

Canyonlands National Park

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



# Junior Ranger EXPLORER GUIDE



YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_



# WELCOME, ADVENTURERS!

Junior rangers explore, learn about, and help national parks. The activities in this guide are mileposts in your learning adventure. Ready? Let's go!

## Choose your level and...

- Cairn level:** 4 book pages
- Spire level:** 7 book pages
- Mesa level:** the whole book

## ...go on at least three adventures.

- Attend a ranger program.
- Go on a hike.
- Go stargazing.
- Spend 10 quiet min. outside
- Pick up litter safely.
- Share something you learned with a friend or relative.



# 1

# READY FOR ADVENTURE

Hold a safety meeting with your family. Is everyone ready to have a safe adventure?

- Use the park map to choose a place to explore. Where to?
- How will the weather shape your plans?
- Check that you have what you need. Write in other things you should bring.

**CHECKLIST**

- Lots of water
- Food and snacks
- Extra layers
- Park map
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



- What is your plan in case someone gets separated from the group?
- Safety brainstorm! Make a list of good and not so good ideas for safety.

HOW TO STAY SAFE

WHAT NOT TO DO

# 2 PLANT DETECTIVE

Find a prickly plant. Does it look like a yucca, prickly pear cactus, or something else? Draw your plant and write your answer.



**NARROWLEAF YUCCA**  
— *Yucca angustissima*  
AGAVE FAMILY [AGAVACEAE]



**PLAINS PRICKLY PEAR**  
— *Opuntia polyacantha*  
CACTUS FAMILY [CACTACEAE]

The prickly plant I found is a:

Find a tree. Use the pictures below to decide if it's a juniper or pinyon pine or another species. Draw your tree and write your answer.



**UTAH JUNIPER**  
— *Juniperus osteosperma*  
CYPRESS FAMILY [CUPRESSACEAE]



**PINYON PINE**  
— *Pinus edulis*  
PINE FAMILY [PINACEAE]

The tree I found is a:

# 3

# HOME SWEET HABITAT



Draw a line to match these desert animals with their habitat (home in nature).

BIGHORN SHEEP



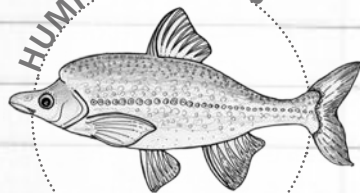
live on steep cliffs where no predators dare to follow

