

Wisconsin State Parks, Forests, Trails, and Recreation Areas

Have fun! Explore! Collect a patch!

Look unrough this book. Find something interesting	•
Get out there and explore it. Check off things as yo	u go!
☐ I followed tracks and trails (page 3).	
∐ I looked for leftovers (page 4).	July 16
\coprod I got the scoop on poop (page 5).	
∐ I found MysTrees (page 6).	
☐ I played Tic-Tac-Tree (page 8).	
\square I stayed safe from the storm (pages 9–10).	
\square I found a constellation (pages 12–13).	
\square I became a human camera (page 15).	
\square I made a treasure map (page 16).	
☐ I blazed a trail (page 19).	
□ I made a rock talk (page 21).	
\square I became a rock hound (page 23).	Available!
m	Explorer Packs Available! Explorer Packs Available! Borrow a pack filled with
To_earn a patch:	Explorer Packs Borrow a pack filled with Borrow a pack filled with Borrow a pack filled with Explorer Packs Packs With Borrow a pack filled with
\square Complete 6 to 12 of the explorations listed above.	exploring
\square Attend a nature program or take a nature hike.	
\square Pick up litter, spread the word about not moving firewood	d (page 7), or turn out the lights
(page 12).	
Fill out the evaluation form in this booklet. If lost, print f search for 'Wisconsin Explorers' and select the 'Share N	_
To get your patch (choose one method):	
Give your evaluation form to a park staff person at a park	articipating property and describe
one thing that you did.	weether 2 has been a made and a
\square Mail the evaluation form, your name and address, and a	letter or drawing telling about your
explorations to: Wisconsin Explorers Program PR/6, Depart	tment of Natural Resources,
P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707. The patch will arrive b	y mail in 2–4 weeks.
Plance mater The Wissensin Evalures program provides and	booklet now shild each year
Please note: The Wisconsin Explorer program provides one While youth groups and schools are welcome to use individuate.	
in groups cannot earn patches. For more information, call (6	508) 266-2181 or email
DNRWisconsinParks@wisconsin.gov	ogram of the
	iling lo.
The Wisconsin Explorers program is an interpretive pro	
Wisconsin State Park System made possible by the gener	

The Wisconsin Explorers program is an interpretive program of the Wisconsin State Park System made possible by the generous support of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin and the following donors: Bong Naturalist Association, Friends of Buckhorn State Park, Friends of Devil's Lake State Park, Friends of Hartman Creek State Park, Friends of Interstate Park, Friends of Kettle Moraine, Inc., Friends of Kohler-

Andrae State Park, Friends of New Glarus Woods State Park, Friends of Rock Island State Park, Friends of Whitefish Dunes State Park, Menasha Corporation Foundation, R.D. & Linda Peters Foundation, and one very generous anonymous donor.

FOUNDATION

of Wisconsin

Track Down Animals

Sometimes you go for a hike, and you don't see any wild animals! Have they mysteriously disappeared, or are they hiding? You'll have to look for clues!

Follow tracks and trails

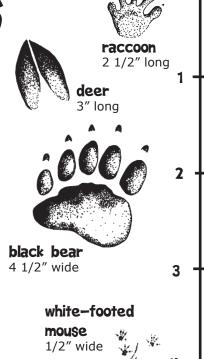
Find a grown-up who is willing to get up early! You want to be the first people to walk along the beach or down a muddy path. You want to see the animal tracks before other people step on them!

Canines

Dog, fox, coyote, and wolf tracks are oval. They usually leave claw marks.

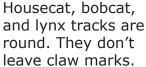


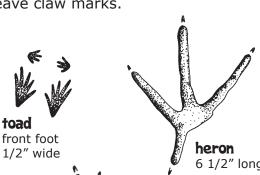


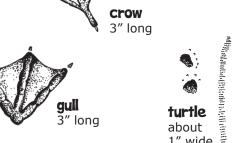




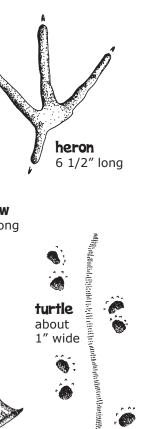
Felines











housecat

1" wide

Draw the track clues you found -

Look for leftovers

When an animal eats, it often leaves clues behind.

