



Smith Mountain Lake State Park Jr. Ranger Activity Book





Becoming a Jr. Ranger



As a Jr. Ranger I pledge to:

- Preserve and protect our parks;
- Care for my natural and historical surroundings;
- Share what I have learned about the parks with others;
- Obey all safety rules;
- Continue to explore and discover.

Rangers are an important part of the Virginia State Park system. Some of the duties of Park Rangers are to protect the plants and animals, preserve the history of each park, share their knowledge in a meaningful way, ensure the safety of each visitor and to instill a sense of discovery in everyone they meet.

We're glad you are going to become a Jr. Ranger.

To start your adventure, raise your right hand & recite the pledge,

Ages 5 - 8 complete 6 of the activities.

Ages 9 - 12 complete 9 of the activities.

To finish your journey; hike one trail, complete one stewardship project and participate in at least two Ranger led programs.

Don't forget to have the Ranger sign your book!

Stop by the Discovery Center or Visitor Center to receive your Official Jr. Ranger Badge .





Welcome to Virginia State Parks

Virginia was the first state to create a state park system on the same day, June 15, 1936.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt started the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression to create jobs for Americans.

In 1936, Virginia opened its first six state parks. Seashore (now First Landing) , Fairy Stone, Douthat, Staunton River, Westmoreland and Hungry Mother.

That legacy of conservation endures today - more than 70 years later.











Virginia State Bat

Virginia State Flower

Virginia State Insect

Civilian Conservation
Corps Logo

Virginia State Bird

Virginia State Fish

Show your knowledge of Virginia by drawing a line from the picture to the State symbol.



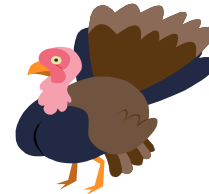


Who's Clues?

Animals *tracks* are easy to find after a snow or when the ground is soft from a Spring rain.
What other tracks have you seen in the park?
Next time you're hiking, be sure to look for the clues animals leave behind. You never know who's been traveling on the path before you!
Even you leave a foot print.

Rangers are alert to these clues so they can *conserve* the vital *habitats* for the animals in the park.

Match the tracks to the animal that left them by drawing a line between the correct match.



Check out the Tracks & Scat program



Hidden Treasures

There are over 12 miles of hiking trails at Smith Mountain Lake State Park for you and your family to enjoy. Hiking is a great way to explore the park and discover some of this State Park's hidden treasures.

Before you start your hike, it is important to pack your backpack with things you might need along the way.

Look at the picture and find the 10 things you'll need on your hiking trip (hint: You will find a first aid kit, a canteen to carry water, a flashlight, food, a map, a compass, binoculars, hiking boots, a walking stick, and your backpack).



**Make
your own
hiking staff
at our Trick Your
Stick Program**



WOOD You Believe, we get so much from Trees?

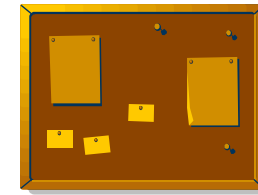
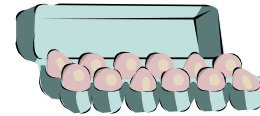
Trees are the longest living organisms and one of the greatest resources on the planet. A Great Basin Bristlecone Pine tree named "Methuselah" growing in California is said to be over 4,700 years old. They keep our air supply clean, reduce noise pollution, improve water quality, help prevent erosion, provide food and building materials, create shade, and help make our landscapes look beautiful.

A single tree produces approximately 260 pounds of oxygen per year. That means two mature trees can supply enough oxygen annually to support a family of four! Over the course of its life, a single tree can absorb one ton of carbon dioxide.

Trees provide us with timber for houses and buildings. The average American uses about 750 pounds of paper every year. That means each person uses the equivalent of one 100 foot tall, 16 inch diameter, tree every year for their paper and wood product needs. It's even in our clothes! Lyocell is a rayon-like fabric made from the wood pulp cellulose of trees.

Rangers work to protect our oldest citizens & living treasures ...TREES!

**Circle
the 11 items
that come
from trees**





Plant Riddle

There are hundreds of different plant species throughout the park and they all serve a special purpose. Some are food for other animals. Some plants are used as homes, plants can be made into medicines but some are toxic or poisonous. There are even plants that make dead stuff disappear!