COLLARED LIZARD

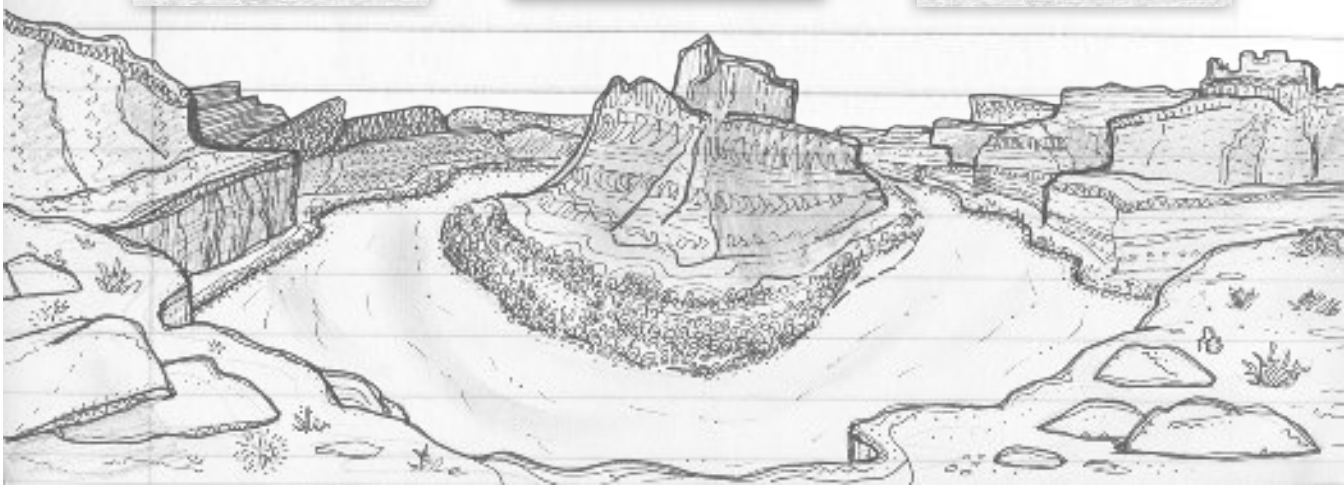


likes rocks to hide under and grass where bugs hang out

HUMPBACK CHUB



lives in the Colorado River and grows up in flooded banks



If you were an animal in what Canyonlands habitat would you live?

WETLANDS CANYON GRASSLAND

RIVER CLIFFS SAND POTHoles



Draw a picture of you as an animal in your habitat. Include what you would need to survive.
















# 4 FIND YOUR WAY

Get out your park map (or the park newspaper). You will see that the park has four districts: Island in the Sky, The Needles, The Maze, and the rivers. Which district are you in right now?

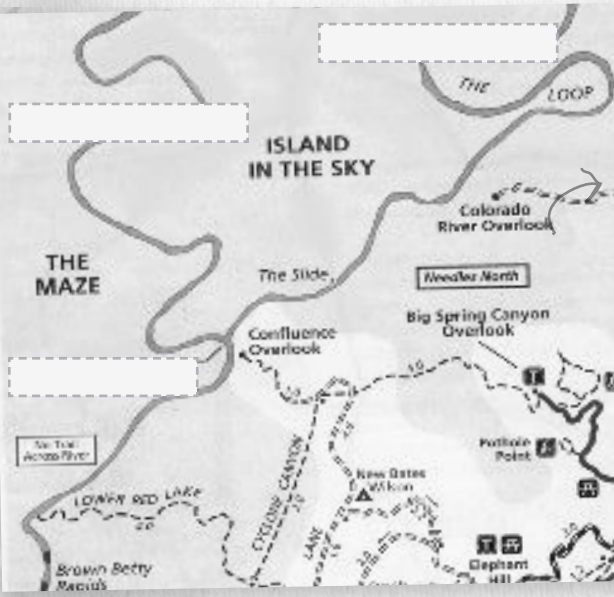
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Find the legend on your map and use it to fill in the missing labels below .

	Overlook/ <u>PAVED ROAD</u>		High-clearance, 4-wheel-drive road
	Unpaved 2-wheel-drive road		Locked gate
	_____		_____
	Picnic area		Developed Campground
	_____		_____
			Designated Backpacking Site

If you're in Island in the Sky, find Shafer Trail on your map. If you're in The Needles, find Elephant Hill. Could you drive on these roads in your car?

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FILL IN YOUR ANSWERS ON THIS MAP.

What two rivers meet in the park?

What is the name for the place where the rivers meet?

How long is the hike to that point?

\_\_\_\_\_ miles

Is this a good hike for your group?

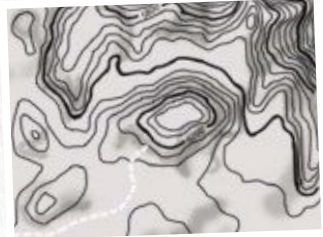
Topographic maps show the shape of the land. Draw a line to match the places with how they look on a 'topo' map.



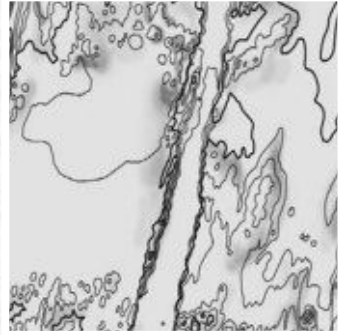
**AZTEC BUTTE** is a hill with flat land on one side and a steep drop off on the other.



