

Starved Rock State Park

Junior Ranger Guide

5 – 7 yrs.



Take Only Memories....Leave Only Footprints.

This workbook belongs to:

Welcome, Adult Leaders & Parents

We are very happy you have come to Starved Rock State Park! We hope you enjoy your visit and the Junior Ranger adventure with your children.

It is the mission of the Illinois State Park system to protect the natural and cultural resources of the parks while allowing visitors to enjoy resource-based recreational activities. As part of that mission, the goal of the Junior Ranger program is to ignite excitement about the outdoors in youth and to interactively educate them about Starved Rock State Park's natural and cultural resources.

The activities in this guide are developed for children between the ages of 8-12, although children of any age are welcome to participate. We encourage you to assist with the activities and to have fun exploring the outdoors safely. Before you begin, please review the safety guidelines and park rules located in the beginning of this guide together with your children.

At least five activities will need to be completed to receive the Junior Ranger certificate and badge. If some activities are below your child's level. You are encouraged to add your own spin. Ask them questions that will inspire them to think critically about the topic, or add math and science concepts.

The most important thing about this Junior Ranger program is that you and your children have fun! Care and concern for our parks begins with interest, and interest can be sparked by having fun, memorable, face-to-face experiences with nature and history.

Happy Adventures!

The Rangers and Volunteers of Starved Rock State Park

For questions about the program contact:

Starved Rock State Park Visitor Center

Natural Resources Coordinator

1-815-667-4726

Welcome, future Junior Ranger, to Starved Rock State Park!

We are so glad you are here to explore the story, plants, and animals that make Starved Rock State Park special! As a Junior Ranger, you can help Park Rangers to their job to **PROTECT** the park's natural and historic places so that people can always visit and enjoy them.

To become a Junior Ranger you will need to:

1. Have fun. Be an explorer! You can go on a hike down a trail, hike up to the top of Starved Rock, and explore the visitor center.
2. Do at least **3 activities** in this book during your adventure. Then bring it to the Visitor Center from 9:00 – 3:30p.m.
3. Receive your Junior Ranger certificate. You will then be an official Junior Ranger at Starved Rock State Park!

If you have any questions ask a Park Ranger or Volunteer. They love to hear what new things you have discovered.

Junior Ranger Safety Rules

Junior Rangers always know how to be smart and stay safe on their outdoor adventures. Be sure to learn and follow these safety rules when you go exploring. Just remember *WATCH*:

Watch the weather – Always keep an eye on the sky. If you hear thunder or see lightning head back, even if it seems far away.

Watch for Animals – Critters are great to see from a distance but NEVER try to touch or feed wildlife.

Walk on the Trails – Stay on the trails so you don't get hurt, lost, or cause harm to the plants and wildlife. Staying on trails also prevents getting poison ivy!

Wear the Right Clothes – To prevent sunburns and insect bites, wear sunscreen, a hat, tennis shoes or hiking boots, pants, and bug-spray.

Water, Water, Water – Drink plenty of water before you go and bring some with you!

Always bring a buddy! A buddy can help you in an emergency and can make your adventure more fun!

Your Duty to Protect

Junior Rangers are stewards of the natural and historical things at Starved Rock State Park. They show respect for nature and places by taking good care of them for other people to see and learn about. Here are some park rules you should follow as a Junior Ranger to help protect the park's nature and history for all to enjoy.

Thank you for being a steward of our special park!



ACTIVITY 1: Help a Ranger

Park rangers help to protect your parks by enforcing the rules and by helping you to understand why parks are important and why it is important to care for them. Learn how to care for your surroundings by answering the following questions. *Circle the best answer(s).*

1. You're walking down the trail and see a snake. You should:
 - a. Teach it to tap dance
 - b. Kill it
 - c. Walk around it

2. When you see a deer in the woods, you should:
 - a. Feed it so it comes closer to you
 - b. Enjoy watching it from a distance
 - c. Ask it if it knows Bambi

3. You see a beautiful flower. You may:
 - a. Take a picture
 - b. Smell it
 - c. Pick it
 - d. Draw it
 - e. Feed it potato chips

