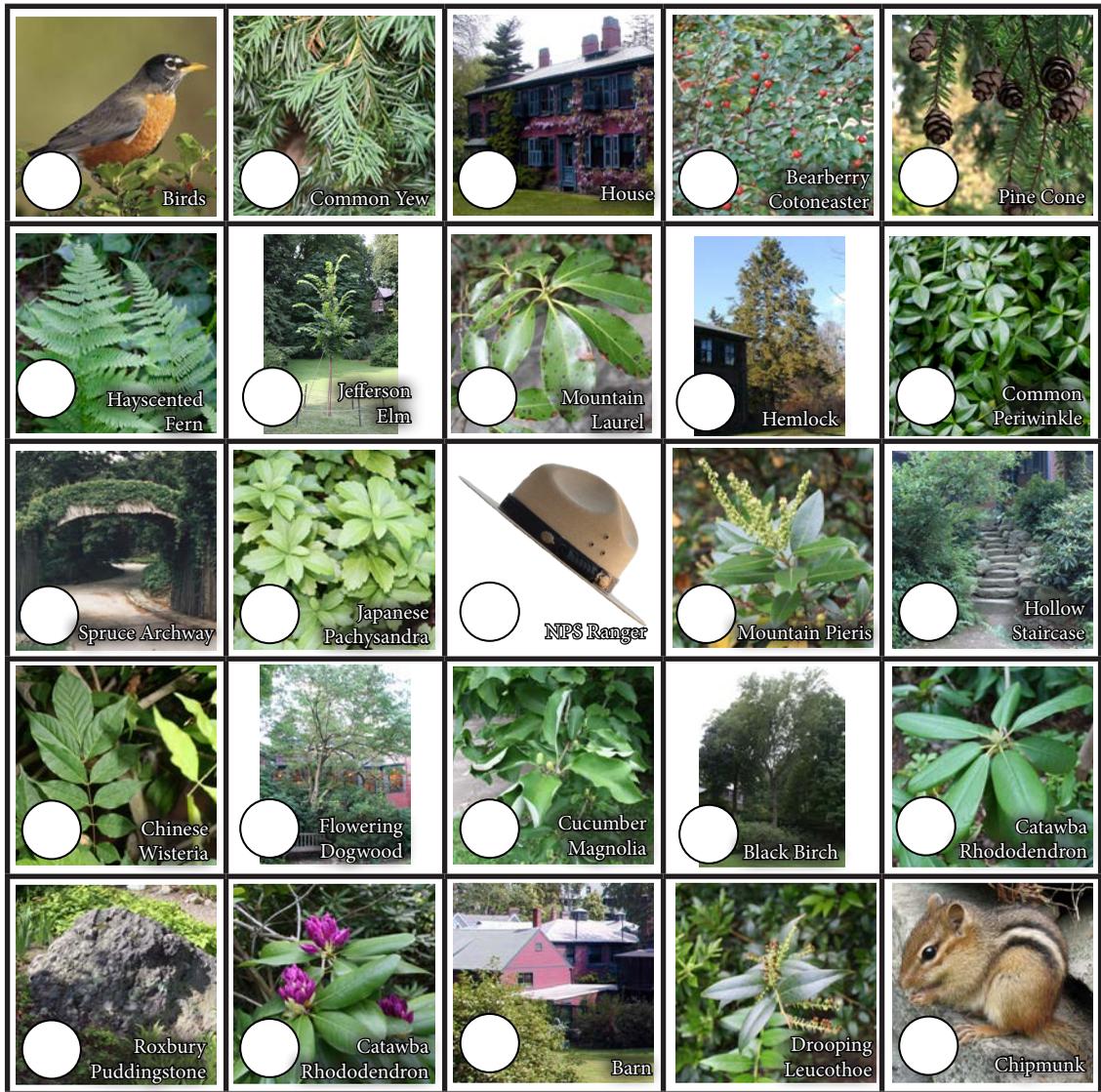
3. There is one elm tree planted in the middle of the South Lawn. **Find the elm tree, and then do tree pose for 30 seconds on each leg.** Standing on one leg, bring your other leg to rest on the standing leg either at or below the knee. Hold your arms out and slightly above your head like tree branches.



Fairsted Bingo!

While exploring the landscape keep a look out for the details Olmsted took care in placing in his landscape for all to enjoy!

See if you can find these things throughout the landscape and make a row- horizontal, vertical, or diagonal!



NATIONAL PARKS & LANDS

The Olmsteds not only worked hard to design landscapes; they also worked hard to preserve and protect **NATURAL LANDSCAPES.**

When traveling to California in the 1860s, Olmsted was amazed by the scenery of Yosemite Valley. He thought it should be protected as a natural place forever and open to everyone. After President Lincoln preserved Yosemite Valley in 1864, Olmsted worked to create a plan for how to care for the park. He wrote a report challenging everyone to take care of remarkable places like this:



The Colfax Party, FLO seated second from the left; courtesy Bancroft Library, UC Berkley

is the will of the Nation ... that this scenery shall never be private property, but ... it shall be held soley for public purposes ... The establishment by government of great public grounds is ... a public duty."