Read the clues for each plant to fill in the blanks. If you get stumped, use the code at the bottom of the page to help you out.

Remember: a good Jr. Ranger knows not to pick any flowers or harm any plants found in Virginia State Parks.



I am a golden color. You can find me growing at the entrance of the park & at the Main Playground area.

I can be used as a natural cleanser for skin & wounds.

Although the first word of my name reminds us of Halloween, I'm not scary!

What am I? _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
10 22 7 16 21 21 14 13 18 25

I am the Virginia State Flower although I'm really a tree.

I can have pink or white flowers. Birds & other animals enjoy my red berries in the fall.

What am I? _ _ _ _ _ _ _
17 2 20 10 2 2 17

I am usually the first tree to bloom in the spring.

I have showy reddish-pink flowers. Lots of people plant me in their yards because of my beauty.

What am I? _ _ _ _ _ _
5 18 17 15 8 17

I am a favorite tree for squirrels to build their nests in.

I produce a seed that is an important food for many animals that live in the park.

There are Black, Red, White & Willow varieties of me found in the park.

What am I? _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .
2 14 24 7 5 18 18

I'm a plant that lacks chlorophyll & must live on organic matter.

Some varieties of me are edible...but BE CAREFULL! Most are poisonous!

I'm a great decomposer because I can make dead plants & animals disappear.

What am I? _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .
26 8 6 21 5 2 2 26

Birds like to build their nests on my branches.

I stay green all year, I'm a conifer.

Lots of animals eat my seed cones.

I'm also grown for my timber.

What am I? _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .
3 22 1 18 7 5 18 18

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13



Animal Sign Bingo

Animals leave behind all kinds of clues as to what they've been up to around the park. Lots of animals leave different *signs* that they've been around besides their *tracks*; turkeys *scratch* the ground looking for a meal, deer *rub* saplings with their antlers and birds of prey such as owls leave traces of their undigested meals in the form of *pellets* on the ground under their perches.

And of course there's always *scat*. You guessed it! That's what an animal leaves behind when it relieves itself!

Even people leave traces that they've been here in the form of *litter* & footprints. Remember people are animals too, we're **mammals**.

As you explore Smith Mountain Lake State Park, locate as many items as you can and put an "X" over each item you find. When you find 5 items in a row - up/down/across/diagonal - you score "Animal Sign Bingo!" Have fun looking!

White-tailed
Deer Scat



Flagging Tape



Nuts Chewed by
an Animal



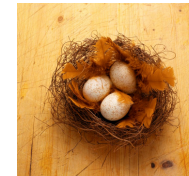
Feather



Trees downed
by Beavers



Bird's Nest



Deer Rub



Trash or Litter



Shed Snakeskin



Turkey Scratch



Squirrel Nest



Rabbit Scat



Fox Scat



Deer Tracks



Boot/Shoe Print



Owl Pellets





A Walk on the Wild Side

There are over 15 miles of hiking trails at Smith Mountain Lake State Park for you and your family to enjoy. Hiking is a great way to explore the park and discover some of this State Park's hidden treasures.

Lead your family on a "Senses Hike". Grab a Trail Guide, choose one of the 12 trails and become a trail guide for your family. Along the journey be sure to make several stops. Ask your family to close their eyes. Ask them, "What do you smell?" "What do you hear?" "What direction is it coming from?" etc. Soak in as many sights, sounds, smells & things to touch (ONLY if it's safe) and record them in the spaces provided.

Remember - Safety First. Be sure to take plenty of water and a first aid kit.



MY HIKE OF DISCOVERY

While on _____ trail...

I observed...

I smelled...

I heard...

I felt...



Around the Tobacco Barn



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

How many barns or foundations have you seen around the park?

Virginia Company
plant
leaf
sucker leaf

Bright tobacco
barn
cultivate
topping

John Rolfe
tobacco
flower
fire curing



Watershed Wonders

One of the oldest forms of writing was a picture story, or "rebus writing."
Can you solve the puzzle to read about the amazing journey of this Watershed?



Everything we do affects the quality of the _____ in our _____ and _____.



If you're concerned about the _____ of your water, you might be interested in knowing where it's been before it reaches you.



