

DeSoto State Park's



Junior Ranger Handbook

Name: _____

Hello!



Welcome to DeSoto State Park, the home of Mother Nature. I am so glad you are here and would like to be a DeSoto State Park Jr. Ranger. It is not going to be easy. A Jr. Ranger has got to love and be curious about nature. You have got to want to conserve & protect our fragile environment.



To become a DeSoto State Park Jr. Ranger you will need to follow the requirements on the next several pages. Clues & tips can be found all over the park to help you finish the activities. When you finish meeting all the requirements you will receive your official Jr. Ranger Certificate.

Thank you for your help & good luck!



IN ORDER TO RECEIVE YOUR JUNIOR RANGER CERTIFICATE YOU MUST FILL OUR THE INFORMATION BELOW AND TURN IN THIS ENTIRE BOOKLET AT DESOTO STATE PARK (Lodge or Country Store)

Booklet & certificate will be mailed to you.
Please print as clearly as possible.

Participant Name: _____
Complete Mailing Address: _____
Age: _____
Phone Number: _____
Number of Room/Campsite/Cabin (if guest): _____
What date will you be leaving? _____
Email(optional) _____



Information about weekend activities & programs is available at the Country Store, Lodge & Nature Center.

See www.ALAPARK.com>DeSoto>Park-Events for full calendar of events.



Junior Ranger Requirements:

1. Attend 1 guided hike or program. (If available)
2. Hike at least two of the trails in the park.
3. Visit the Nature Center

Name two live animals you saw in the Nature Center:

1. _____
2. _____

4. Visit 5 or more of the following:

- _____ DeSoto Falls
- _____ Little River Canyon
- _____ Indian Falls
- _____ Old CCC Rock Quarry
- _____ Needle Eye Rock
- _____ Lost Falls
- _____ Sallie Howard Memorial Chapel
- _____ Laurel Falls
- _____ Azalea Cascade
- _____ Lodge Falls



5. Collect any litter you see while hiking in the park. (Ask at the Country Store for trash bags)
6. Complete the exercises in this Jr. Ranger Handbook.

As you Hike, remember:



Poison Ivy

Be aware of potential hazards!

This small creeper can crawl along the ground, grow into a bush, or up a tree. It always has 3 leaves & can camouflage itself among places that you may want to explore. Sounds innocent, right? Not! This plant can cause an allergic reaction on your bare skin. Stay on the trails in the park & be safe!

Ticks

These arachnids are very tiny and parasitic, meaning they feed on blood. Ticks crawl on shrubs & grasses waiting for host animals to pass by. They quickly let go of the plant and then crawl on the host. Be sure to check your hair & body after being the woods.



Snakes



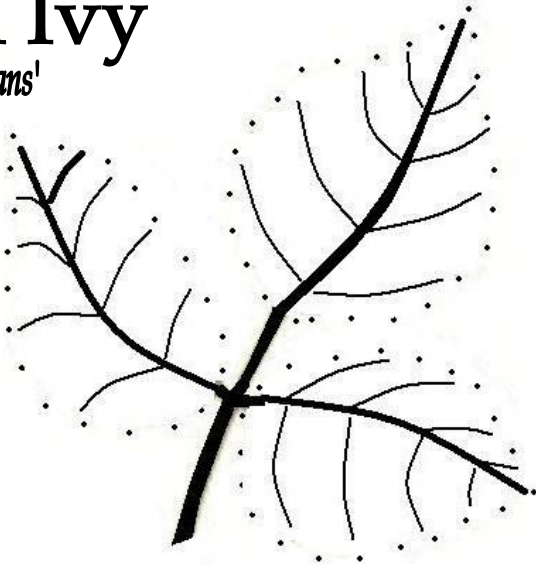
-All kinds of snakes can be found in the woods, though not very often. A snake's most common form of defense is avoidance; they don't want to see us as much as we don't want to see them! If you happen to see one on the trail, step back, give it space and they will quickly slither off of the trail. They are protected in a state park.

Leaf Shapes

Botanists are people that study all about plants, including the sizes & shapes of leaves. Trace around the leaf shapes & look at plants while out hiking to help you become a botanist.

