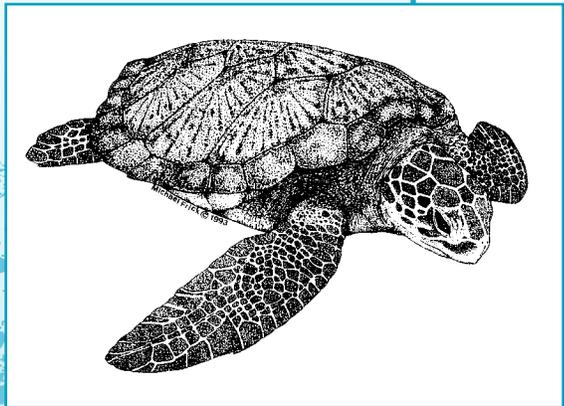
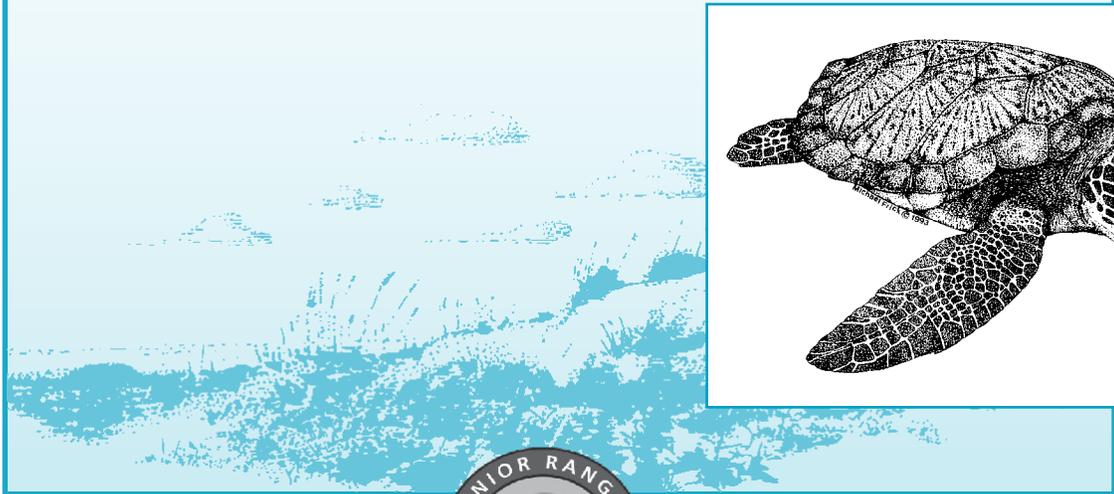
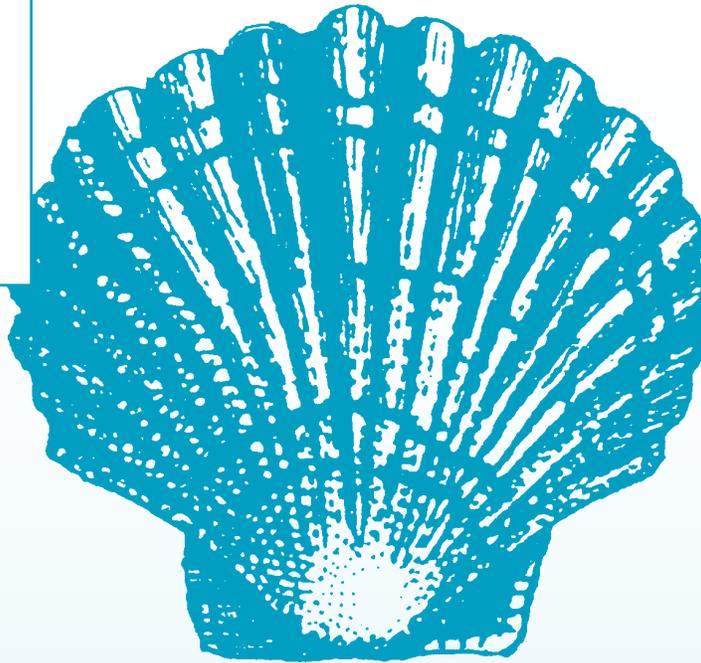


