

Dune Ranger

Jockey's Ridge State Park



Explore - Learn - Help Out

This book belongs to: _____

Start Today!

Welcome to Jockey's Ridge State Park. While completing the dune ranger activities you will learn more about the sand dunes of Jockey's Ridge. Dune Rangers observe their environment and teach others about what they discover, protect natural resources, and follow the rules for safe recreation in our parks.

To receive the official Dune Ranger patch, complete four of the below activities and present your completed guide to park staff.

- Landmark to State Park
- By the Sound
- Ask a Ranger
- Live Oak Lessons
- Dune Sleuth
- Attend a Park Program

Date: _____ Program: _____

Ranger Signature: _____



To Adult Leaders.....

Dune Ranger programs are open to all but have been developed for the 6 - 12 age range. Included are self-guided activities to promote inquiry and exploration. Park staff have prepared this guide specific to the unique landscape of Jockey's Ridge but Junior Ranger activities are available when visiting all parks managed by the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation.

The North Carolina State Park System

Our state park system began with Mount Mitchell and has grown to protect areas throughout all the different regions of North Carolina. The parks are for the people to visit but also a home for native plants and wildlife. Park rangers work to make several different goals all work together.



Mission Statement of North Carolina State Parks:

Conservation: To conserve and protect representative examples of North Carolina's natural beauty, ecological features, recreational and cultural resources within the state parks system;

Recreation: To provide and promote safe, healthy and enjoyable outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the state; and

Education: To provide educational opportunities that promote stewardship of the state's natural and cultural heritage.

Dune Safety Tips

- ⊗ Visit the park with an adult.
- ⊗ Plan your visit and let someone else know your plan.
 - ⊗ Wear sunscreen and drink plenty of water.
 - ⊗ Dress for the weather.
 - ⊗ Do not feed or approach wildlife.
- ⊗ Check for ticks soon after being outside.

Landmark

The park was established in 1975 and the dunes are believed to have formed 3,000 to 4,000 years earlier. At one time, the dunes were 138 feet tall but today the elevation is lower. They remain the largest active sand dune system in the Eastern United States.

The dunes formed when the current and tides brought sand onto the beach. These sand deposits are much deeper along the northern coast of our state. As time passed, winds carried this sand further to the west forming back barrier dunes. The winds are often northeast in the cooler months and southwest in the summer months. This seasonal shift in wind causes dune movement to change slope and height.

There were once other large dunes to the south and extended north into the coast of Virginia. All have changed greatly, but Jockey's Ridge preserved as a park offers a view into historic landscapes of coastal North Carolina.

Legends are common in the Outer Banks. Jockey's Ridge was likely first named "Jackey Ridge" and the reason for the change is not fully understood. A popular story is that people lined the steep slopes of the dunes to view jockeys racing wild horses down below.



State Park

Highway signs serve as reminders of the past. The park's entrance is located where Croatan Highway and Carolista Drive intersect.

Croatan is for the Native Americans living along the coast when colonists first arrived. When colonists arrived from England in the 1580s, they met others thriving with knowledge of the coast. In the 1830s, travel to the coast increased for a place where they sought better health and relaxation. This led to the first Nags Head hotel built in 1838 with a view of the dunes. The Civil War slowed travel to the area but that was only temporary.

As roads improved, longer bridges were built. With new roads, bridges, and better cars there were more people visiting and living in the Outer Banks.

In 1972, condominiums were added just north of Jockey's Ridge with plans for others. During the summer of 1973, children played along the dunes while a bulldozer crept closer to this goal. The children asked their parents to protect the dunes and the parents asked for the state government to support their plan for a park.

These parents were Walter and Carolista Baum. The Baums are honored with street signs for establishing the People to Preserve Jockey's Ridge and for slowing development to protect resources for a park. As you venture into Jockey's Ridge and other parks, take time to study nature and notice the changes. Never disturb plants and animals. Take time to share your observations with family and friends.



Landmark to State Park

1973 was a year when a lot of people helped to make Jockey's Ridge a state park. This was needed because new homes were going to be built near the dunes. To ask for help, people flew kites, made stickers and placemats, and wrote letters. Today, staff and volunteers continue working to offer recreation while also protecting natural resources at the park.



Think about land that you would want to be a park and complete the questions below.