**CYCLONE CANYON** has rock towers called spires on both sides.



**TURKS HEAD** is a small tower inside a bend of the Green River.



**TOPO MAP HINTS:**

- Close-together lines show steep land that climbs up or drops off.
- Widely spaced lines show flat land with little change up or down.
- Hills look like many circles inside each other. The inside circle shows the very top.
- The tops of spires look like tiny circles.

# 5 MORE THAN DIRT



Here is a science phrase for you: **biological soil crust**.  
Can you figure out what it means? Circle the answers below.

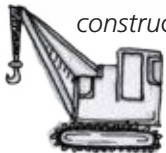
- Bio means: A) ice cream B) smelly C) life D) cold  
Soil means: A) flamingo B) sky C) hula hoop D) dirt  
Crust means: A) hard layer B) sandwich C) river D) hat

Hint: The ground is alive!

*Biological soil crust* is a mix of tiny living things growing on the dirt.  
Why do we care? This soil is like a mini town that helps the park!

- Draw a line to match the parts of a town to the ways biological soil crust helps the park!

grocery store



construction



neighborhood

*Biological soil crust*  
**BUILDS LAND**  
by gluing dirt together.

*Biological soil crust*  
**MAKES FOOD**  
for plants and animals!

*Biological soil crust*  
**GIVES HOMES** to  
plants and animals.

DON'T STEP ON THE SOIL CRUST! IT TAKES SO LONG TO GROW THAT YOU WOULD BE AS OLD AS A GRANDPARENT BY THE TIME IT HEALED.

# 6 JUNIOR RANGER ROLE MODELS

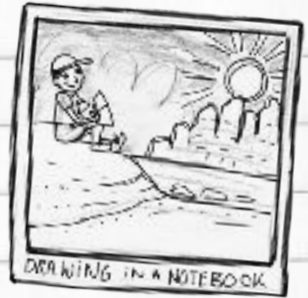
Junior rangers show others how to explore safely and respect wild places.



Below, **circle** good role model actions.



Draw an **X** over the actions that could hurt you or the park.



Pick one role model action. Why is it a good idea?



Pick one action that isn't a great idea. Why is it not the best choice?  
What would a junior ranger do instead?



# 7 SCENES IN THE SCENERY



Below, match stories with their setting in the landscape. Fill in the circles with the matching number.



## 1. WHITE RIM SANDSTONE

This famous rock layer outlines canyons and caps towers. Today, White Rim Road winds around this rock layer at the canyon rim. You can drive on, mountain bike on, or hike on the road.

## 2. KAYENTA FORMATION

You might be walking on the same ground that dinosaurs walked! Dinosaur tracks and mud cracks have been found in the Kayenta Formation, which was left behind by ancient streams. At Grand View Point, you're standing on this rock layer.



## 3. CONFLUENCE

Imagine traveling through this wild land with no map. John Wesley Powell set out to map the Colorado River in 1869. He saw where the Colorado and Green rivers meet. Today this spot is called the Confluence.

BONUS: LABEL THE MOUNTAIN RANGE ON THE LEFT OF THIS PICTURE.



#### 4. MINING ROADS

Can you find a straight line cutting through the view? It's a mark on the land left by mining equipment before this became a park. Imagine what it took to build roads across these steep cliffs and down into the canyon.



#### 5. ABAJO MOUNTAINS

How did people survive here before grocery stores? For early Native Americans, the Abajo Mountains gave precious water used to grow beans, corn, and squash. The Abajos lie south of Canyonlands National Park.

#### 6. THE NEEDLES

Striped like candy canes, The Needles are spires made of rock from ancient beaches. Today, a whole section of the park is named for them. The water and grass of this area once brought cowboys and their camps.



#### 7. WINGATE SANDSTONE

Woah! This rock layer's sheer cliffs kept cattle stuck on Island in the Sky. That helped cowboys in rounding up herds.