# Padre Island

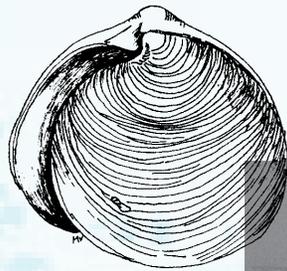
## National Seashore





You'll find our national parks all across the United States, from the cold coast of Alaska to the swampy tip of Florida. Many parks offer visitors the chance to become a Junior Ranger. With the program, you'll discover each park's wild beauty and colorful human history. You'll even receive a special badge. The more parks you visit, the more Junior Ranger badges you can collect.

So get out your walking shoes, your water bottle, and your sun hat...it's time to go exploring!



## Have Fun and Stay Safe!

Help make your visit to Padre Island both fun and safe by keeping the following tips in mind:

- Wear sunscreen and insect repellent.
- On the beach, avoid the Portuguese Man-of-War—a blue-colored jellyfish-like creature that can sting even when it washes ashore.
- Head indoors if a thunderstorm approaches.
- Watch out for rattlesnakes and other snakes. If you leave them alone and move cautiously away, they won't bother you.
- Stay on trails, especially in delicate dune habitats.
- Have fun!

# Padre Island National Seashore JUNIOR RANGER GUIDE

## Discovering Padre Island



Do you love wading into the ocean? Tracking rare sea turtles? Collecting sea shells? If so, you've come to the right seashore.

Padre Island is a very special place. It's a barrier island—a long, low island that forms parallel to a coastline. It has the longest stretch of undeveloped seashore of any barrier island in the world! What's more, Padre Island provides an important stopover point for migrating birds. It's home to five species of endangered sea turtles. And it even has habitats so rare you may see them here and nowhere else.

So what are you waiting for? This guide will give you lots of ideas for exploring Padre Island and learning about its wonders. If you complete the activities in this guide, you can earn a Junior Ranger badge. You can work alone or with your family or with a group of friends. Just show your completed guide to a park ranger to receive your special badge.



### Ask a Ranger

Have you ever talked to a national park ranger? Now's your chance! If you can, ask a ranger these questions and record his or her answers:

What's your name?

How long have you worked at Padre Island National Seashore?

What's the best part about your job?

What's your favorite plant or animal here?

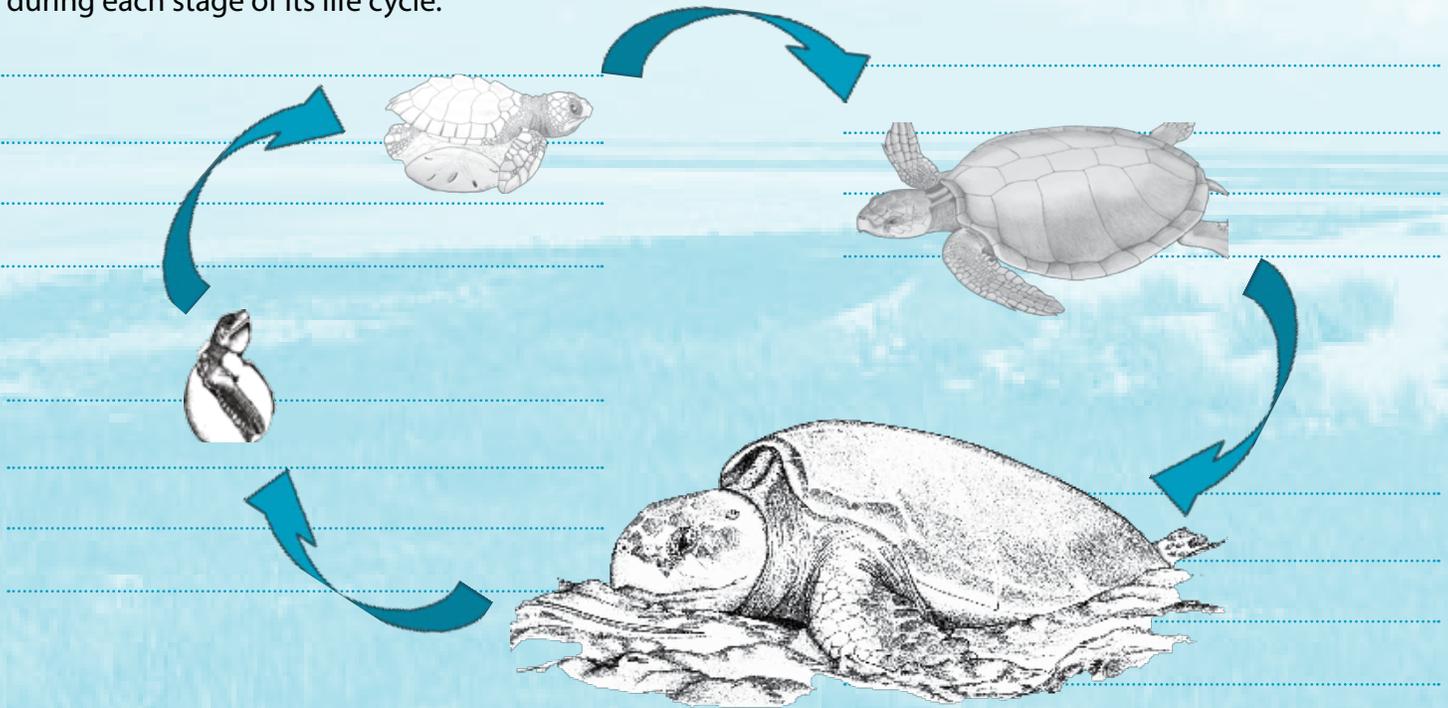
What's your favorite activity to do on the island?



