

False Cape State Park Jr. Ranger



Activity Book

Name: _____



Become a False Cape State Park Jr. Ranger!

Rangers are an important part of the Virginia State Park system. Some of the duties of Park Rangers are to protect plants and animals, preserve the history, share their knowledge in a meaningful way, ensure the safety of each visitor and to instill a sense of discovery in everyone they meet.

We are SO GLAD you are going to become a Jr. Ranger!



To start your adventure, complete an activity level;

Kit = Ages 5 - 7 complete 4 of the activities.



Pup = Ages 8 - 10 complete 7 of the activities.



Fox = Ages 11 & up complete 10 of the activities.

When you are done, stop by the Visitor Center during operational hours to have a Ranger sign your book and be sworn in by taking the VSP Jr. Ranger Oath. Then you'll receive your Official Jr. Ranger Badge.

Look for tips from State Park mascot Ranger Redfox on pages throughout this book!

As a Jr. Ranger I pledge to:

- Preserve and protect our parks;
- Care for my natural and historical resources;
- Share what I have learned about the parks with others;
- Obey all safety rules;
- Continue to explore and discover.



VIRGINIA STATE PARKS

Be Aware

To be a Jr. Ranger at False Cape State Park, it is important to be aware of the possible dangers that you may come across while exploring.

ACTIVITY: Read through this page with an adult. Check the box when done!



Poison Ivy Leaves



Poison Ivy Vine

Poison Ivy:

Poison Ivy is a plant that is common at False Cape and can grow as both a bush and a fuzzy looking vine. The leaves of the Poison Ivy plant grow in a cluster of three, and can sometimes be toothed (uneven) or smooth. In the spring and summer the leaves appear to be shiny and waxy in the sunlight. This sheen is from the oil, called urushiol, that the plant produces. It is this oil that causes the Poison Ivy rash.

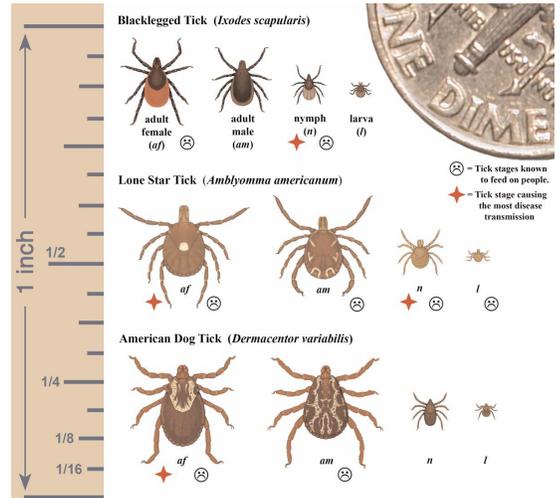
All parts of the Poison Ivy plant are poisonous and can cause allergic reactions, avoid it at all costs.

Ticks:

Ticks are small parasitic cousins of spiders. They spend their time on tall grass and trees, waiting for an animal or person to walk by. They attach to the animal or person and suck their blood. Be sure to do a tick check after every adventure outside. If you find a tick, remove it by using a pair of tweezers as close to the skin as possible and pulling slowly away from the skin.

Ticks can sometimes carry diseases such as Lyme Disease, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. If you feel sick, tired, or have the rash after a tick bite, tell an adult.

Do NOT burn attached ticks or use oils to remove them.



Snakes:

While there are many species of snake that can be found at False Cape, the only venomous snake is the Cottonmouth/Water Moccasin. All snakes can bite if they feel threatened. If you come across a snake in your adventures it is best to give them plenty of space. Remember to watch where you step! Many bites occur because a snake was accidentally stepped on.

Remember that snakes do not want to attack us, and every snake is important to the ecosystem.



Cottonmouth (Venomous)



Cottonmouth warning sign



Eastern (Black) Rat Snake (Non-Venomous)



What is the difference between **Venomous** and **Poisonous**?
Venom is injected through things like snake fangs.
Poison is something that has to be touched or eaten.

Be Prepared

The first step to any great adventure is to make sure that you have what you need to not only survive, but also to be comfortable. Below is Ranger Parker Redfox's preparedness check list.