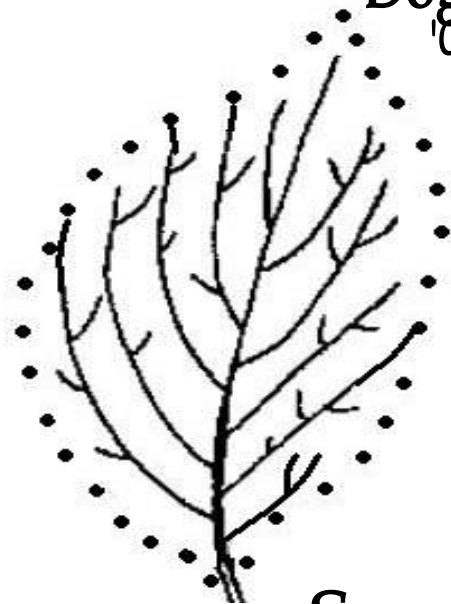
Poison Ivy

'Toxicodendron radicans'



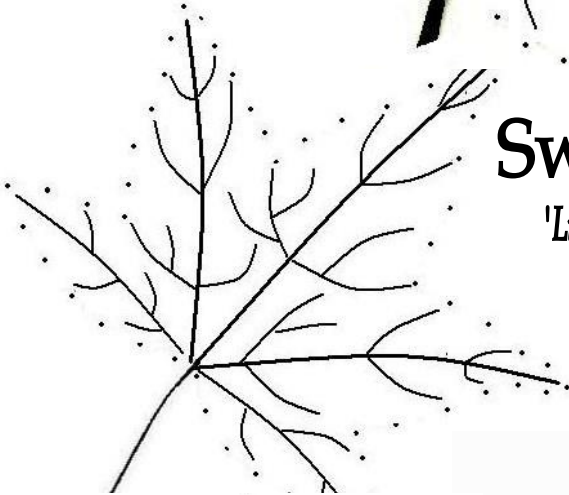
Dogwood

'Cornus florida'



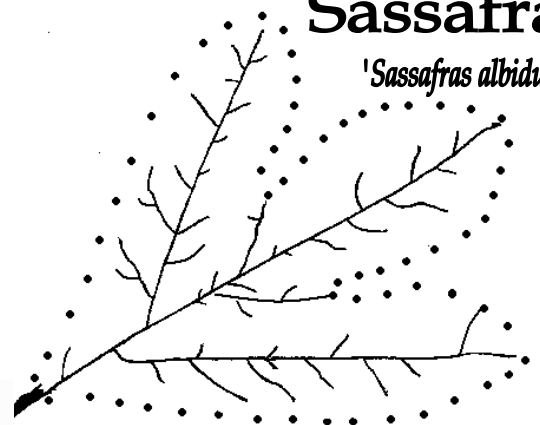
Sweetgum

'Liquidambar styraciflua'



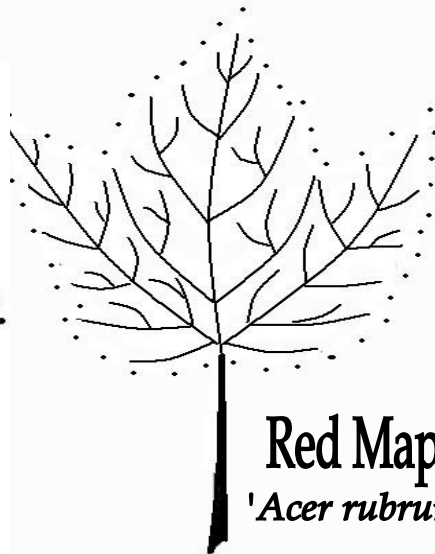
Sassafras

'Sassafras albidum'



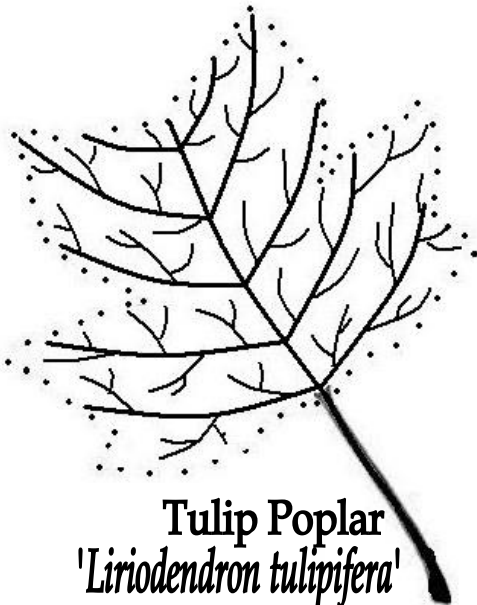
Red Maple

'Acer rubrum'



Tulip Poplar

'Liriodendron tulipifera'



White Oak

'Quercus alba'



Civilian Conservation Corps

The Civilian Conservation Corps built DeSoto State Park in the 1930s over 80 years ago.