Eggs

When a baby bird hatches, it usually breaks the egg into two separate halves. If you find eggs with holes, look around for predators.

Weasels bite into eggs and leave square holes.

Birds peck small holes in eggs.

Cones

Pick up cones to see if birds or mammals have eaten the seeds.

Birds

remove the seeds from between the scales—leaving scratch marks.

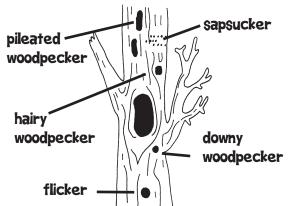
Squirrels remove the scales, then eat the seeds.

Pellets

Many birds (like owls, hawks, crows, and gulls) eat their food whole. Later, they regurgitate (throw up) the fur, feathers, bones, and other things they can't digest. Look for pellets where birds rest.

Woodpecker holes

Different kinds of woodpeckers make different kinds of holes as they look for food and build nests.



Acorns

Pick up acorns and look for clues.

Bears and deer chew acorns and spit out the crumpled shells.



Birds peck acorns open—leaving jagged holes.

Squirrels split the acorns open along the seams.



Weevils drill little

holes.

Voles and mice chew acorns open and leave little toothmarks.

Shells

Look around water for snails, clams, crayfish, and fish that have been eaten.



Twigs

Squirrels, porcupines, and wild turkeys bite the ends off of twigs to eat the fruit, nuts, cones, or buds. Look at the broken ends for signs of tooth or beak marks.



Draw the eating clues you found

Get the scoop on poop

If you eat, you've got to poop! Look for animal scat (droppings) in the middle of trails, at the bases of trees, on fallen logs,

fox

and on top of rocks. Don't

touch scat!



Foxes, covotes, and wolves often leave their scat in the middle of trails. Look for fur, feathers, and bones in their droppings. Canine scat often ends with a tapered twist like an ice cream cone. Yum!



Small droppings falling from trees and other plants are probably from caterpillars. Caterpillar scat is called frass.





Herbivores

Animals that eat mostly plants leave piles of pellet-shaped scat.



Omnivores

Raccoons, opossums, and bears leave droppings that look different depending on what they've eaten recently. Sometimes their scat is loaded with berry seeds; sometimes it contains fur.



Birds and reptiles

raccoon

If you see scat that has white tips or white smears, you have found bird or reptile droppings. The white stuff is a form of urine. Birds and reptiles poop and pee from the mourning same opening.

-Here's what I did!-

- \Box I followed the tracks and trails of _ animals.
- ☐ I looked for leftovers!
- \square When I ate lunch, I didn't leave any leftovers!
- \square I got the scoop on poop!
- \Box I cleaned up after my pet so no one will ever step in my dog's
- \Box The most interesting mystery that I solved was . . .

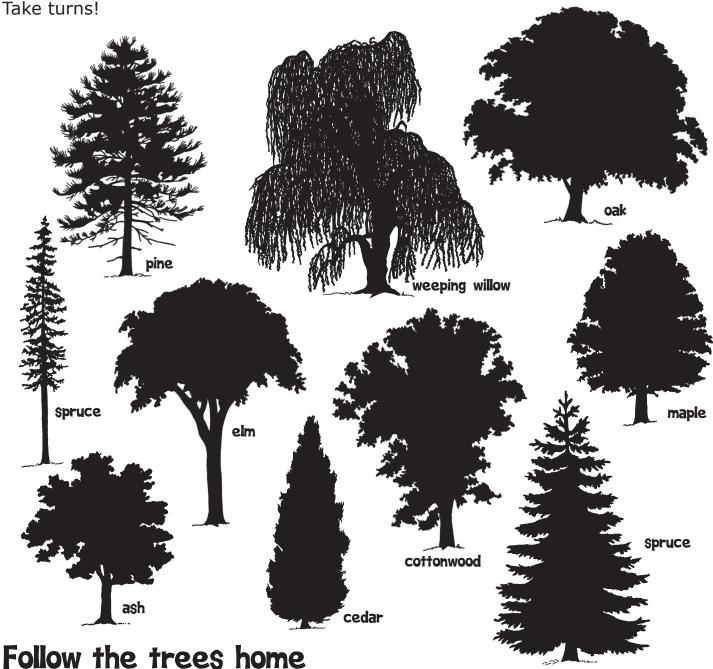


Find a MysTree

Different kinds of trees grow in different ways. Can you find trees that match these mystery tree silhouettes? Take a hike with a grown-up. When you see a tree with a matching silhouette, make the American Sign Language sign for tree and point to the tree silhouette on this page. Can your grown-up find the matching tree in the park?