Make sure you do these things **BEFORE your adventure:**

- **Find a Buddy:** When hiking it is always important to have a friend to hike with you.
- **Check the Weather:** Knowing the weather can help decide what to pack
- **Tell a Friend/Ranger:** Before you go make sure that you tell someone that you are going, where you are going, and when you expect to get back.
- **Know your Limits:** Every trail has a different difficulty. Before you go on the trail, make sure it is a difficulty that is right for you.

ACTIVITY: Read through this checklist with an adult to make sure you are prepared! Check items as you go.

Preparation Checklist:

- Plenty of water:** water is the most important thing to pack.
- Comfortable shoes:** sandals and flip-flops can cause blisters or broken toes while hiking.
- Dress in layers:** layers can help you prepare for cold and warm weather.
- Pack your rain gear:** being wet can increase your chance of hypothermia.
- Bring extra socks:** having wet socks can make you feel cold, and cause foot injuries.
- Wear a hat:** wearing a hat keeps the sun out of your eyes and protects you from sunburn.
- Jacket and gloves for cold weather:** having these will help prevent frost bite and hypothermia.
- Sunscreen:** sunscreen is important even in the winter!
- First Aid kit:** a first aid kit is important for any outdoor adventure.
- Snacks:** snacks like trail mix are great for boosting energy on long hikes.
- Flashlight:** flashlights can help you find your way if the sun goes down, and it can help get a ranger's attention.
- Whistle:** if lost, a whistle can help you get the attention of a ranger or another park visitor.
- Mobile Phone:** having a way to contact help if you need is a must.
- Park Map:** you should always have the trail map of the park you are visiting.
- Camera:** you cannot bring objects from the park home, but with a camera you can always remember what you saw.