Olmsted's report helped create Yosemite National Park and support the National Park movement.



Yosemite Board of Expert Advisors William Colby, Olmsted Jr., and John P. Buwalda 1951.

Our dad taught Charlie and me that designing and protecting places was a gift for future generations. I moved to California to help protect a place I love. Here I am in Yosemite National Park all grown up and working to preserve the natural beauty across the county.

Following his father's preservation ideas and principles, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. (Rick) helped write the "Organic Act," the law that created the National Park Service in 1916. Today, we still follow the mission he created:

"...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife ... to provide for [their] enjoyment ... [to] leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

The National Park Service manages many different parks under one "team name" and one mission, which Olmsted Jr. helped write. In 1951, this team, known as the National Park Service got an official logo, the Arrowhead. The Arrowhead uses symbols to represent the diverse sites we protect:



**the sequoia tree
represents all plants**



**the mountain
represents all land forms**

**the arrowhead represents
culture and history;
the shoulders are asymmetrical
(not matching) to represent both
eastern and western native cultures**



**the lake
represents all waters**



**the bison
represents all animals**



Frederick Law Olmsted is just one of over 400 National Park sites managed by the National Park Service today.



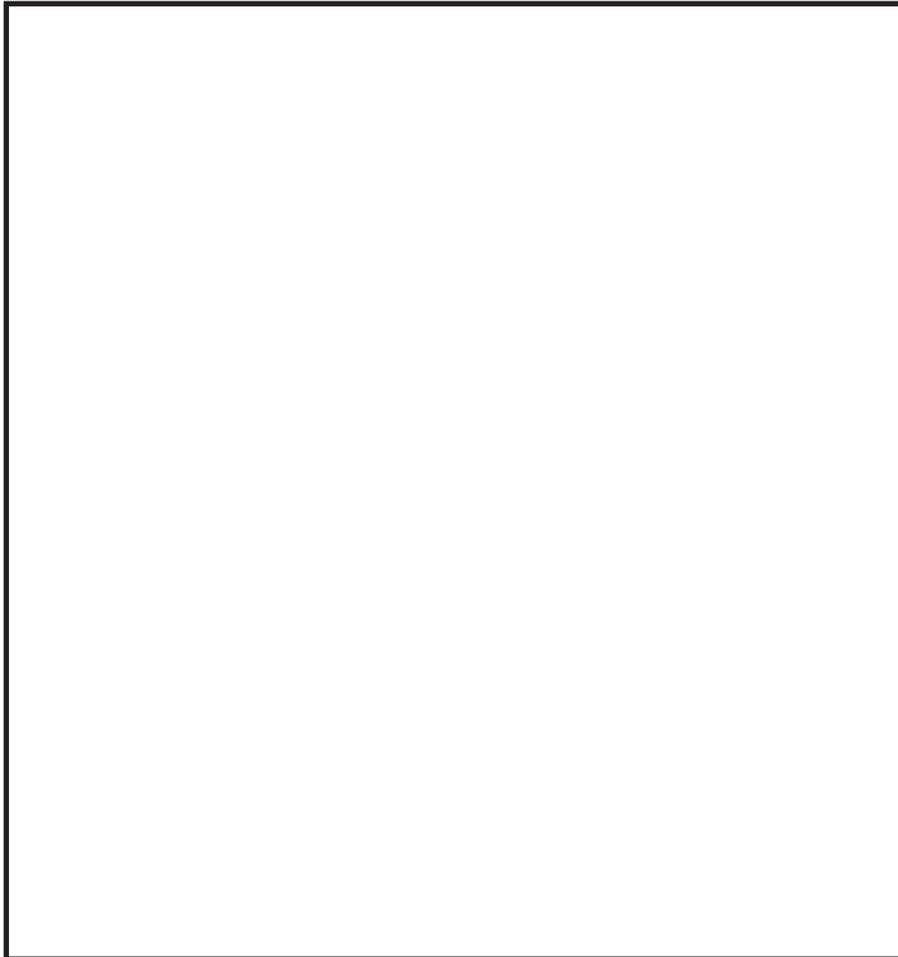
Have you visited other National Parks?

YES

NO

If yes, which ones?

If no, where do you want to visit?



The arrowhead represents the things that are important to us. What is important to you? Draw something or some place you would protect!

Why do you want to protect it?

*Wow! The National Park Service works hard to protect a lot of different places!
I hope you had fun exploring where I grew up and worked.
Thanks for visiting and congratulations on becoming a Junior Ranger!*

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

HAS COMPLETED THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE A

JUNIOR RANGER

of

**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

**As a Junior Ranger, I pledge to teach others about
what I learned today, explore other parks and
historic sites, and help preserve and protect these
places so future generations can enjoy them.**

OFFICIAL SITE STAMP

RANGER SIGNATURE

DATE



After completing this activity booklet you have successfully started an important first step towards being involved with the NPS! There are other opportunities for you to become more involved and active with the National Park Service.

What will you try next?