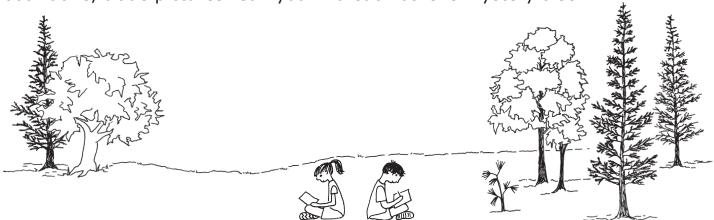
Make a "tree" with your hand and twist it twice.



Find a grown-up and head off down the trail. As you walk, point out odd-shaped trees, big trees, and interesting bark. After a while, turn around and walk back to where you started. On the way back, try to point out all the same trees. Paying attention to the strange shapes of trees can help you stay on the right trail!

Draw a mystery tree

Find a friend, a spot with a lot of trees, two pieces of paper, two pencils, and two things to write on. Sit back-to-back. Each person should find a tree that the other person cannot see. Draw a picture of the tree you picked. When you are both done, trade pictures. Can you find each other's mystery tree?



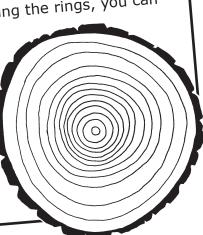
Watch for trees in trouble

Fires, diseases, storms, and insect attacks can hurt or kill trees. But when you see a healthy tree mysteriously look sick or die suddenly, something is wrong. Start looking for insect pests like emerald ash borers, Asian longhorn beetles, and gypsy moths. Since insect pests love to hide out in firewood—don't move wood. Use only local firewood!

- Did you know?

Each year, a tree adds new layers of wood to its trunk. The wood formed in spring grows fast. It is light-colored because it is made up of large cells. In summer, the tree grows more slowly. The wood formed in summer has smaller cells and is dark. Together, the spring wood and summer wood form an annual growth ring. By counting the rings, you can tell the age of

tell the age of the tree. Find a stump or piece of firewood and figure out how old the tree was when it was cut.



gypsy moth
caterpillar
(1 1/2" to
2" when full

grown)

Find out more!

The Gift of the Tree by Alvin Tresselt **The Big Tree** by Bruce Hiscock

Asian longhorn

beetle (1" to 1 1/2"

long)

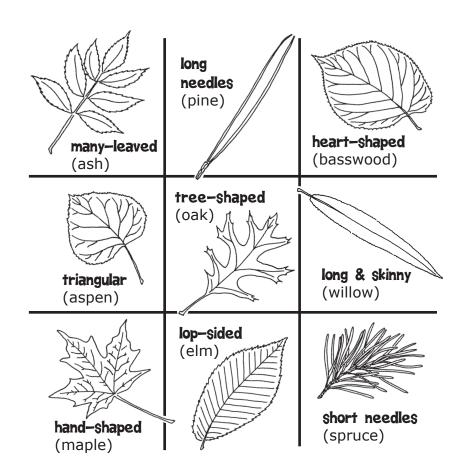
·Here's what I did! -

- ☐ I found mystery tree silhouettes.
 ☐ I took a hike and used trees to find my way home
- ☐ I drew mystery trees with a friend.☐ I watched for trees in trouble.
- ☐ I played Tic—Tac—Tree (page 8).



Play Tic-Tac-Tree!

You'll need a grown-up and two crayons. Take a hike looking for leaves that look similar to the ones in this tictac-tree game. Whoever finds the first leaf look-alike gets to go first. Color in the leaf with your crayon. Then it is the other person's turn to look for a leaf that matches a different square. First one to get tictac-tree wins!