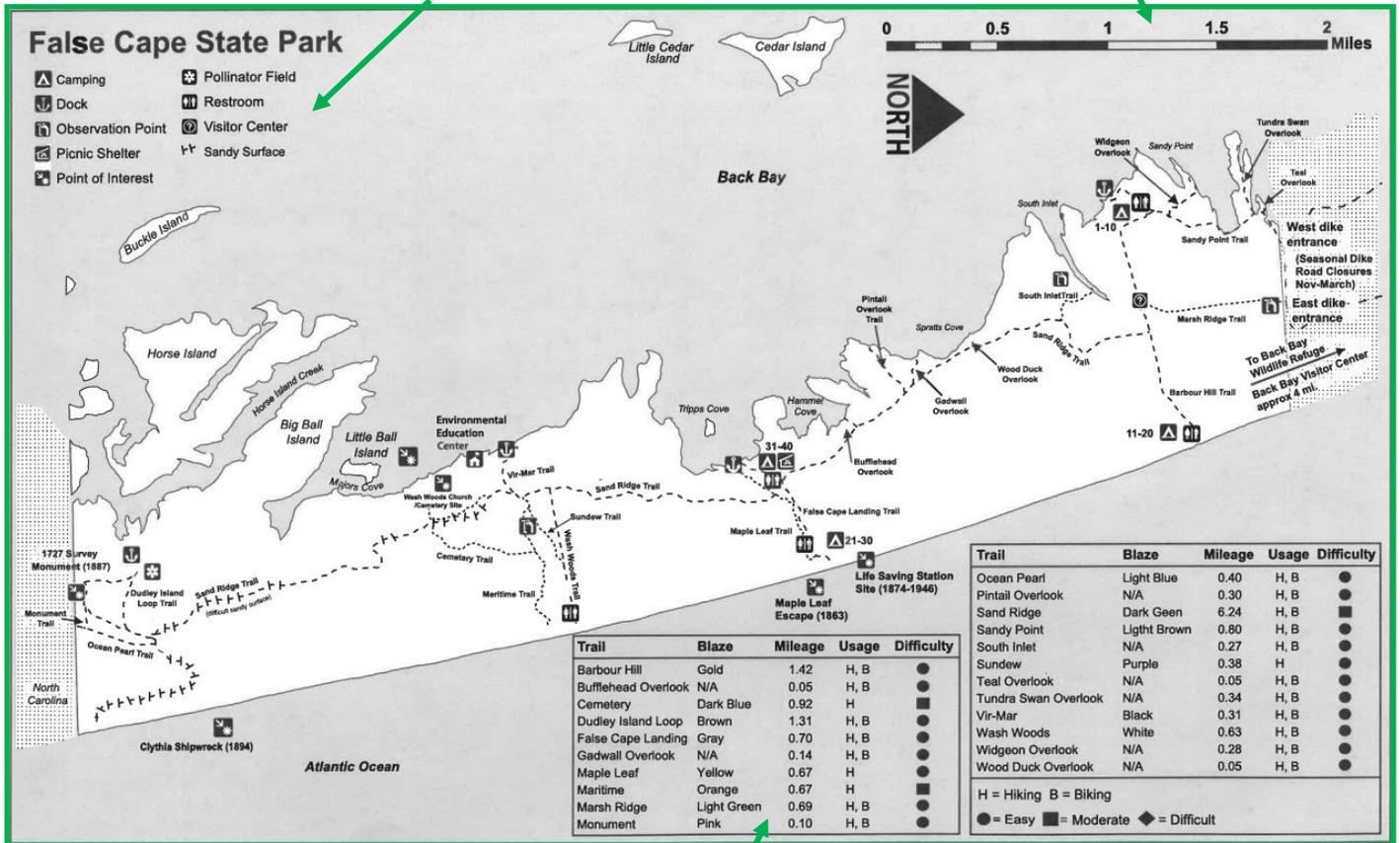


Map Skills Challenge

Whether you are visiting False Cape State Park for the first time or you are visiting for the tenth time, one of the best ways to discover all of the park's treasures is to take a look at the park map! First let's take a look at some important map features:

Legend: This helps you figure out what all those little pictures mean. Want to find where the playground is? This helps you figure out what symbol to look for on the map.

Scale: This helps you measure distances on the map. Each map will have it's own scale.



Trail List: This will give you important information about all of the park's trails; including how long the trail is and if it is easy or hard.

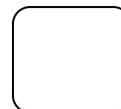
Activity: use the map to answer the following questions.

What is the longest trail at the park? _____ How long is it? _____

How many Picnic Shelters are there? _____ How many restrooms? _____

Where is a good place to spot some wildlife? _____

What does the symbol for Camping look like? Draw it here:



You can usually pick up a park map at the park office, visitor center, or self-pay station. Or you can have an adult help you print a map from www.virginiastateparks.gov.

Scavenger Hunt

ACTIVITY: As you explore the park keep a sharp eye out for items on Parker's scavenger hunt list. Ask a ranger if you need help!



#	✓	Item
1		Hike an Overlook trail
Trail name:		
2		Find an animal's nest
Describe:		
3		Hug a tree
Tree species:		
4		Run your fingers through sand
Where?		
5		Sit and listen quietly for 5 min.
What did you hear?		
6		Find something red
Describe:		
7		Find a Live Oak leaf
Round or pointy ends?		

#	✓	Item
8		Take a picture of something cool!
Show the ranger.		
9		Find an animal track
Describe:		
10		Find a spider web
What was in it?		
11		Find something green (not a leaf)
Describe:		
12		Find a flower
Describe		
13		Find moss or lichen
Describe:		
14		Find a campsite
What #?		

Habitat Hunt

Even though it's only 1.5 miles wide at its widest point, there are many different types of habitat across False Cape State Park, from the salty Atlantic Ocean to fresh-water Back Bay. Different types of animals have different needs for food and shelter, and will live in different habitats around the park.

Activity: Draw a line to connect the animal with the description and area of the park where it can be found!