The _____ waters of the _____ or Roanoke-Staunton River starts above



Salem VA. It flows through Smith _____ & Buggs _____ Lakes before



reaching the Atlantic _____ at the Albemarle Sound in _____ Carolina.



Find out
more about



Watersheds at our
Discovery Cove program



Thoughts, Observations & Ideas

Nature Journaling is a great way to preserve your memories.

Park Rangers can also be Park Naturalists.

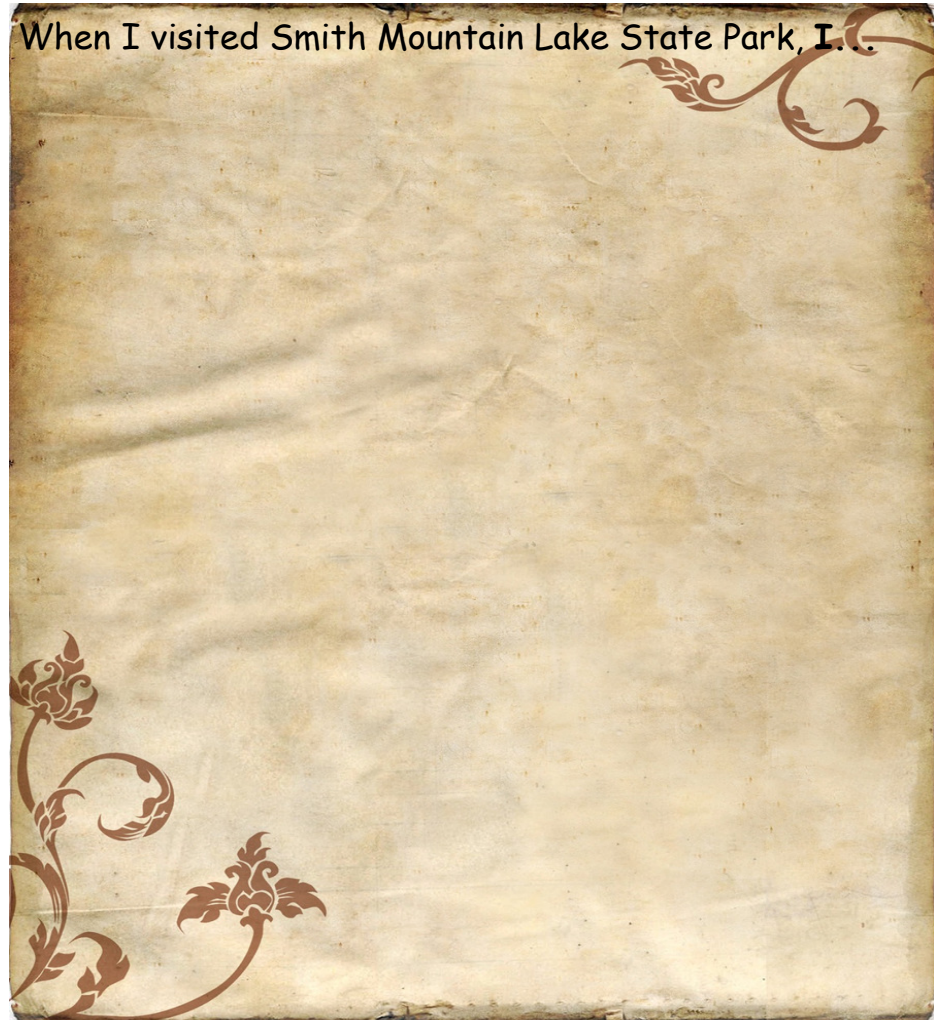
They write & draw pictures in a Nature Journal to keep a record of their observations.

Like the different plants and when they bloom.

And the animals they've seen and their behavior.

Use this space for recording your own observations & adventures!