Find the words about the CCC in the puzzle below.

Memorial

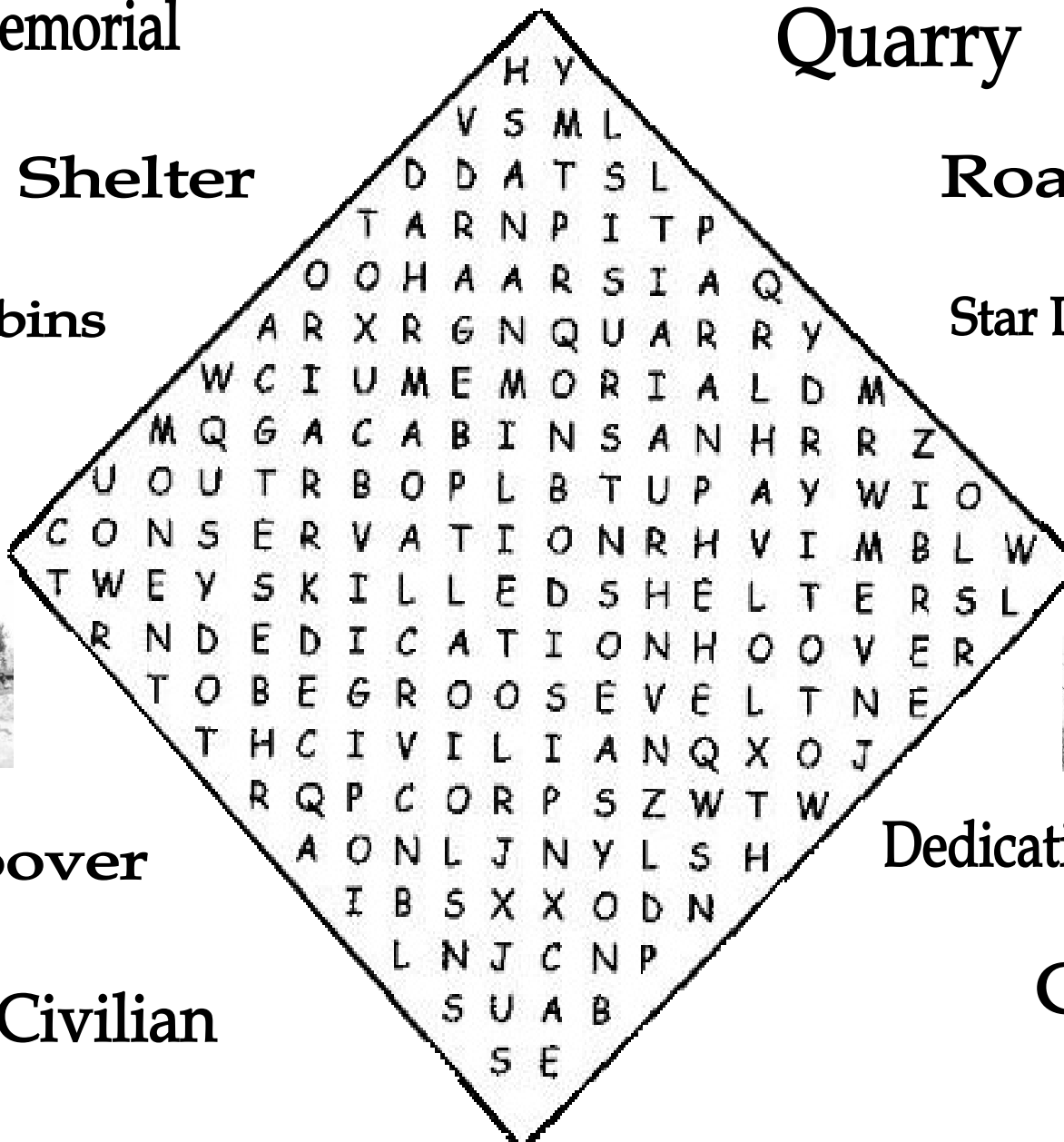
Quarry

Shelter

Roads

Cabins

Star Drill



Hoover

Dedication

Civilian

Corps

Roosevelt

Conservation

Restaurant



Skilled

Sandstone

Trails



Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is a national program that promotes responsible outdoor recreation.