# Against All Odds

The Kemp's ridley sea turtle is the most common nesting turtle on Padre Island National Seashore's beaches. This beach is a very important part of the Kemp's ridley life cycle. A life cycle includes all of the changes an animal goes through during its lifetime, from before they hatch to when they die. Throughout a Kemp's ridley's life cycle, it will face many challenges to its survival. Some challenges are natural, like a bird or shark eating a turtle for a meal. Other challenges are caused by people, such as litter floating in the ocean that turtles may eat and choke on or become tangled up in.

Visit the display of the sea turtle in the visitor center and watch the video to learn about the Kemp's ridley sea turtle's life cycle. Then, in the space provided, name one thing that might be a threat to the sea turtle during each stage of its life cycle.



## Ask the Turtle Expert

While humans are the reason for Kemp's ridley sea turtles coming close to extinction, they can also be a big part of the solution. Imagine you're a wildlife expert who's been called in to help with some problems facing the Kemp's ridley sea turtles of Padre Island. **What advice would you give to visitors asking these questions? Write your advice on the lines.**

Dear Expert,  
Wow! I just found out it's possible to spot Kemp's ridley sea turtles digging their nests and laying their eggs. But people drive on these beaches. How can we keep the sea turtles—and their eggs—safe?  
Signed,

*Sandy Woze*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Dear Expert,  
I want to celebrate my wedding with a big balloon release near the ocean. But now I've heard that old, floating balloons can look like jellyfish to sea turtles, and choke them. What should I do?  
Sincerely,

*Mary N. Tipe*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

# The Park in the Dark

1. I feed at dawn and dusk, keeping a wary eye out for people and other predators. Males of my species have antlers; females usually don't.

2. At night I scuttle down the beach to get water for my "gill sac." That's a special body part that has enabled me to go from being a sea creature to breathing on land. During the day, I hide in deep burrows in the sand.

3. I'm a doglike scavenger that can often be seen at night or in the early morning while I'm out searching for food.

4. I feed at dusk and night in areas where other herons feed during the day. That means less competition for food!

5. I jump across the ground just like the mammal I'm named after. At night I emerge to find seeds; by day, I stay in my underground burrows.

6. I fly through the night air searching for rodents and other small mammals. I happen to be the only animal that regularly eats skunks!