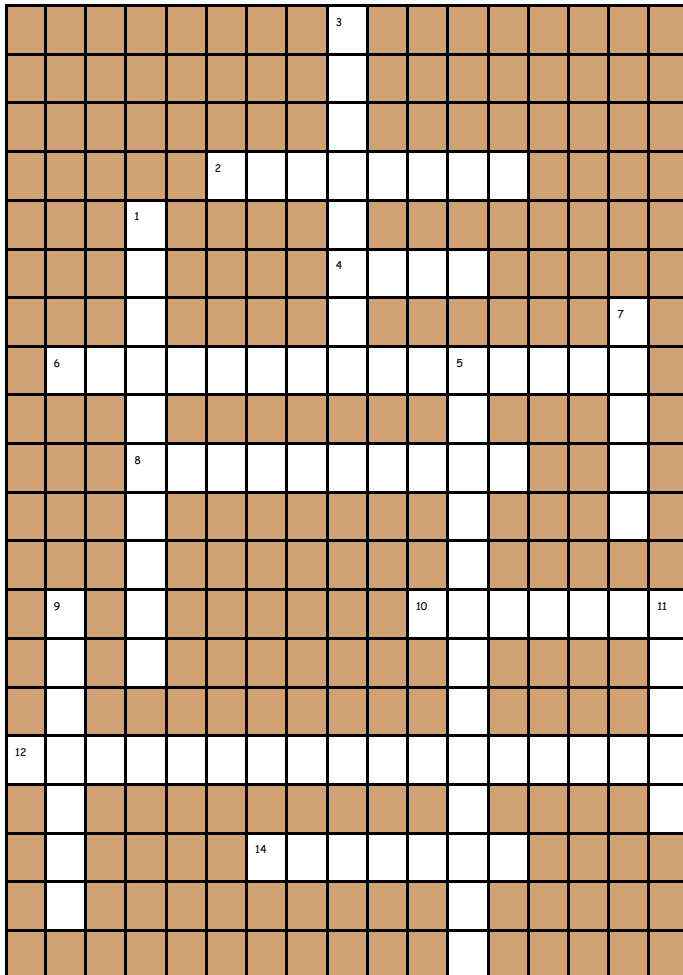
What's the coolest or strangest thing you saw at SML State Park?





Discover Peoples of the Past

Find the Moody Meeting House foundation to discover why this structure was vitally important to the citizens and settlers of this area.



ACROSS

- 2. The mans last name that donated this property.
- 4. The building material used to construct the meeting house.
- 6. Where can this church be found operating today?
- 8. The first congregation met on the mouth of this river.
- 10. What denomination worshiped here?
- 12. The name of the building that stood on this foundation.
- 14. _____ was chosen as the first Pastor.

DOWN

- 1. A red, sweet fruit that describes the Baptist Association.
- 3. This church developed in what county?
- 5. The church was relocated to this school in 1877.
- 7. A kind of foundation.
- 9. The fall month the Strawberry Baptist Association met.
- 11. How many ministers were present in 1790?





Stewardship



As a Jr. Ranger, there are a lot of ways *you* can protect the natural spaces we all share.

Choose at least one Stewardship Project from the list below to make a difference in the world and have an adult sign once you complete it.

1. Pick up & properly dispose of 5 pieces of trash (check the dock area, the playground, the trails).
2. Collect any recyclables that your family may have used during your stay and dispose of them properly in the recycle bins throughout the park.
3. Re-use something you have already used in a different way (maybe: reuse your plastic soda bottle as a water container).
4. Give a brief ranger program to a friend or family member.

Your service project _____

Adult's signature: _____

Programs Attended

List the Ranger led programs you attended below:

1. Program title: _____

What was the most interesting thing you learned at this program? _____

Park Ranger's signature: _____

2. Program title: _____

What was the most interesting thing you learned at this program? _____

Park Ranger's signature: _____

**Stop by
our Visitor or
Discovery Centers
to have a Ranger
sign off on your
completed booklet**



Smith Mountain Lake State Park

is proud to award

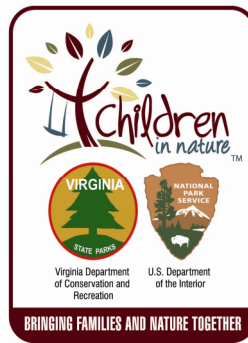
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Certificate of Graduation

**For successfully completing the requirements to be inducted
into the ranks of the Virginia State Parks as a Jr. Park Ranger**

Park Ranger
Smith Mountain Lake State Park

Date



Funding for this booklet supplied in part by;
the Friends of Smith Mountain Lake State Park.