Coyote



Largemouth Bass



Bottlenose Dolphin



River Otter

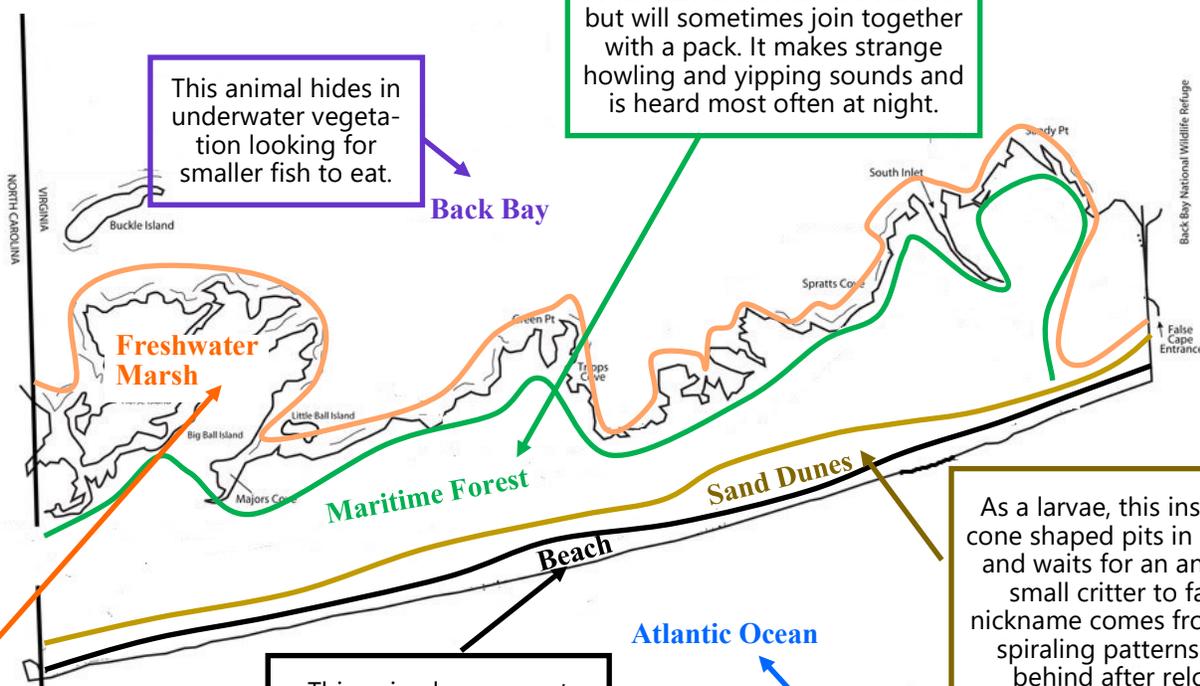


Ghost Crab



Antlion/Doodlebug

FALSE CAPE STATE PARK



This animal hides in underwater vegetation looking for smaller fish to eat.

This animal is often seen alone but will sometimes join together with a pack. It makes strange howling and yipping sounds and is heard most often at night.

As a larvae, this insect makes cone shaped pits in the ground and waits for an ant or other small critter to fall in. Its nickname comes from the odd spiraling patterns it leaves behind after relocating.

This animal has thick, water repellent fur and loves to eat fish, frogs, and freshwater mussels.

This animal comes out mostly at night and spends much of the daytime in burrows dug into the sand. It is a scavenger although sometimes catches smaller animals or insects to eat.

This animal swims in pods looking for fish, squid and crustaceans to eat. It can weigh between 400-800 pounds.

Atlantic Ocean

Animal Investigations

Even if we can't see them, there are always animals around us in the park. Use your detective skills as you adventure around False Cape to find signs of our wildlife!