		Make your own game Each player should choose his/her own unique tree leaf that is small enough to fit on this gameboard.
		Take your leaf and crayon with you on a hike. Look for trees that have matching leaves. When you find one, use your leaf to make a leaf rubbing in one of the squares. Keep hiking until you find another tree with matching leaves. Who can get "tree" in a row first?

Stay Safe from the Storm

How do animals know that it is going to storm before people do? Why do the clouds change before the weather changes? The weather won't be such a mystery if you learn to read clues in the clouds and watch animals.

Read the clouds

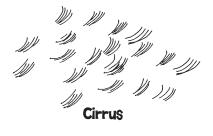
How clouds look and where they are in the sky can help you predict the weather. Color the clouds you see.

High clouds

are thin, wispy clouds made of ice crystals. They are usually so thin that you can see sunlight through them. If high clouds thicken, watch for rain.



Cirrocumulus look like waves.



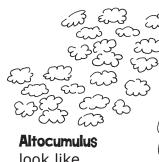
Cirrostratus make halos around the sun and moon.

Middle clouds

are usually bluish gray and full of water. Pack your raingear!



Altostratus look like a gloomy blanket.

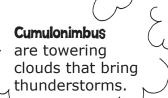




Low clouds

are white or bluish grav clouds that hold a lot of water. If they grow to cover the sky, watch for rain.





Nimbostratus

bring all-day rain.

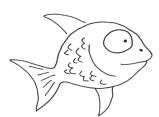


Cumulus

look like puffy cotton balls in a blue sky.

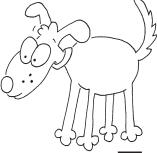
Watch for storm signs

When a storm is coming, animals change their behaviors. If you know what to watch for, you can get to a safe location before the storm strikes. Put a lightning bolt in the box of each sign you notice before a storm.



Fish swimming close to the surface of the water





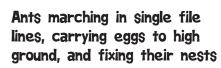




Spiders leaving their webs

Mosquitoes biting ferociously







Frogs calling loudly









Get to a safe place sooner, stay there longer!

Before the storm

Go to a safe place (enclosed shelter or hard-topped metal vehicle) as soon as you hear thunder or see lightning. Tents and picnic shelters will not protect you from lightning.

During the storm

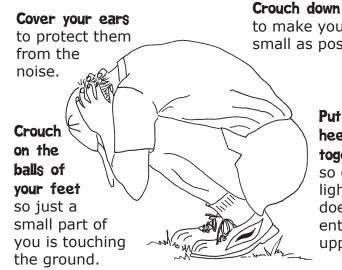
Stay away from windows, doors, phone lines, plumbing, and things that use electricity.

After the storm

Stay in a safe place until 30 minutes after you hear the last boom of thunder.

- Did you know?

If you are caught in a thunderstorm and can't get to shelter, or if you feel your hair stand on end, you will have to do the lightning crouch! Practice! It is harder than it looks.



to make yourself as small as possible.

Put your heels together so ground lightning doesn't enter your upper body.

Make a thunder popper

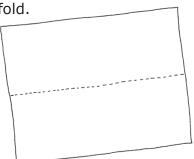
were a huge mystery. People imagined angry gods and powerful spirits sending punishment down on the earth. Now we know that lightning is caused by an electrical discharge. When a bolt of lightning quickly heats and expands the air, we hear a loud boom! Quick! Make a thunder popper before the storm gets here! For the loudest pop, fold each fold in both directions.

In the ancient world, thunderstorms

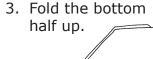
- Did you know? -

Thunder and lightning happen at the exact same time, but light travels a lot faster than sound. That means you see the lightning before you hear the thunder. When a storm is one mile away, you hear the thunder five seconds after you see the lightning. To figure out how far away a storm is, start counting the seconds as soon as you see the lightning, "One thunderstorm, two thunderstorm, three thunderstorm . . ." Stop counting when you hear the thunder. Divide your number by five. If 15 seconds pass between the lightning and the thunder, the storm is three miles away.

