

N.C. State Parks Junior Ranger Program

OUTDOOR ART EXPLORER



Finish the 5 steps to earn the Outdoor Art Explorer badge and cache 6 Junior Ranger acorns.

What you'll need: Art supplies of your choice (i.e. clay, paint, paper mache, etc.), clay or salt dough, a camera, terrarium supplies (optional).

STEP 1 - WILDLIFE INSPIRED ART

Visit a park and see how many different types of wildlife you can find. Take notes about their appearance. Think about the different colors, textures, and body parts that you see. How do these features help each living creature thrive in your environment? When you get home Create an art piece—it could be a painting, a sculpture, or a collage—to show a whole new kind of wildlife that would be well suited to your local environment. Maybe a bullfrog with a wide tail to fan itself during heat waves, or a pigeon that grows a fur coat when it's cold? The sky's the limit!

STEP 2- MAKE AN IMPRESSION

Using clay or salt dough, make an outdoor-themed impression. You might collect leaves or shells, or anything that's unique to the park. Press your found objects into the clay or dough, then remove them and return them to the place where they were found. If you'd like to hang your impression when it's finished, make a hole at the top for string. (You may need to re-poke the hole a few times as your impression dries to keep it from closing up.) Your impression can be dried in the oven on low heat—ask an adult for help—or outside in the sun on a hot day.

STEP 3 - CREATE AND NATURE SYMPHONY

Make music with items you find in the park. You might shake a bag of rocks, wave swishy branches, and blow grass or acorn cap whistles. Come up with your own beat, or set up an outdoor speaker and play along with your favorite songs! When you're done making music, return the items back to the places where they were found. Check out some fun songs sung by a ranger on our Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/parksNC>

STEP 4 - BIG AND SMALL PICS

Macro means big and micro means small. Try taking macro and micro shots of outdoor objects by zooming in and out with your camera. (Some cameras have macro and micro settings.) Take a series of photos where you get closer and closer in on an object until it's difficult to tell what it is. Share your photos with family or friends—see how long it takes them to guess what's shown in the pictures.

STEP 5 - DESIGN A TERRARIUM

A terrarium is a container that has an entire ecosystem inside. An ecosystem is where plants and animals function together as a unit creating a food chain. There are many different food chains in N.C. State parks. Visit a park and try to come up with a food chain that may exist there. Start with a plant: a producer. What eats it? Continue up the food chain until you reach the apex predator, or the animal that doesn't get hunted. Draw a picture of your food chain. If you want, when you get home try and make a terrarium.



N.C. State Parks Junior Ranger Program

ECO-CAMPER



Finish the 3 steps to earn the Eco Camper badge and cache 6 Junior Ranger acorns.

What you'll need: Trail mix ingredients and Journal and writing supplies

STEP 1 - INTERVIEW A RANGER

Find a ranger and ask them how they practice Leave-no Trace in the park. Gather some tips and tricks that you can use while on your camping trip.

STEP 2 - SNACK FOR A HIKE

Make your own brand of trail mix by combining the things you love most, like banana chips, dried berries, pretzels, raisins, granola, and more. And don't forget to pack water in a reusable container. Then take it on a hike. You can find a park map to pick your trail on our website: www.ncparks.gov

STEP 3- SET UP A SLEEPING AREA

In some of the primitive camping sites in the state parks you may have to set up a minimal impact campsite. Find flat, dry land away from the kitchen and wash areas to set up your tents. Look for signs of where water will pool and drain if it rains, and avoid those areas. Are the tents spread out so there isn't too much traffic in one area? Will you arrange your tents in a circle so all the openings will face each other? Watch for drainage so your tent doesn't fill with water in the event of a rainstorm.

STEP 4- WILDLIFE HABITAT GAME

Pick your favorite animal that you may be able to find in the park. Then act out how that animal sleeps, eats, moves and sounds. Have someone try to guess what animal you are. Take it to another level by acting them out as you hike one of the park trails.

STEP 5- RECORD WILDLIFE

Record sounds you hear in the park, and photograph, film or sketch what you see in a journal. Explore nearby trails for animal tracks. Do you see a nest where an animal has rested? Be sure to keep your distance. At the end of your hike, share your recordings, images or journal sketches with friends or family.