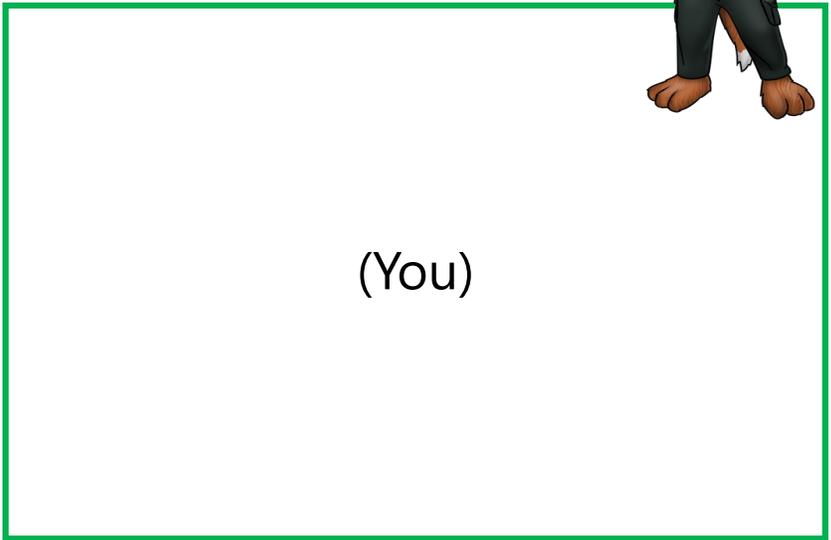


ACTIVITY: SIT, LOOK, and LISTEN

Sometimes all we have to do is sit quietly for a few moments and let our senses do the work. Find a nice quiet spot and try closing your eyes and listening carefully.

You can make a record of the sounds you are hearing by drawing a sound map. Imagine you are in the center of the square. Mark X's around you on the map where you hear sounds.

How many different sounds can you identify?



ACTIVITY: TRACK MATCH

One of the best clues that an animal leaves behind is tracks! You can learn a lot from an animal track like what kind of animal it was, and which way it was going. If you see lots of different types of animal tracks in an area, you can tell that it is a great habitat for animals - there might be good food, water, or shelter near by. Try matching each of these animals with their tracks.



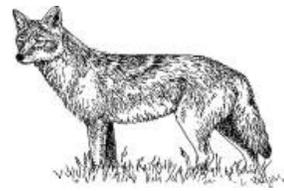
Raccoon



Great Blue Heron



Bobcat



Coyote



Opossum



White-tailed Deer

Feathered Friends

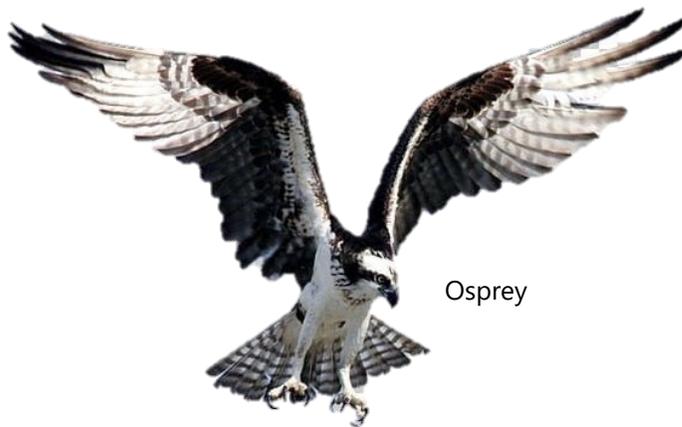
Bird watching is a wonderful way to get outdoors and be active. Like a scavenger hunt that you can do anywhere, bird watching challenges you to use your senses to find and identify our feathered friends. Over 200 different types of birds can be found at False Cape State Park. Some live here year-round, some for just a season, and a few only stop for a rest on their migratory journeys.

Activity: observe one habitat in the park really closely and see if you can see or hear any birds. Describe the habitat and birds below.

Habitat:

Birds can be found just about everywhere in the wild, but every bird has a habitat that they prefer. What does the habitat look like around you? Check all descriptions that apply.

- Tall Trees
- Short trees/shrubs
- Tall Grass
- Short grasses
- Wildflowers
- Bare ground
- Leaves on Ground
- Deep water
- Shallow water
- Wetlands (plants and water mixed)
- Freshwater
- Saltwater
- Beach



Osprey

Behaviors:

Besides knowing what habitat you are in, watching what the bird's behavior can help you identify the species. Every bird species has a different shape, size, color, song, and behavior. Some birds, like Osprey can be seen hovering over the water, hunting fish. Describe any birds you see or hear below.

Bird 1

Shape: _____

Colors: _____

Sounds: _____

What is it doing? _____

Do you know what this bird is called (species)? _____

Bird 2

Shape: _____

Colors: _____

Sounds: _____

What is it doing? _____

Do you know what this bird is called (species)? _____

Common bird shapes.