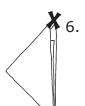
1. Start with a piece of newspaper the size of a regular sheet of paper or bigger. Fold it in half. Unfold.



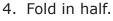
2. Fold in the four corners.

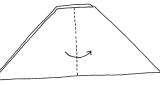


5. Fold the top point up. Flip over and fold the other point up.



6. Your popper should look like this.





Did you know? People all over the world have symbols for thunderstorms.





Japanese



Weather Service

Native Americans



7. Hold on tight to the very tip of the corner (marked with an "X" in step 6). Raise your arm over your head and bring your arm down hard like you were throwing something to the ground. Keep trying until it pops!

Here's what I did! -

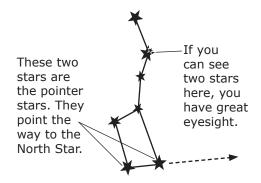
- \Box I tried to predict the weather by reading the clouds.
- □ I watched for signs of a storm by observing animals.
- ☐ I practiced the lightning crouch.
- \square I made a thunder popper!

Find a Constellation

A long time ago, people didn't understand how or why the stars moved across the sky. Connecting stars into pictures helped people make sense of the mysterious sky.

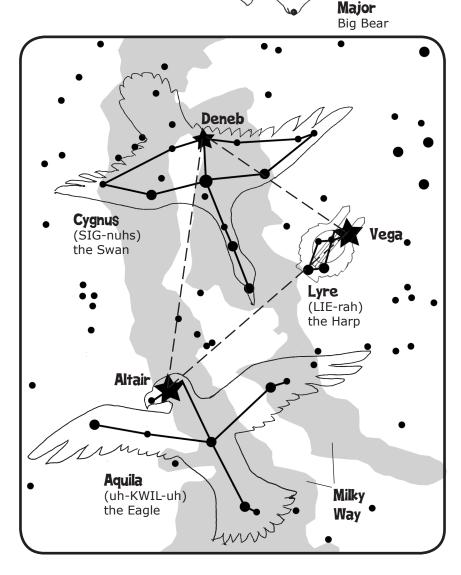
Hunt for bears

The Big Dipper is one of the easiest patterns to find. It is part of the constellation called Big Bear or Ursa Major. Look to the north to see it.



Search for the Summer Triangle

Keep looking north, but tilt your head back to look almost straight overhead. Do you see one of the brightest stars in the summer sky? This is Vega (VEE-guh). Nearby are two other very bright stars, Deneb (DEN-ebb) and Altair (AL-tare). Together, these stars form the Summer Triangle. Is it dark enough for you to see the Milky Way?



Ursa Minor Little Bear

North

Star

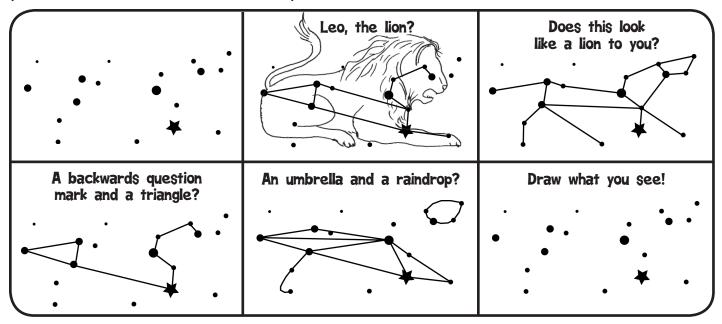
Ursa

Did you know?

On a clear, moonless night, you can see a lot of stars! But if you or your neighbors have bright lights, you might not see very many stars at all. We know it is important to reduce litter and other kinds of pollution. Remember that it is also important to reduce light pollution. You will see more stars, and wild animals won't be confused by bright lights!

Use your imagination!

Constellations are pictures people see in the stars. Most of the constellations were drawn by very imaginative people long ago. What you see depends on how you connect the stars. What do you see?