Remember - As a Jr. ranger you'll enjoy nature even more by caring for your special place.

Solve the cryptogram below by finding the letters that go along with the numbers in the puzzle to learn the 7 principles of Leave No Trace.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
9	4	25	21	26	5	11	8	23	19	3	20	16

Key

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
6	18	15	13	1	17	10	14	24	12	7	2	22

" **K** _____ **B** _____ **Y** _____ **G** _____ "

3 6 18 12 4 26 5 18 1 26 2 18 14 11 18

Be prepared! Use maps to show you where you'll be going & you won't get lost. Learn about the areas you visit. The more you know the more fun you'll have.



" **C** _____ **T** _____ **R** _____ **P** _____ "

25 8 18 18 17 26 10 8 26 1 23 11 8 10 15 9 10 8

Use existing camp areas & walk on the main trail to protect nature.



" **T** _____ **Y** _____ **T** _____ "

10 1 9 17 8 2 18 14 1 10 1 9 17 8

Pack it in, pack it out. When hiking or camping take your trash home with you. Keep water sources clean.

Don't put soap, food, or poop in rivers or streams.



" **L** _____ **W** _____ **Y** _____ **F** _____ "

20 26 9 24 26 12 8 9 10 2 18 14 5 23 6 21

Leave plants, rocks and historical items as you find them so the next person can enjoy them.



" **B** _____ **C** _____ **W** _____ **F** _____ "

4 26 25 9 1 26 5 14 20 12 23 10 8 5 23 1 26

If it's ok to build a campfire in the area you're visiting, use an existing fire ring to protect the ground from heat. Don't break off any twigs or branches from live plants; instead collect loose sticks from the ground. Be

sure that the fire is completely out and cold before you leave.



" **R** _____ **W** _____ "

1 26 17 15 26 25 10 12 23 20 21 20 23 5 26

Watch wildlife from a distance and never approach, feed or follow them. Human food is unhealthy for all animals and feeding them starts bad habits. Protect wildlife and your food by storing your meals and trash tightly. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.

" **B** _____ **K** _____ **T** _____ **O** _____ **V** _____ "

4 26 3 23 6 21 10 18 18 10 8 26 1 24 23 17 23 10 18 1 17

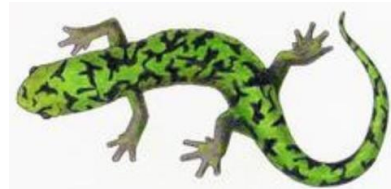
Make sure the fun you have in the outdoors does not bother anyone else. Remember that other visitors are there to enjoy nature. Listen to nature. Avoid making loud noises or yelling. If you meet other visitors on the trail, step to the side & let them pass.



DeSoto State Park Quiz



Use the words below to solve the puzzle.



Salamander

Milford



Orchid

~Across~

Rangers

Park

Endangered

Explorer



River

Green

Canyon

Dam

Amphibian

Pecan

Plants



Lodge

Dedicated

3. DeSoto's Mountain Inn Restaurant was built in the original _____ dating from the 1930s.
4. DeSoto State Park was named for Hernando DeSoto, a Spanish _____.
6. Little River _____ was originally called May's Gulf..
12. The Pink Lady Slipper is Alabama's largest native _____.
13. Park _____ help to protect the park.
14. The rare Green _____ can be found in DeSoto State Park.
16. The Sallie Howard Memorial Chapel was built by _____ Howard in memory of his wife.