Protect Your Park

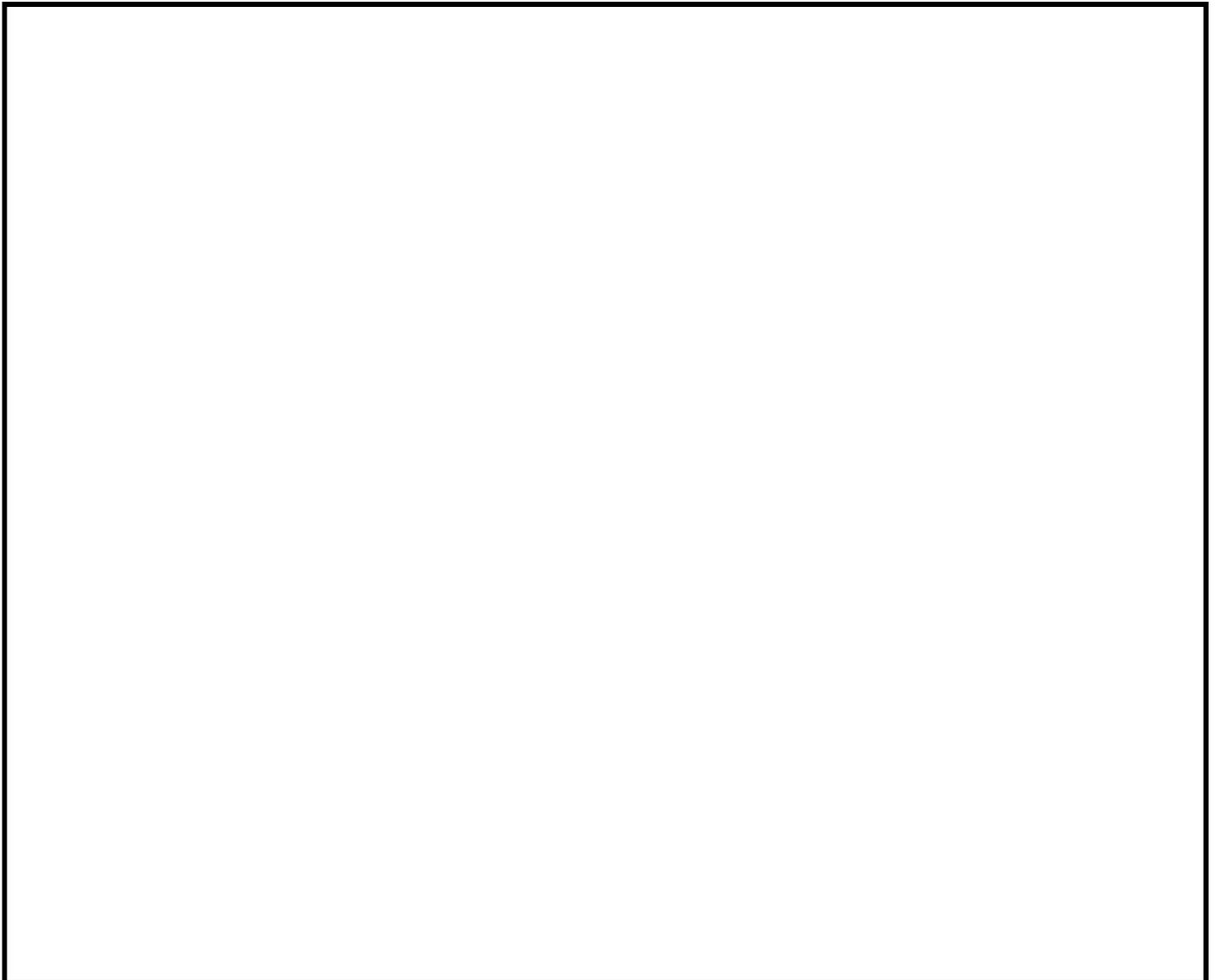
False Cape State Park is home to plants and animals that are hard to find anywhere else. We need YOUR help to keep our park beautiful and protect the natural resources found here.

Activity: write three things you can do to protect the park. Next, design a poster to hang in the park that tells other people how to help.