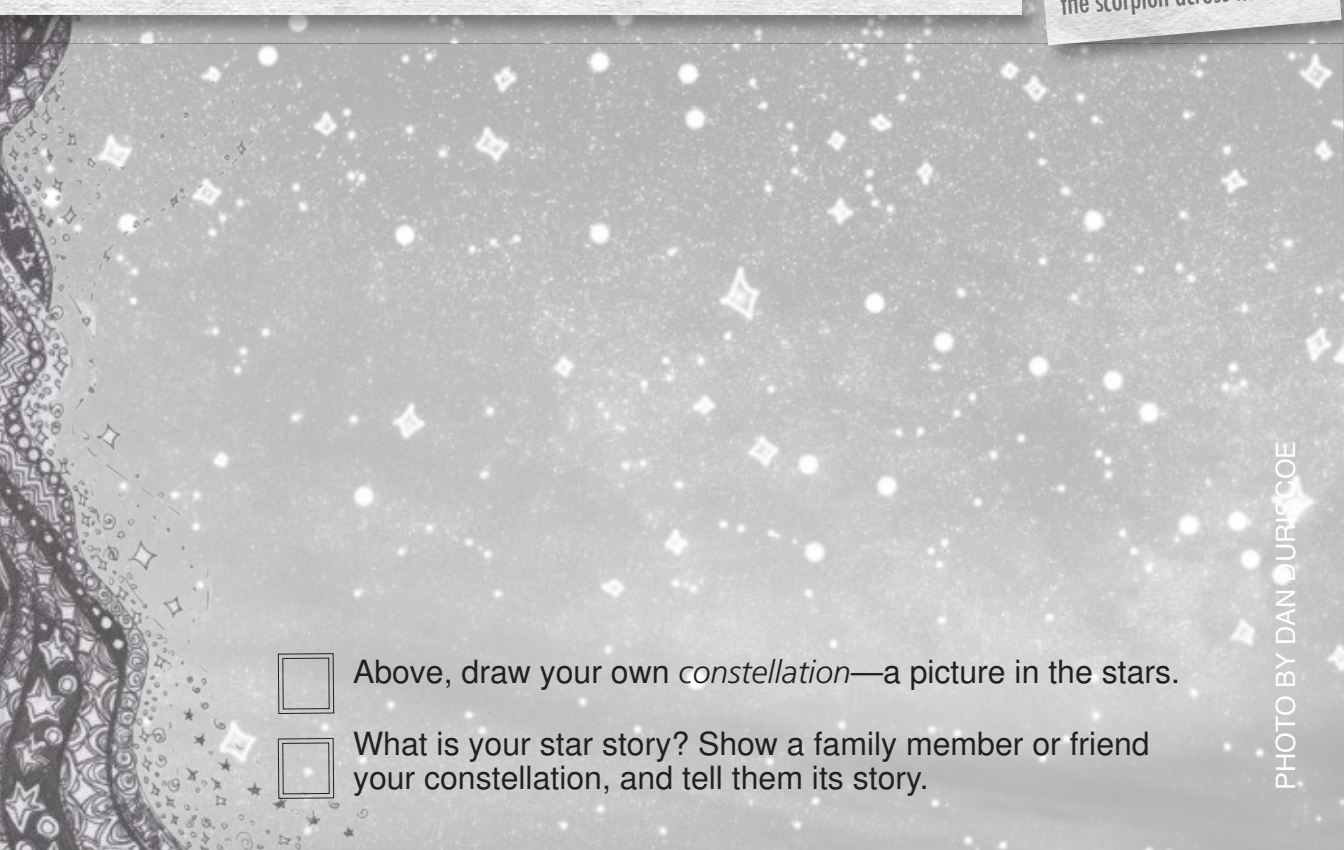


## 8 STAR STORIES

We don't need screens here—thousands of stories are shown in the stars each night. You can enjoy these stories or make your own.

Go stargazing! Find a safe place with a good view. Remember to bring the basics like water, food, flashlight, and warm clothes.