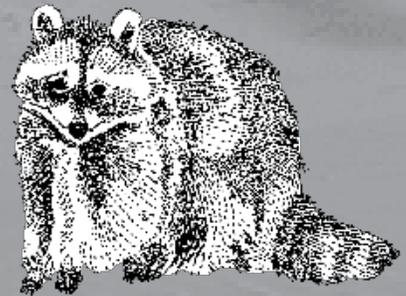
7. I'm busy at night searching for insects, snakes, frogs, fish, birds, nuts, fruit, and even garbage. The black band of fur across my eyes looks like a mask.

8. I drag my bill through the water as I fly to catch small fish. I feed at dusk, dawn, and even night, using my sense of touch to snag my prey.

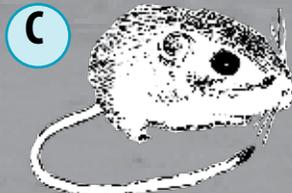
Fill in the letter of the correct animal in the circle next to the description of the animal. After you're done, check your work with the answers at the bottom of the page.



A



B

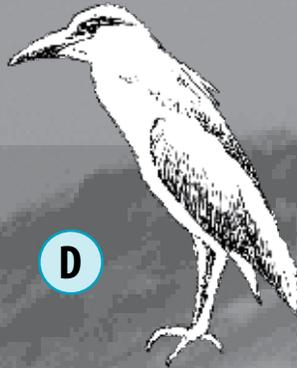


C

1-(F) DEER; 2-(E) GHOST CRAB; 3-(G) COYOTE; 4-(D) BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON;  
5-(C) KANGAROO RAT; 6-(A) GREAT HORNED OWL; 7-(B) RACCOON; 8-(H) BLACK SKIM-  
MER

The beaches and dunes of Padre Island really come alive in the cooler, darker nighttime hours. Read the following descriptions to find out which creatures prowl, fly, and crawl through the park in the dark.

Fill in the circles with the correct letter for each animal.



D



E



F



G



H

**DID YOU KNOW?** The eyes of many nocturnal animals are adapted to see in limited light. But many cannot detect colors. That means you can use a flashlight covered with red cellophane (or with the lens painted with red nail polish) to see animals such as kangaroo rats and ghost crabs without disturbing them!

# Beach Clean-Up

Strong currents in the Gulf of Mexico deliver a messy mix of trash to the beaches of Padre Island. But you can help! Trash washes into the Gulf from rivers and streams. Anytime you're out on our beaches, help the environment by picking up trash and depositing it in litter barrels. Ask for a trash bag at the visitor center front desk. Then collect as many kinds of trash as you can, including at least six items from the list below.

When you're done, place the litter bag in the large trash container in the visitor center parking lot. Save all the recyclables for the bins on the visitor center deck. **THANK YOU!**

Try to find:

**WARNING:** Don't pick up broken glass, discarded needles, or other sharp objects that can injure you, and avoid any metal drums, which may contain hazardous waste.

1. Something that could get wrapped around the fin of a fish.

2. A piece of trash that looks like a jellyfish and could cause a turtle to choke.

3. An old rubber glove.

4. A piece of rope.

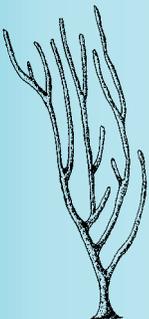
5. A chunk of Styrofoam.

6. An aluminum can.

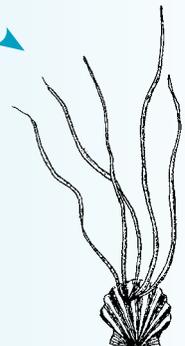
7. A piece of trash probably left by someone visiting the beach.

8. A glob of black tar.

9. A used plastic bottle.



If you see yellowish stuff that looks like this, don't pick it up: It's not trash, but a species of coral that helps control beach erosion!



# The People of Padre

Many people have lived on or visited Padre Island throughout time. Match the descriptions on the left with the drawings on the right by drawing a line between the two and follow the other instructions that are given with each description.

1. Among the first people to inhabit Padre Island were the Karankawas. They came to the island each summer to hunt and fish. Draw a fish shape around the Karankawa arrow points pictured.