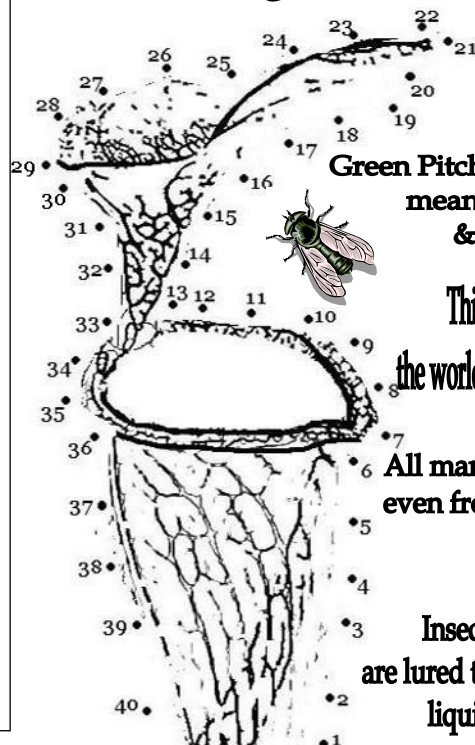


~Down~

1. The _____ is Alabama's state nut.
2. The _____ Pitcher Plant is endangered in Alabama & can only be found in small colonies.
5. Digging or picking _____ is not allowed in state parks & other protected lands.
7. Alabama's state _____ is the Red Hills Salamander.
8. DeSoto State Park was the largest state _____ in Alabama at the time of its dedication.
9. The Green Pitcher Plant is _____ in Alabama & can only be found in small colonies.
10. Little _____ flows almost its entire length atop Lookout Mountain.
11. DeSoto State Park was _____ on May 24, 1939.
15. A. A. Miller built the _____ above DeSoto Falls in the mid 1920s.

Connect the dots to see the picture.

Green Pitcher Plant



Did you know?

Green Pitcher Plants are carnivorous, meaning they eat animals & other organisms.

This plant is only found in 3 states in the world, & is considered critically endangered.

All manner of insects, arachnids, & even frog bones have been found in Green Pitcher Plants.

Insects & other small animals are lured to the plant by the smell of the liquid trapped in the pitcher.

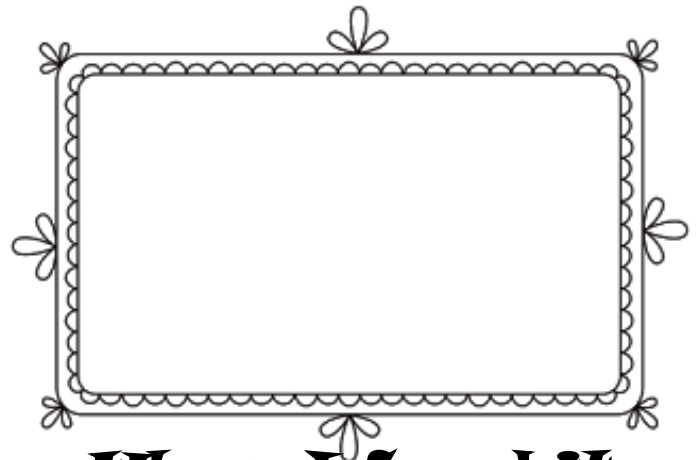
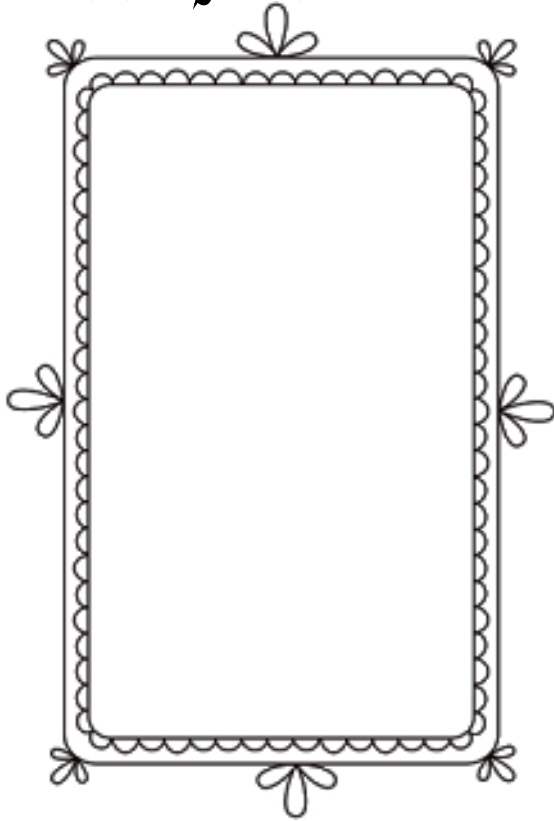
Nature Journaling

Do you keep a journal? A nature journal is a way to explore nature and record memories of your visit in nature in a creative way.