1. Draw a map of the park on the following page. For hints on what to include check out our park map.

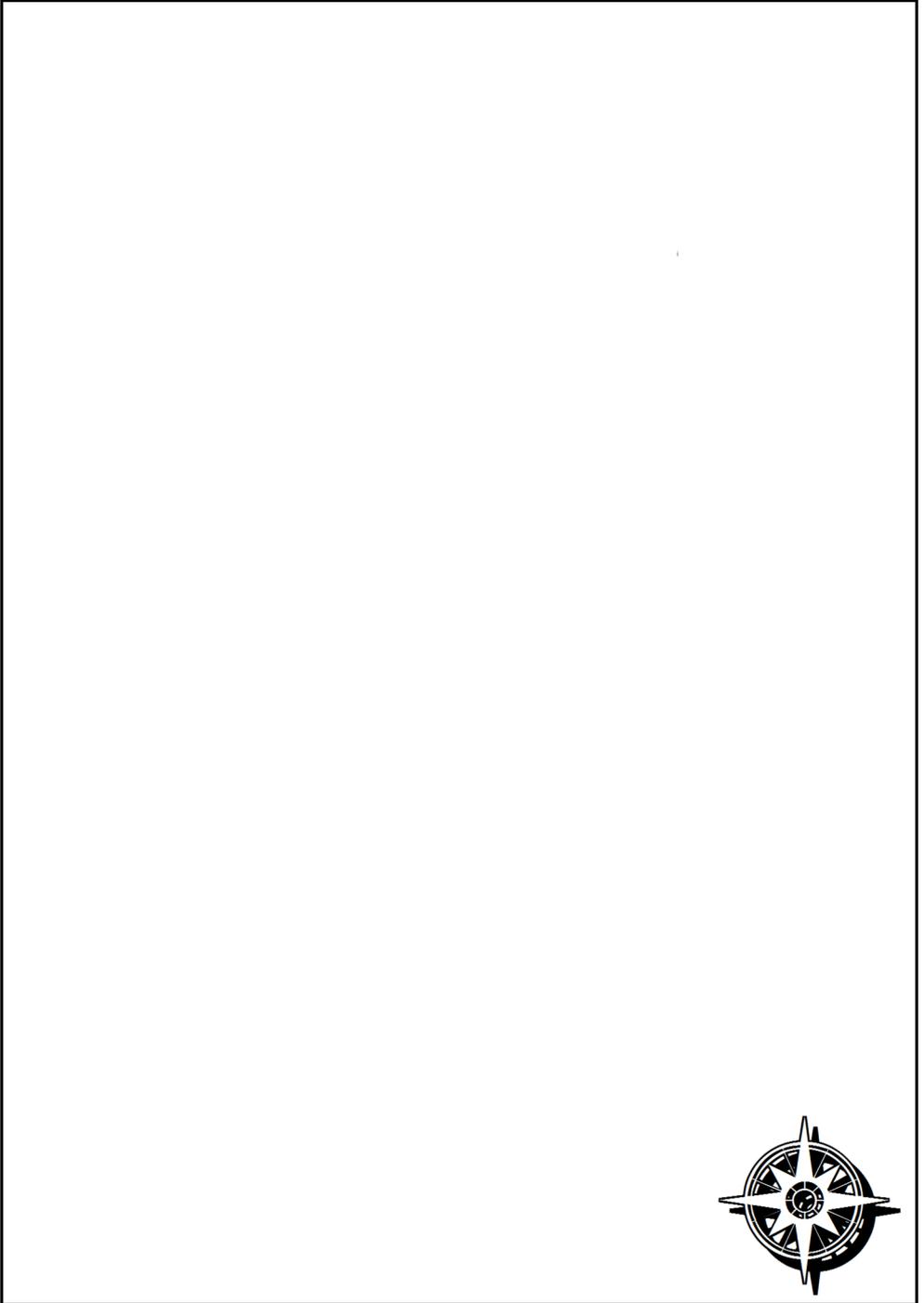
2. What would you name the park? _____

3. How would you let other people know about the importance of this park? _____

3. What animals would live in this park? _____

4. What activities would there be for park visitors? _____

Park Map



By the Sound

Sound is a word we use to describe a nearby waterbody and also what we hear. Sometimes this is the only way we are able to identify animals that are able to stay well hidden. Our parks are also places we may hear sounds we never hear near our homes. Depending on when we visit, these sounds may also be different in each of the four seasons.



1. Draw a sound map in the space on the following page. Include pictures to show what you hear all around you. The “x” marks your location in relation to the sounds around you.