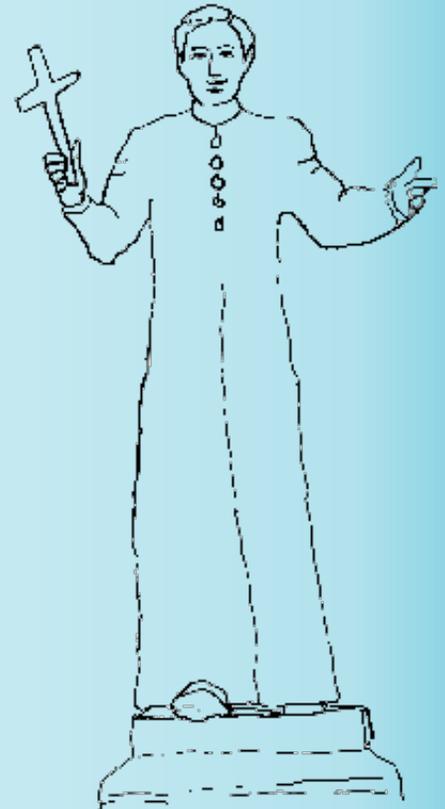
2. The first Europeans to explore the island came from Spain in the early 1500s. Write the word oro (Spanish for gold) under the coins.



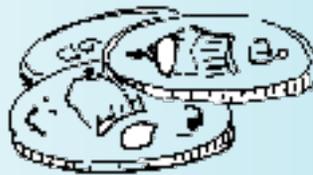
3. In 1804, Padre Jose Nicolas Balli of Spain built a mission and a ranch on the island. Padre Island is named for him. Draw a circle around the statue of Padre Balli.



4. A man named Patrick Dunn started ranching cattle on the island in 1879. Cattle continued to roam the island through the 1960s. Draw a cow next to the branding iron with a D (for Dunn).

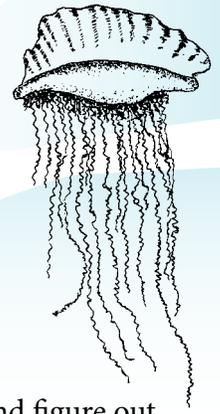


5. In 1962, Padre Island was declared a National Seashore. Fill in the badge with the words from a Junior Ranger badge like the one you will receive today when you complete this book.



# A World of Jellies

The warm waters around Padre Island are home to many kinds of jellyfish and their relatives. The jelly group includes sea anemones and corals. Most have tiny venom-filled structures in their bodies.



Use the descriptions below to help you identify five jelly-like creatures found around Padre and figure out which ones you might want to avoid. **Circle the pictures of the creatures you should not touch.**

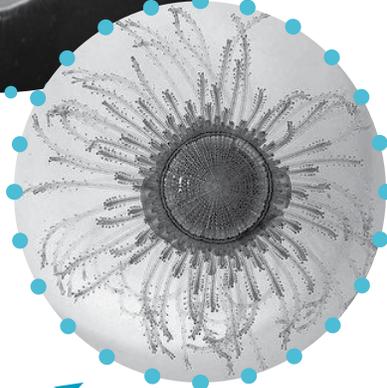
The MOON JELLY is colorless and translucent. Touching one can irritate your skin.



The PORTUGUESE MAN-O-WAR has a blue balloon-like float and long tentacles. It can give people a very painful sting. But it isn't a true jelly: It's made up of four different animals that function as one unit!



The BLUE BUTTON is usually blue, but its tentacles can vary from blue to brilliant green. It's generally harmless to people.



The CABBAGEHEAD JELLYFISH has a milky colored bell. If you touch one, you might feel a mild tingle.