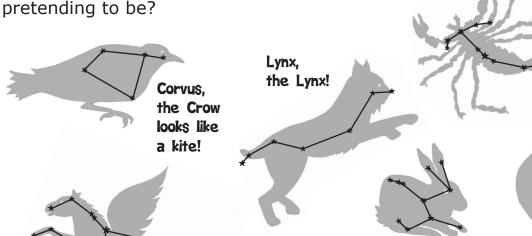


Now it's your turn. Go outside on a clear, dark night. Stare up at the sky and find stars that you think make pictures. Sketch and label them.

Play charades with the stars

Some constellations look like the animals that they are named after. Other constellations leave you scratching your head. What were those ancient people thinking?

Play charades with constellation names. Can your family or friends guess which one you are



Scorpius looks like a scorpion!

Draco, the Dragon

Pegasus, the Winged Horse Lepus, the Hare

Vulpecula, the Fox? It's only three stars!

Pisces doesn't look anything like fish!

Canis Major, the Big Dog

Delphinus, the Dolphin

Find out more!

Lacerta.

the Lizard

Glow-in-the-Dark Constellations: A Field Guide for Young Stargazers by C.E.

Thompson

The Sky is Full of Stars
by Franklyn M. Branley

I have a for board

- ☐ I hunted for bears!
- \square I searched for the Summer Triangle.
- \square I used my imagination to connect stars into pictures.

- Here's what I did! -

- ☐ I turned off all the lights we didn't need! I saved energy and kept the night dark for animals and stargazers!
- ☐ I played charades with the stars.
- □ I made a wish upon a star. If you could make a wish for yourself, this park, or our earth, what would it be?

Hunt for Treasures

State parks, forests, trails, and recreation areas are full of treasures. To find them, you will need a sense of adventure, a grown-up, and a good map.

Some parks have large, bumpy maps that let you feel the hills, trails, cliffs, and waterfalls. Some have paper maps that you can take with you when you hike. Find a map of the park and figure out where you are. As you hike, keep your eyes open! Some of the best treasures in parks might not be marked on your map.

Be a hyman camera

Pick an interesting place to visit. When you get there, take some pictures. But don't use a real camera! Use your eyes to take the pictures. Here's how a human camera works.

One person is the camera and another person is the photographer. The camera closes her eyes. The photographer looks for something that would make an interesting photograph. He gently leads the camera to the perfect spot, points the camera's head in the right direction, and taps the camera's shoulder to take the picture. The camera takes the picture by opening and closing her eyes. After a few photographs, the camera and photographer can trade places.



Make your own treasure map

Find a small area of the park that you like and draw a map of it. You could map your campsite, a trail, the beach, or any place you want. Sit down in one spot and draw your map from that spot. On your map, label things that don't move, like trees, rocks, and buildings.



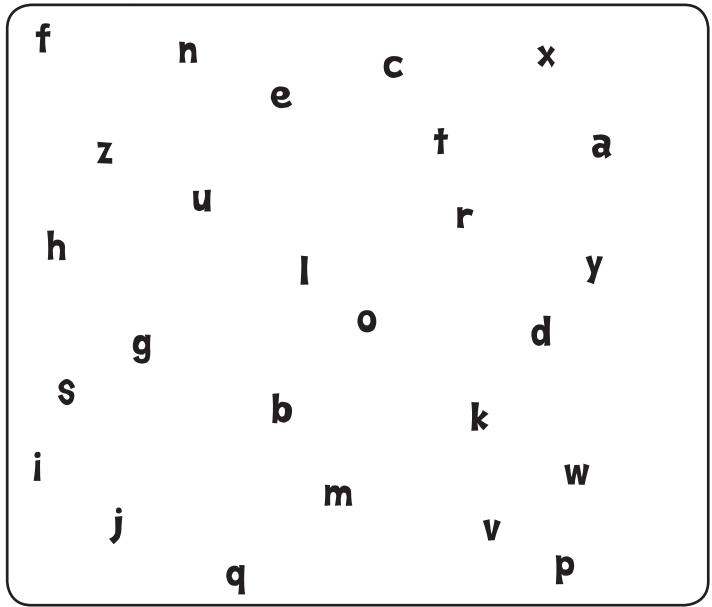
map of campsite

Now comes the fun part. Place a treasure (like a treat or a penny) inside the area drawn on your map.

