

Adventure Guide

Pre-teens

This Junior Ranger self-guided program and Adventure Guide were developed by the Friends of Shenandoah River State Park and the Park staff.

Funding for the production of this Guide and our library of nature guides was provided by a grant from Kohl's Department Stores.

Please visit the Park online at dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks and the Friends at riverparkfriends.org

If you have any questions about Shenandoah River State Park's Junior Ranger program or Junior Ranger Day Camp, Call the Park at 540-622-6840 or write to Chief Ranger, Shenandoah River State Park, 350 Daughter of Stars Drive, Bentonville, VA 22610

*Friends of Shenandoah River State Park, May 2011
Revised: August 2013, February 2015, August 2018*



This book belongs to:

**Andy Guest / Shenandoah River State Park
Bentonville, VA**

Welcome to Andy Guest / Shenandoah River State Park

We know you will enjoy participating in this Junior Ranger self-guided program. It is a great opportunity for the family to share outdoor time and to learn more about the Park's natural and recreational resources. It is not necessary for an adult to be an expert in nature to assist a young person in his/her efforts to carry out these activities. No individual can answer all of the questions generated by a curious child. Your willingness to provide encouragement and help your youth find his/her own answers is what matters.

The Virginia park system is one of the finest in the nation. Shenandoah River State Park is rich in many ways - from its natural resources to the talented and devoted people who work here. The Park Rangers and staff are committed to helping you enjoy your visit to our Park. Ask any staff member for help with this adventure.

If you haven't already done so, go to the visitor's center to see our great displays and ask about materials on loan to help with the activities.

Junior Ranger Day Camps are also offered in the summer months. Check with the visitor's center to learn more.

We would love to hear any comments you wish to share with us regarding your experience with the Park and the Junior Ranger program.

CONGRATULATIONS ! YOU ARE ABOUT TO BECOME A SHENANDOAH RIVER STATE PARK JUNIOR RANGER

When you complete the activities in this guide, bring it to the visitor's center. A Ranger will review the guide with you.

If you have successfully completed the activities you will be presented with your Junior Ranger certificate and patch.

Thanks for visiting Shenandoah River State Park and hurry back for more adventure.



JUNIOR RANGER CERTIFICATE

(your name)

has completed the requirements and is appointed a
Shenandoah River State Park Junior Ranger
and pledges to protect all nature for future generations.

Date

Park Ranger



6 - "See" Animals In Many Ways

You have already been introduced to some animals in the Park. In this activity you will look for larger animals - not only by sight but also by the signs that they leave. Some are largely nocturnal and most avoid humans. But walk quietly and look closely - they are there.

The best times to see whitetail deer are early morning or at dusk. Sit along the edge of a field. Even if you don't see a live deer you can tell they are around by their tracks. You will find deer tracks in many places, especially by the river or on damp ground.



You will see many animals near the river if you walk quietly. Look for our Great Blue Heron fishing along the shore and many Painted Turtles sunning on logs and rocks.



The gray squirrel is probably the ground animal you will see most. Look also for its tracks in damp areas.



The raccoon is mainly nocturnal and you probably won't see one unless you walk along the river at night with a flashlight. However you may find its tracks in many places.



Our Park has many other animals - how many can you see or find by their sign?

How To Become a Junior Ranger

Become a Shenandoah River State Park Junior Ranger by completing the six self-guided activities in this Guide. Of course, you may seek help from your family and the Park staff, but you will find the activities more rewarding if you do the work yourself.

The activities are designed to be completed in about six hours, but you do not have to complete them all in one day or in one visit to the park. Come back as often as you need to complete all the activities.

When you complete all six activities, take this guide to the visitor's center. Have fun and good luck in your adventure!

You might also be interested in our **Junior Ranger Day Camp for ages 7 to 12**. This program presently runs in late July and/or early August from 9 to 12, Monday through Thursday and repeats in a second week. It is designed to provide a guided introduction to the Park and its marvelous natural environment. Check with the visitor's center or at riverparkfriends.org for more information about the program and this year's dates.



5 - Bugs, Bugs Everywhere

Shenandoah River State Park

The Park has over 1,600 acres with 5.2 miles of river frontage along the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. The rolling, mountainous land features steep slopes and is mostly wooded. In addition to meandering river frontage, the Park offers scenic views of Massanutten Mountain to the west and Shenandoah National Park to the east. There are 24 miles of trails, many of which are multi-use. A Park map is available at many places in the Park.

Junior Rangers need to be aware of potential dangers and use good common sense when exploring in the outdoors. Ask an adult to read the following aloud while you listen carefully.

Poison Ivy - *leaves of 3, let it be*

Poison ivy is commonly found in all woodlands. It may be found growing on the ground or as a hairy vine climbing up a tree trunk. Each leaf is divided into three leaflets which may be smooth or notched. Many people develop a rash when they come in contact with this plant. Although not popular with people, poison ivy berries are an important food for wildlife. Find and identify poison ivy, but do not touch it.