What Westerners call *Scorpius* Hawaiians see as *Mauī's Fishhook*. Chinese astronomy calls it part of *Dōng Fāng Qīng Lóng*, the *Azure Dragon*. In winter it disappears. Look for Orion instead, forever chasing the scorpion across the stars.



Above, draw your own *constellation*—a picture in the stars.

What is your star story? Show a family member or friend your constellation, and tell them its story.



Canyonlands is full of amazing shapes—read some of the names on the map!

- Draw or write a story about one of Canyonlands' wild places. You can choose from the list of real places below, make something up, or go out in the park and look for ideas.

My wild place is named \_\_\_\_\_

REAL PLACES IN CANYONLANDS:

WHALE ROCK    WOODEN SHOE ARCH    ANGEL ARCH  
 DEVILSKITCHEN    ELEPHANT HILL    PAUL BUNYANS POTTY

# 10 WILDERNESS DREAMS

Canyonlands is full of wild and remote places where the marks of humans fade away. It's not easy to explore in wilderness, but those who go come back amazed.

Use your map to find the places listed below. Then, circle or write in an adventure you would like to take one day.

## Mountain bike

White Rim Road

## Raft the rapids

Cataract Canyon

## Backpack

The Needles

## Backcountry drive

The Maze

How would your adventure be different than life at home? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What wild places near your home would you like to explore? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





CAVE SPRING



NEWSPAPER ROCK

See this site on your way in or out of the  
The Needles on Highway 211.

## 11 IF WALLS COULD TALK

The images left by early Native Americans help us understand their lives. We think about their connection to this place and wonder about our own.



Look at the pictures above, or find paintings or rock peckings in the park. What do you think the images mean? What messages do they share?

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What images would tell the story of you, your family, and the place you are from? Draw your story. Try using symbols people from other cultures would understand.



# 12 MEET A ROCK

The rocks in Canyonlands are stacked like a huge layer cake with many flavors. Each rock is unique. Find a rock to look at more closely.

What color(s) is your rock? \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the words that describe your rock.

SHINY    SMOOTH    ROUGH    HEAVY    LIGHT

DRAW OR DESCRIBE YOUR ROCK



Is your rock made up of pieces of different sizes or is it the same throughout?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What makes your rock different from the rocks around it?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# 13 TAKE IT IN



Find an inspiring place, and fill in the blanks of the sensory poem below.



Read your poem to a friend or family member.



## EXAMPLE

Needles

WHERE I AM:

dust

I SMELL...

windy

THE WEATHER IS...

raven's croak

I HEAR...

open

IT LOOKS...

silent

IT SOUNDS...

towering

IT FEELS...

freedom

I FEEL...

MY PARK  
POEM :

\_\_\_\_\_  
WHERE I AM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
I SMELL...

\_\_\_\_\_  
THE WEATHER IS...

\_\_\_\_\_  
I HEAR...

\_\_\_\_\_  
IT LOOKS...

\_\_\_\_\_  
IT SOUNDS...

\_\_\_\_\_  
IT FEELS...

\_\_\_\_\_  
I FEEL ...