Mark on your map where you put the treasure. Then give your map to a friend and challenge your friend to find the treasure. Trade places and ask your friend to hide a treasure and mark its location on your map. Can you find it?

Say your ABCs naturally

When you stop to look around at nature, it doesn't take long to find amazing treasures and favorite things. Can you write or draw a favorite thing for each letter of the alphabet?



Play North-South

You can play this game at your campsite or in your backyard. Write "north," "south," "east," and "west" on separate pieces of paper or cardboard. (Cereal boxes work great.) Use the signs to label the four directions at the edges of your campsite.

Ask a grown-up to hide something and give you directions to find it. They could say things like, "Head west for 5 steps, turn south and take 2 steps backwards, turn to the east and take 3 hops, . . ."

·Here's what I did!

- I was a human camera!I drew a treasure map and hid a treasure.
- I made an ABC list of my favorite treasures in nature
- ☐ I played North—South!

Search for Clues

If explorers walked into your bedroom when you were outside playing, what clues could they discover about you? Could they tell what you like to do? Could they guess your favorite color?

Wherever people go, they leave behind clues that they've been there. Sometimes they leave clues on purpose. Sometimes they are careless. And sometimes they don't even know they have left a clue.

Look around your campsite. What clues has your family left out in the open?

Pretend you are from the future!

Imagine you are an archeologist (a person who studies people who lived a long time ago by looking at the things they left behind). Walk around your campsite or picnic area and choose five objects you brought with you. Pretend that all you know about yourself is what these five things can tell you. Write a story about yourself or draw a self-portrait based on these objects.

Blaze a trail

Long before people drew maps, scouts explored the land and chose the best ways to travel. Then they marked the trails so that others could follow their paths.

At the park, you might find trails marked with paint, flags, cairns (piles of rocks), or special posts. Can you blaze a temporary trail for a friend to follow? Your trail could be over a beach, or you could mark a certain path to

follow using trails already at the park. Talk to a grownup about how you can mark a trail without harming your environment. You might use one of the ways shown below. Put things back after your game!

Did you know? Native Americans bent young trees so that they pointed the direction to travel. Trail Marker Trees are often oak trees. You can still see some of these old trees today!

Turn right













Turn left











Stay on this trail









Here's what I did!-

- \square I pretended I was from the future!
- □ I blazed a trail.
- \Box I kept my eyes on the road (page 20). \square The best sign I saw was . . .

Don't go this way!





Find out more!

Read **Right Here on this Spot** by Sharon Hart Addy. It is a book about finding things from the past.

Keep your eyes on the road

Some of the clues people leave behind can help you find Wisconsin's wild places, historic spots, and beautiful landscapes. How many of these signs can you see on vacation? Try to mark a whole row or column. If you really want a challenge, try to find all of these signs. Ask your family and friends to help you search.



Make a Rock Talk

Do you know what is most mysterious about rocks? They are silent! They've been to a lot of cool places and done interesting things, but they don't brag about it. They just sit there and wait for you to unlock their mysteries. Find a place with a lot of rocks and see if you can make them talk!

Sort them

Are all the rocks the same? Think of different ways to sort the rocks you found. Can you put all the smooth rocks in one pile and the sharp rocks in another? Or would you like to sort them some other way?

Ask questions

When no one is watching, have a little conversation with the rocks. Here are some questions you can ask:

How old are you?

(Some crumbly rocks are billions of years old! Does your rock look old or young?)

Have you always looked like this?

(Most rocks were once much bigger.)

How far have you traveled?

(Some rocks have traveled here from outer space, but most have lived on earth all their lives. Glaciers, volcanoes, earthquakes, water, and people move rocks to new places. How do you think your rock got here?)

What was your favorite adventure?

What are you going to do next?

(Most rocks just get smaller as the wind and water break them apart. What is the most exciting rock adventure you can think of?)

Can I play with you?

(Most rocks love to play Tic-Tac-Toe and Hopscotch, but a flat rock's favorite game is skipping across the water!)

Find out more!

If You Find a Rock by Peggy Christian and Barbara Hirsch The Big Rock by Bruce Hiscock

- Did you know?