2. Are there more natural sounds or sounds made by people? _____

3. How many different animals can you hear? _____

3. How far away would you guess the sounds are from you?

4. What season are you visiting the park? _____

5. What time of day? _____

6. Circle the current weather conditions.



Sound Map

x

Ask a Ranger

Park rangers see plants and animals in different life stages throughout the year as well as seasonal weather changes within the park. The job has been described as one requiring you to “wear many hats.” This means that rangers work on different projects to help the park. They are also available in the parks to provide information to visitors. While exploring the park, write questions about what you find that you would want to ask a park ranger.

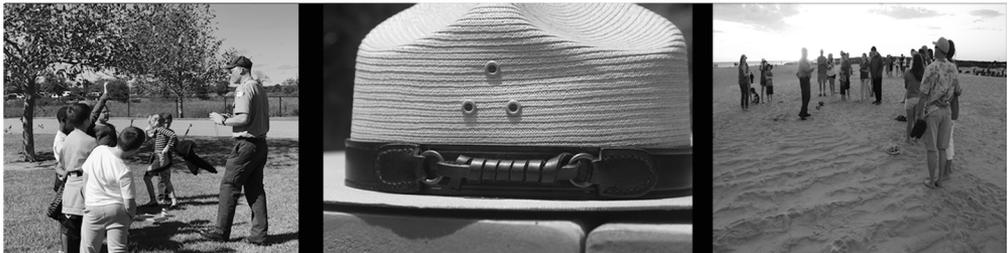
What _____ ?
Answer: _____

Why _____ ?
Answer: _____

How _____ ?
Answer: _____

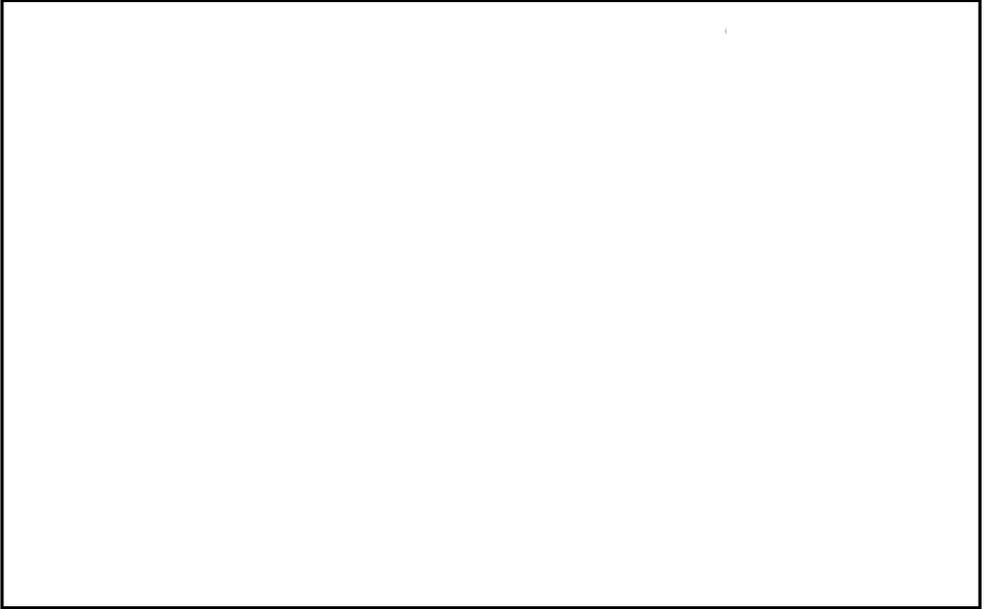
Where _____ ?
Answer: _____

When _____ ?
Answer: _____



Live Oak Lessons

Twisting and curling in the parking lot and areas near the visitor center are our live oaks. Though they are said to grow out instead of up, they may be the tallest trees in certain areas of the park. The branching of live oaks may also be shaped by our coastal weather. The following activities will involve observing the live oaks and noting what we can learn from their bending branches.



1. Draw a picture above of one live oak found within Jockey's Ridge State Park.
2. Circle any of the below that you can find on a live oak.

flower - acorn - other plants

3. What animals can you see on or near the live oak trees?



Dune Sleuth

Just like when we try to solve a mystery, when studying nature, we must also observe. To do this, we look closely and become very aware of our surroundings.

Find an area in the park where you see animal tracks in the sand.