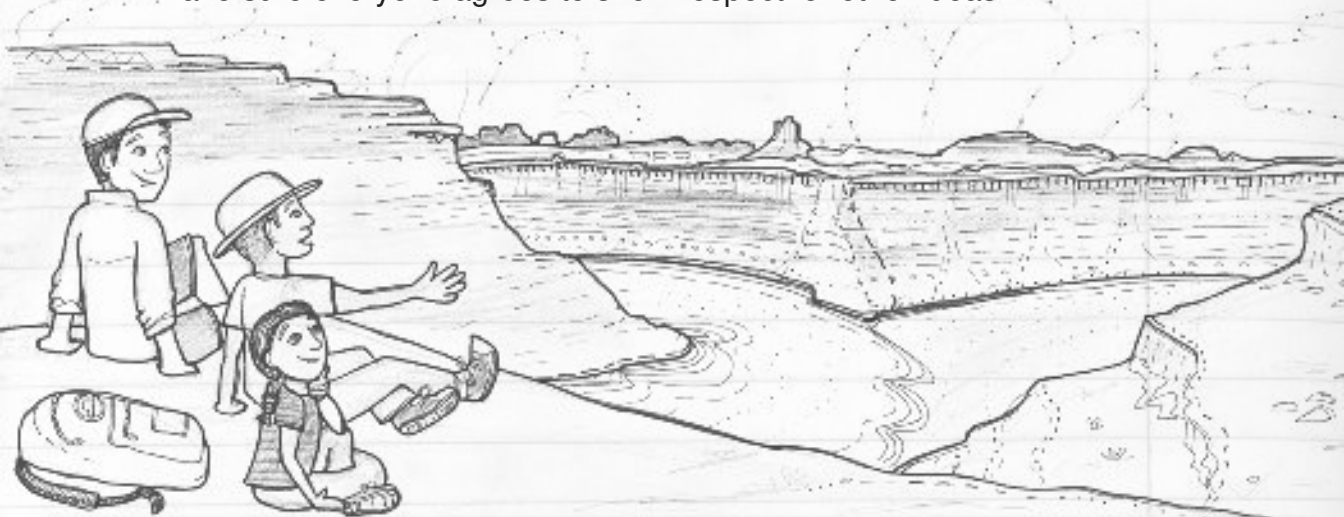
As they say in the  
desert, be sure to stop  
and smell the cliffroses.



# 14 ROOM FOR VIEWS



Ask your group to have a discussion about wild places using this guide. Make sure everyone agrees to show respect for other ideas.



Let everyone take turns answering the questions below. There are no right or wrong answers. The goal is to understand each other's ideas.

1 Which picture below best fits how you feel about wilderness—a place far from the marks of humans? Explain your choice.

(Have everyone write their name next to the picture they chose.)



2 What person or experience shaped how you feel about wilderness today?

3 What things make a place less wild for park visitors? Which of these do we need?

4 Who else would you like to talk to about wilderness? What will you ask them?



# WHAT'S NEXT?



Getting your junior ranger badge is just the beginning. Circle the role model actions you'll do at home.

- RECYCLE
- USE REUSABLE BAGS
- UNPLUG AND PLAY OUTSIDE
- GROW A GARDEN
- STUDY SCIENCE
- EXPLORE NATURE
- START A CLUB
- DON'T WASTE WATER
- ORGANIZE A CLEANUP
- SHARE PARK STORIES
- PRACTICE SAFETY



Write your own junior ranger pledge or promise. You can use the word bank for ideas.

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## MAKE US PROUD, JUNIOR RANGER!

Are you ready to become a certified junior ranger? Share this book with a park ranger. You'll take the junior ranger pledge and go forth as a protector of parks. Check out these ideas for continuing the adventure.

- Learn more about Canyonlands by visiting our park website: [nps.gov/canyonlands](http://nps.gov/canyonlands)
- Check out a National Park Service site or other park close to your home!
- Become a web ranger at [nps.gov/webrangers](http://nps.gov/webrangers).

### Park Mailing Address

Canyonlands National Park  
2282 Resource Blvd.  
Moab, Utah 84532



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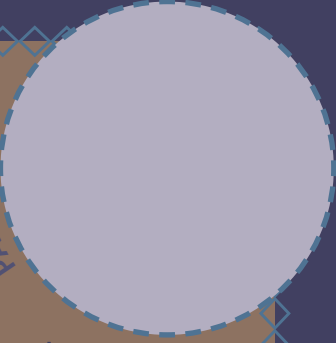


# CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARK Junior Ranger



AS A JUNIOR RANGER, I promise to learn about, respect,  
and protect national parks, my community, and the earth.  
I will explore the natural world and other cultures wherever I go.  
I promise to be safe and be a good example to others.

PARK STAMP



JUNIOR RANGER

PARK RANGER