4. You're planning a hike. You should take:
 - a. Water
 - b. Bowling ball
 - c. Food
 - d. Map
 - e. A hair dryer

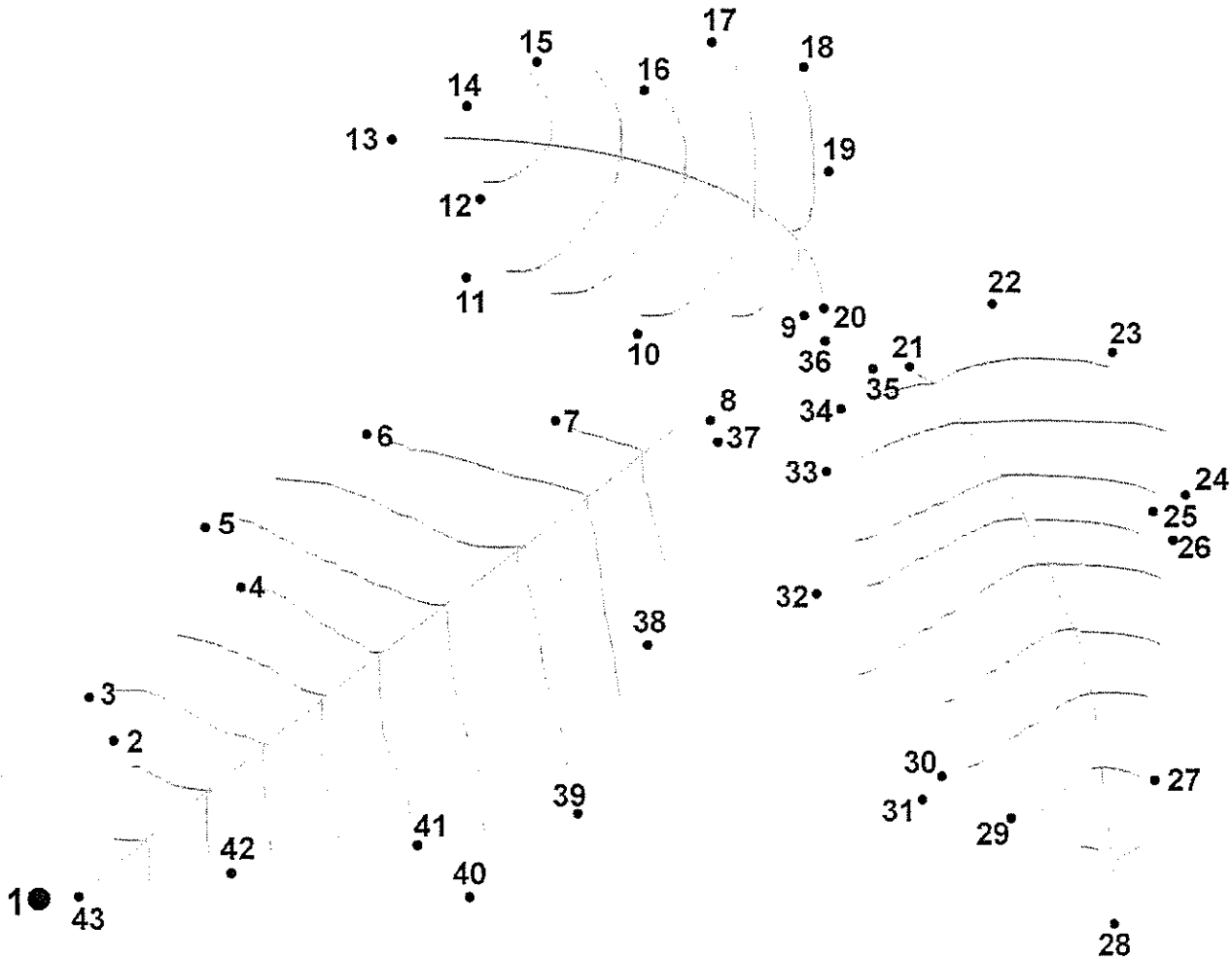
5. You're walking along a trail and find a deer fawn hiding in the grass and its mother is nowhere in sight. You should:
 - a. Take it to the nearest ranger station
 - b. Leave it alone
 - c. Pet it
 - d. Knit socks for it

Great job! State Parks belong to everyone. You can help to take care of your parks and your own surroundings by following the rules and treating the things around you with care and respect.

ACTIVITY 2: Leaves of Eeeee!



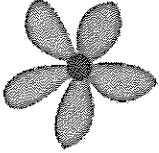






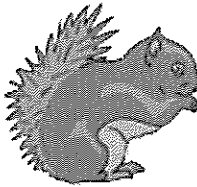
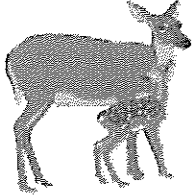



There are many plants to see and enjoy at Starved Rock State Park, but Poison Ivy can give you an itchy rash if you touch it. Poison Ivy is the most abundant plant at Starved Rock and lines all of the hiking trails at the park. Starting with 1, connect the dots to reveal what Poison Ivy looks like. The leaves are green and turn red in the fall. Just remember:

“Leaves of Three, Let it Be!”