Red granite is Wisconsin's state rock. If you can't visit a place where red granite is found naturally, you can find it on pathways, along roads, at railroad crossings, in buildings, and in cemeteries. How will you know you have found red granite? Well, it really looks more pink than red from a distance. Up close, you can see little pieces of red minerals (feldspar) and little pieces of clear, grayish, or purplish minerals (quartz). You might also find small shiny minerals (mica) and small black minerals (hornblende).

Here's what I did! — I found red granite at I sorted rocks by I asked a rock this question:

☐ I Sketched my rock (page 22). ☐ I hid my rock (page 22). ☐ I was a rock detective. I found _____k of rocks (page 23).

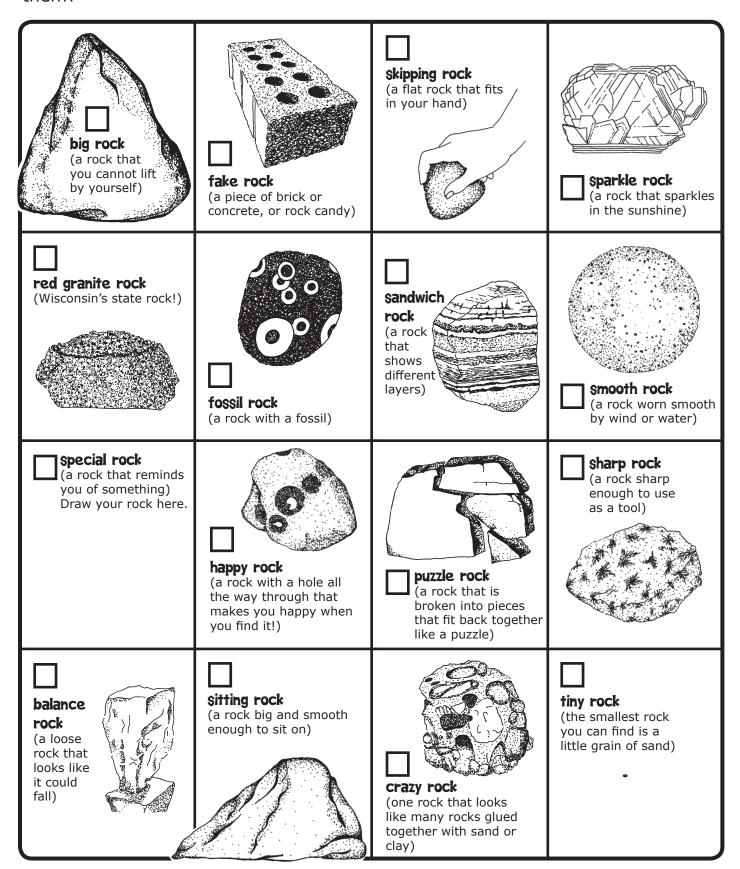
Tell your rock's story ———		
Which of the rocks is your favorite? How old do you think your rock is? Where do you think it has been during its long life? Draw a picture.		
Where do you think it has been during its long life: Draw a picture.		

Hide your rock

You need special permission to take rocks from most state parks. But there isn't a rule against hiding your rock in a secret place so you can come back to the park and visit it in the future! You can't bury it, so you will have to find a secret place above the ground. Come up with a plan to find your hidden rock. Draw a map, write down directions, or record the GPS coordinates. Write your plan here.

Be a rock hound

Take your family for a walk in search of interesting rocks. Check them off as you find them. Can you find four in a row, four in a column, all four corners, or all of them?





Get moving! Get energized! Get a little dirty!

Just . . get out there and explore!

The grown-ups in your life need you to help them stay active as they get older. Spending time exploring nature with you will help everyone's health and fitness. Look for ways to get out! How many of these activities can you do together this year?

Outdoors!
Become a Wisconsin Explorer.
Go to a nature program.
Hike or bike a state trail.
Recreate at a state recreation area.
Go camping.
Take a bird walk.
Snowshoe or ski through a forest.
Find a geocache.
Ride a horse.
Canoe or kayak down a river.
Go fishing.

Nature Programs and Events – Find out about activities in state parks by visiting <www.wiparks.net> and searching for the Get Outdoors! Calendar.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.) upon request. Please call (608) 266-2181 for more information.

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