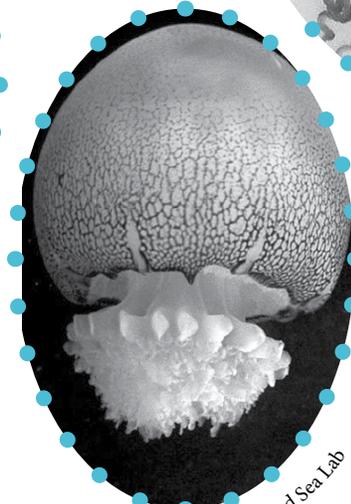


photo: Dauphin Island Sea Lab

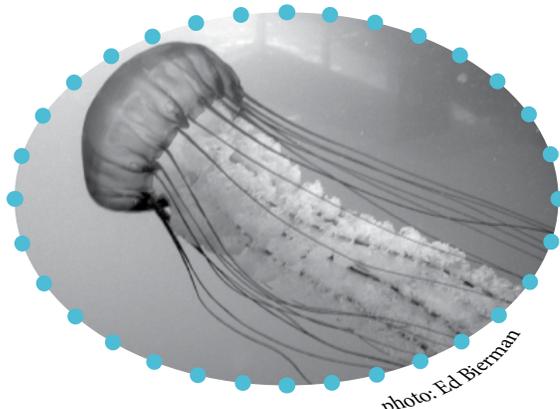


photo: Ed Bierman

The SEA NETTLE varies in color from nearly clear to pink or rust. Sea nettles pack a powerful sting and are common during the summer in the Laguna Madre and Gulf.

# Seashell Search

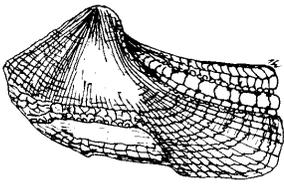
At Padre Island, you're allowed to collect up to five gallons of sea shells. But remember—shells are homes that animals either make or borrow. If a shell you pick up has an animal still living inside, please place it back in the water.

See if you can find any of the shells below on the beach.

Then visit the touch table at the visitor center and try to find at least eight more.

Note: The drawings on this page are not to scale. For example, the Coquina Clam, at 1/2 inch, is much smaller than the 2-3 inch Iris Tellin.

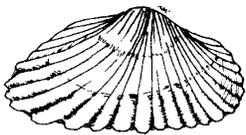
## 1. Turkey Ark



## 2. Saw-Toothed Pen Shell



## 3. Transverse Ark



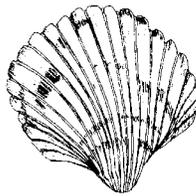
## 4. Lettered Olive



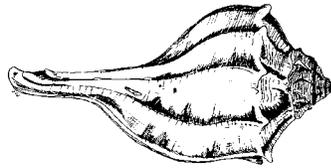
## 5. Sundial



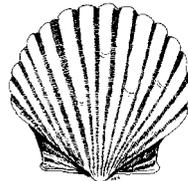
## 6. Atlantic Cockle



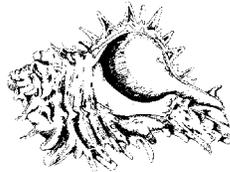
## 7. Lightning Whelk



## 8. Bay Scallop



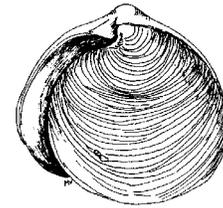
## 9. Murex



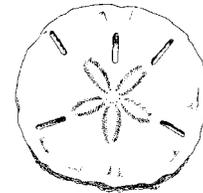
## 10. Iris Tellin



## 11. Disk Dosinia

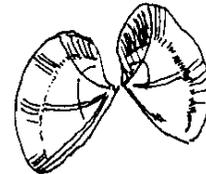


## 12. Sand Dollar

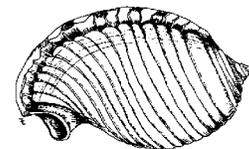


Note: Fuzzy sand dollars are still alive!

## 13. Coquina Clam



## 14. Scotch Bonnet



## 15. Moon Snail



Extra credit: Can you find a seabeans? Seabeans are tropical seeds and fruits that are carried on ocean currents and wash ashore. Some come from as far away as the Amazon! Some of the most common seabeans at Padre Island are coconuts, hickory nuts, and starnut palms.

# Padre Island National Seashore



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[www.nps.gov/pais](http://www.nps.gov/pais)

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visit <http://www.nps.gov/webangers>

## Junior Ranger Pledge

I am proud to be a National Park Service Junior  
Ranger. I promise to appreciate, respect, and  
protect all national parks. I also promise to  
continue learning about the landscape,  
plants,  
animals, and  
history of these special places.  
I will share what I learn  
with my friends and  
family.