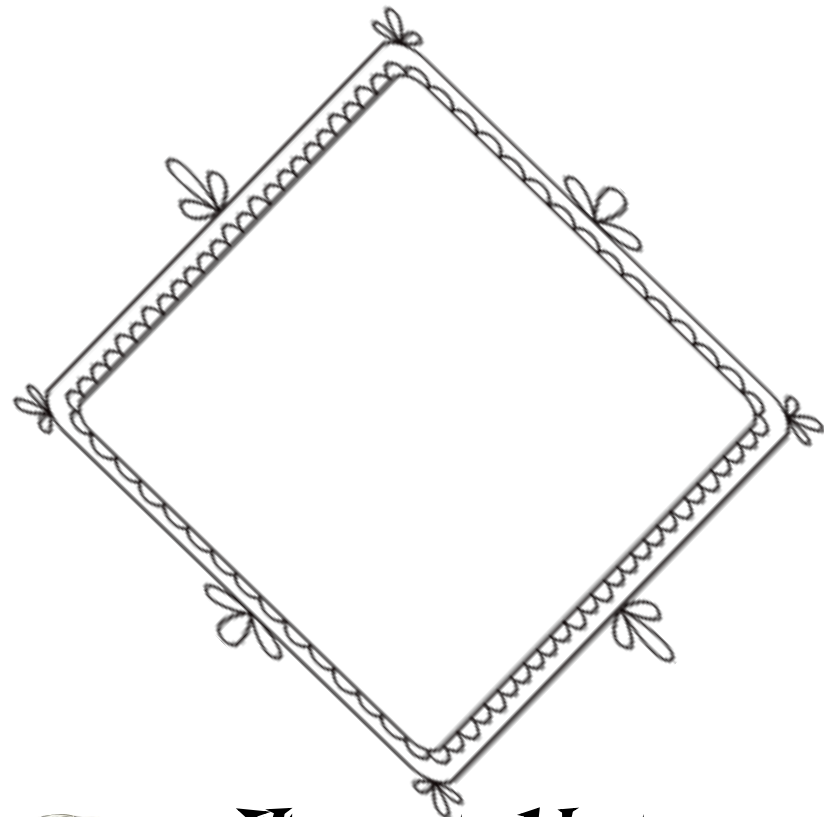
A nature journal is a place to draw, or write, or paint your observations, experiences, or other cool things you see!

This is just for you, so even if you don't think you can draw well or write well, it is a creative way to record your memories of your visit to DeSoto State Park

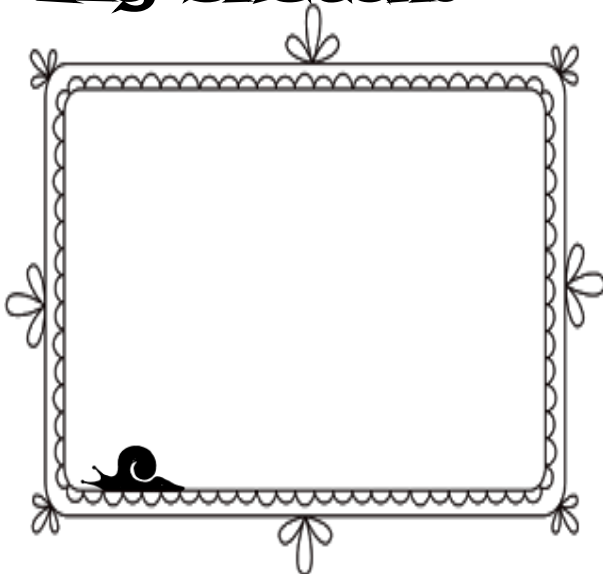
Today's interesting observation:



Where I found it:



My sketch:



It was cool because:





Your sketches & notes:



Black Bears in Alabama



'Ursus americanus'

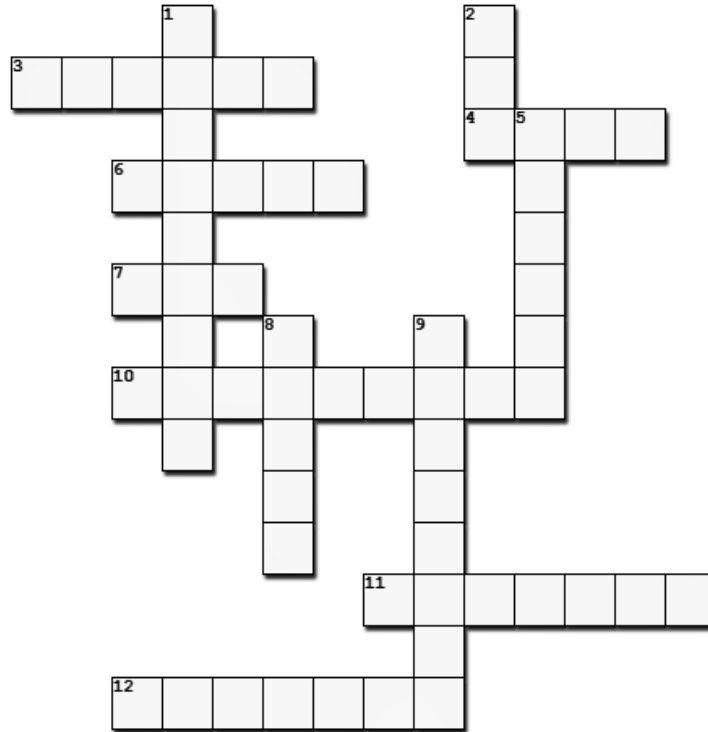
Black Bear



Hind
Hind Print
Length: 6 – 7 inches
Width: 3.5 – 5.5 inches



Front
Front Print:
Length: 4 – 6.3 inches
Width: 3.8 – 5.5 inches



Word Bank:
Sow
Garbage
Mammal
Omnivores
Feeding
Boar
Ounces
Anywhere
Cub
Trees
Birth
Yearlings

Across

3. Black Bears are Alabama's state _____.
4. An adult male black bear is called a _____.
6. Mother bears give _____ to baby bears during the months of January or February.
7. An adult female black bear is called a _____.
10. _____ are bears between 12 and 18 months old.
11. During hyperphagia in the Fall, bears can spend up to 20 hours a day _____ in order to prepare for winter hibernation.
12. Bears may try to eat people's _____.

Down

1. Black bears are opportunistic _____ meaning that they eat almost any type of food.
2. A baby black bear is called a _____.
5. Cubs weight 8 to 12 _____ at birth.
8. Bears are excellent climbers and will climb _____ for food and to escape disturbances.
9. Black bears can be seen potentially _____ in Alabama, with males traveling great distances during late spring and summer

Fun fact: Black bears are umbrella species, which means that conservation and management efforts that support black bears additionally support many other species as well- both plants and animals.

Black Bear encounters in DeSoto State Park fairly rare. If you see a black bear, it requires caution but is not cause for great alarm, as they are seldom aggressive, and attacks are rare.

If you see a bear before it notices you: stand still, don't approach and enjoy the moment. Then move away quietly in the opposite direction.

If you encounter a bear that's aware of you: don't run; running may trigger a chase response. Back away slowly in the opposite direction, talk in a normal voice and wait for the bear to leave.



Visit bearwise.org/bear-safety-tips to learn what to do if a black bear approaches, charges or follows you.

Congratulations!



You have successfully completed all requirements to become a DeSoto State Park Junior Ranger. Now that you have earned the title of Jr. Ranger, it is your turn to show others how they can help to protect our beautiful state park. I hope that you have had a great time here at DeSoto and that you will visit again!

Brittney M. Hughes
DeSoto State Park Naturalist



DeSoto State Park-Fort Payne, Alabama

#desotostatepark

To receive emails about events happening in the DeSoto State Park/Little River Canyon National Preserve area, sign up at the Country Store, Nature Center, or Lodge Lobby in DeSoto State Park.

www.ALAPARK.com