Ticks



The deer tick is tiny, about the size of a pin head. A small percentage of deer ticks carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Wood ticks are larger than deer ticks but still very small. Wood ticks may carry the bacteria that causes Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Although it was first identified in the Rocky Mountains, most cases occur in the southeastern United States. Be sure to check for and remove any ticks after spending time in the outdoors.

Insects are the most common form of animal life and we certainly have our share. In the US there are over 90,000 species of described insects. A few are not so nice, like the tick, but most are very beneficial to humans. Over one third of our food comes from insect pollinated plants.

The honey bee not only pollinates but makes honey. Unfortunately the honey bee has been vanishing for unknown reasons.



The grasshopper is found mostly in fields and grassy areas. You may know it best for its "singing" and noisy flight, sounds made with its wings and hind legs. It also has a voracious appetite.

The tiger swallowtail butterfly is so beautiful - with its bright colors and tiger-like stripes - that it is the State



insect of Virginia. It is interesting that sometimes the female is black and blue with only vague tiger striping.

Daddy-long-legs - also called harvestmen - look like spiders but are not, although they are in the same class - arachnids. Unlike spiders they do not produce venom and are harmless to humans.



Can you find these insects?

4 - Lets Take a Hike

The Park has over 23 miles of hiking trails and plenty of other areas where you can walk. Hike one of the trails and see how many of the following things you can find. Please never hike alone and leave things as you find them so that they can be enjoyed by other visitors.

Animals

- ___ squirrel
- ___ butterfly
- ___ bird
- ___ grasshopper
- ___ ant

- ___ deer

Plants

- ___ flower
- ___ fern
- ___ tree with huge leaves
- ___ plant with heart shaped leaves
- ___ tree you can't put your arms around
- ___ tree that has fallen down

Other things you found

- ___ nut or acorn
 - ___ woodpecker hole
 - ___ an animal track
- I saw a _____
I saw a _____
I saw a _____

Draw a picture of your favorite discovery:



What trail did you hike? _____

How long did you hike? _____

What time of day was it and what was the weather? _____

What are some things you might do to help protect nature in the Park? _____

1 - What Does a Park Ranger Do?

We have many different types of Park Rangers with interesting jobs. Park Rangers keep people safe, teach people about the Park, help with people's needs and maintain the Park. Find a Park Ranger and ask some questions.

Name _____ Job _____

1. What do you do in your job? _____

2. What training do you need to be a Ranger? _____

3. What do you like best about being a Ranger? _____

4. How does your job help protect the Park? _____

5. Your own questions: _____

Ask, at the visitor's center, to borrow some materials we have that will help you identify various animals, trees, and other things found in the following activities. Did you enjoy our many inside animal friends?



2 - We Have TREES

Our 1600 acres are mostly wooded with many of Virginia's most common trees. You know that some trees keep their leaves and stay green in the winter - evergreens, and some trees lose their leaves annually - deciduous or broadleaf. Trees can be identified many ways, but leaves are most commonly used.

Here are pictures of common leaves. See how many you can find. You may save leaves that are on the ground but please don't pick them off the trees.

Eastern redcedar is an evergreen with mature leaves, called needles, that look like scales. Young needles are short, pointed and prickly. The cones are found only on female trees and look more like berries than usual cones.



Eastern redcedar



Eastern white pine

Eastern white pine has soft needles, 3 to 5 inches long, in bundles of 5. The cones are large, 4 to 8 inches long, and often sticky

White oak, which loses its leaves annually, is one of our most valuable trees for lumber and other household products. Its leaves are 4 to 7 inches long with 7 to 10 large lobes on each leaf.



White oak



American sycamore

American sycamore is another broadleaf. It grows into a big tree with big leaves, often 8 inches long and wide. Sycamore is an easy tree to identify even in winter because its bark looks like camouflage - many colors and peeling readily.

Our visitor's center has books which will help you identify trees and many other things in these activities.

3 - We Have a Great River



The South Fork of the Shenandoah River flows beside the Park for over five miles. The south and north forks join in Front Royal to form the Shenandoah. The Shenandoah joins the Potomac at Harpers Ferry and the Potomac flows into the Chesapeake Bay. Do you know what a watershed is? We are part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The Shenandoah is home to many large and small animals which live above, on, and in the river. Can you name some? Some of the smallest - insects - spend much of their early lives in the water. Go to one of the river access points, turn over some rocks, and see if you can find some of these larvae which grow up to be kinds of flies.

Mayfly - note 3 tails

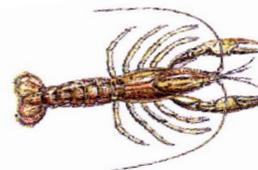


Stonefly - which has 2 tails

Dobsonfly, called a hellgrammite



Maybe you will also see a crayfish, which is not a fish at all but rather a crustacean.



The visitor's center has a sheet which will help you identify many stream insects and crustaceans.