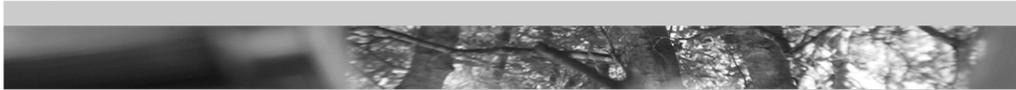
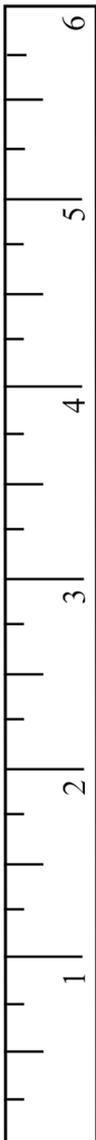
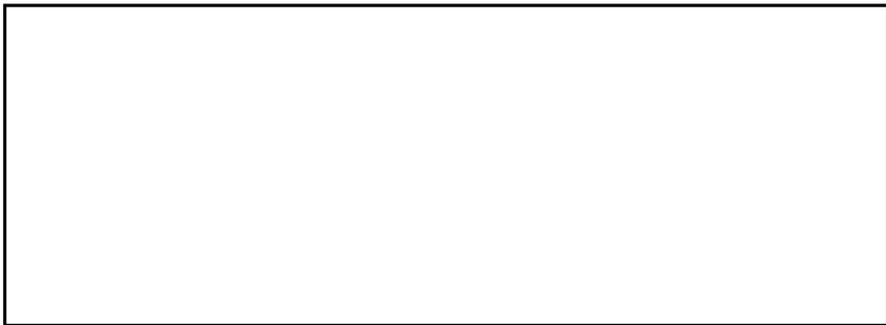
1. Look very quickly and write what you first notice.

Next study what you see and describe it below. If you have not seen this before, share your observations with family or park rangers to see if they can help identify.

2. Does this animal have a tail? _____
3. How many feet does this animal have? _____
4. Take measurements of the track:
Length: _____ inches
Width: _____ inches
5. How would you describe the movement? (circle below)

a straight path - or - moving in different directions

6. Draw the track in the space below.

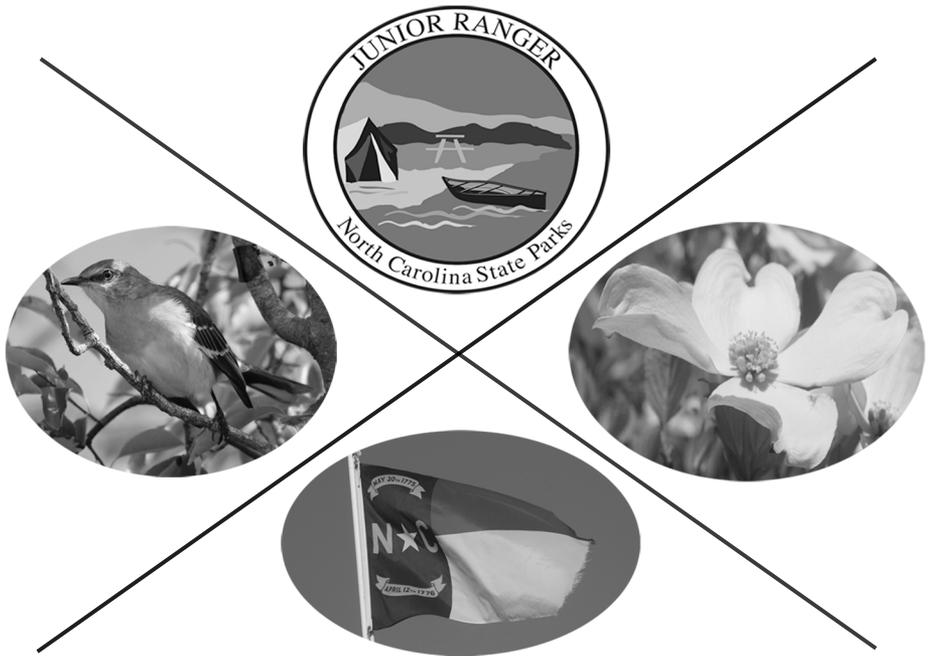


The Dune Ranger Pledge

I promise to help take care of our parks.
I will not litter and I will help keep our parks clean.

I will not harm or remove any plants or animals.
I will observe safely while visiting and teach others
about what I see in parks.

I will encourage my friends and family to support
the park and protect our natural resources.



Congratulations!

You are now an official Dune Ranger and also a Junior Ranger.
Additional patches can be earned while visiting our other state parks.

Dune Ranger Signature: _____



Jockey's Ridge State Park

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