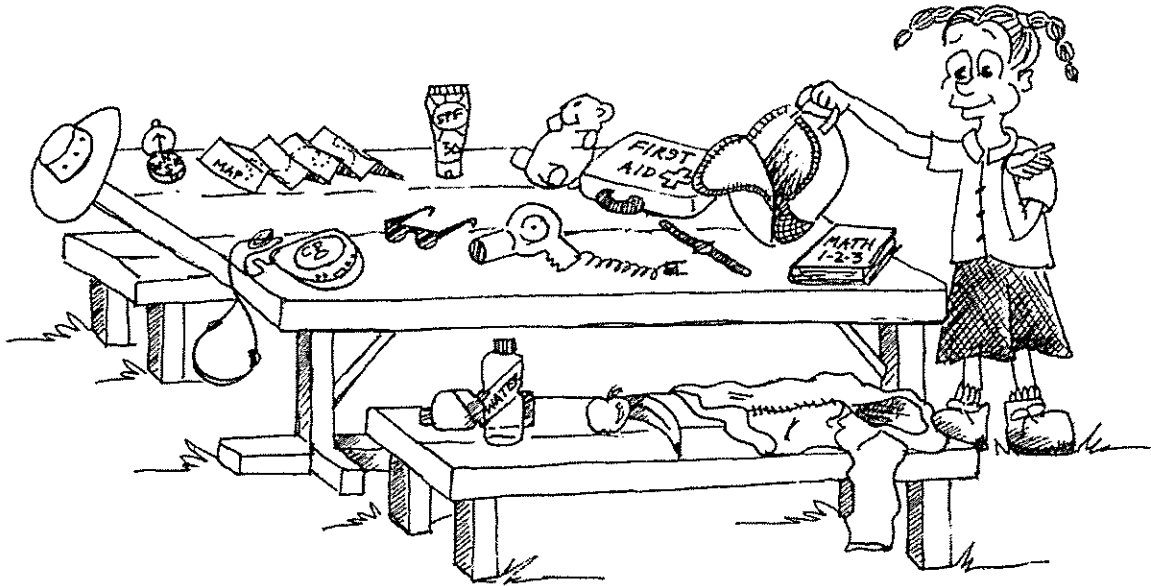
ACTIVITY 3: Scavenger Hunt Bingo

It is your job as a Jr. Ranger to protect wildlife and plants at Starved Rock State Park. Learning to recognize and observe wildlife is a big part of this job. Watch and listen for these common sights and sounds at the park. As you see and hear them, circle the picture and try to get bingo (four in a row up, down, or diagonally) The empty spaces are "wild cards". Find something not on the board and draw it in!

 Song Bird	 Fish	<hr/>	 Wildflower
 Animal Tracks	 Woodpecker	 Duck	 Tree
 Bird Nest	 Frog	 Squirrel	 Deer
 Pinecone	<hr/>	 Acorn	 Eagle

Activity 4: Ready, Set...Hike!

Help Jr. Ranger Jessica decide what she needs to take with her on a hike in Starved Rock State Park. Circle the things she will **need** to be ready for her hike. Cross out the things she should leave behind.



What trails have *you* hiked at Starved Rock State Park?

What was your favorite part of the hike? Why?

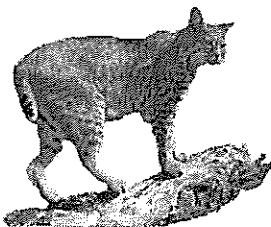
Remember that Jr. Rangers need to help care for the park by leaving no trace of their visit. When you go hiking, stay on the trail and leave the plants, animals, and rocks as you find them. Be safe and respectful of other visitors so they can enjoy Starved Rock too!



Activity 5: Animal Tracks

Animal tracks are evidence of life that you may see in the park even if you don't see the animal. Match the animal picture to the name; then match the name to the animal's track. Remember to always observe wildlife from a distance and never feed them.

Animal



Name

Beaver

Deer

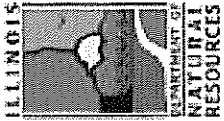
Duck

Bobcat

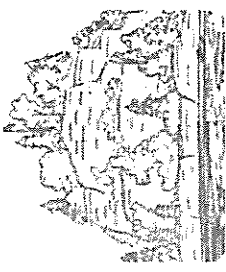
Raccoon

Track





Starved Rock State Park

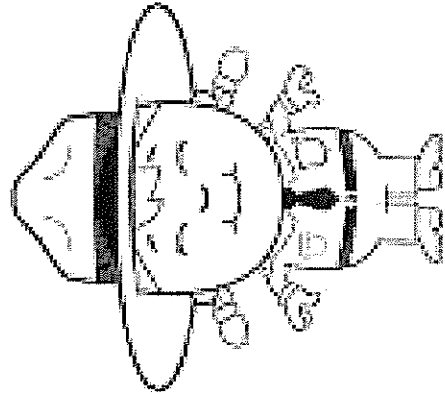


This certifies that:

Has completed the required activities and is hereby designated a

Junior Ranger

Congratulations!



Park Ranger

Date