Three things I can do to protect False Cape State Park:

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.

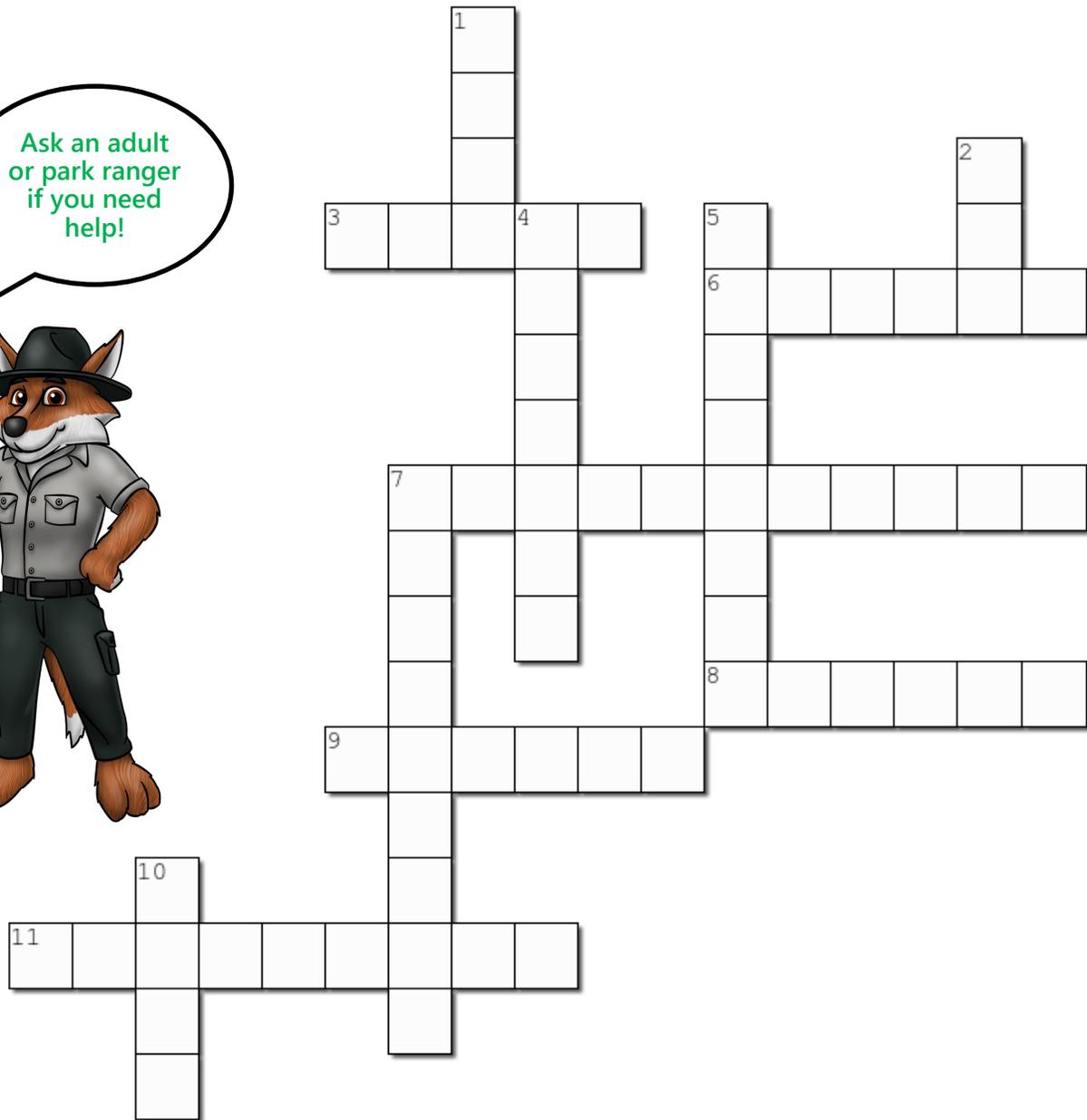
My Poster:



False Cape Crossword

Activity: solve the clues to complete the crossword puzzle.

Ask an adult
or park ranger
if you need
help!



Across

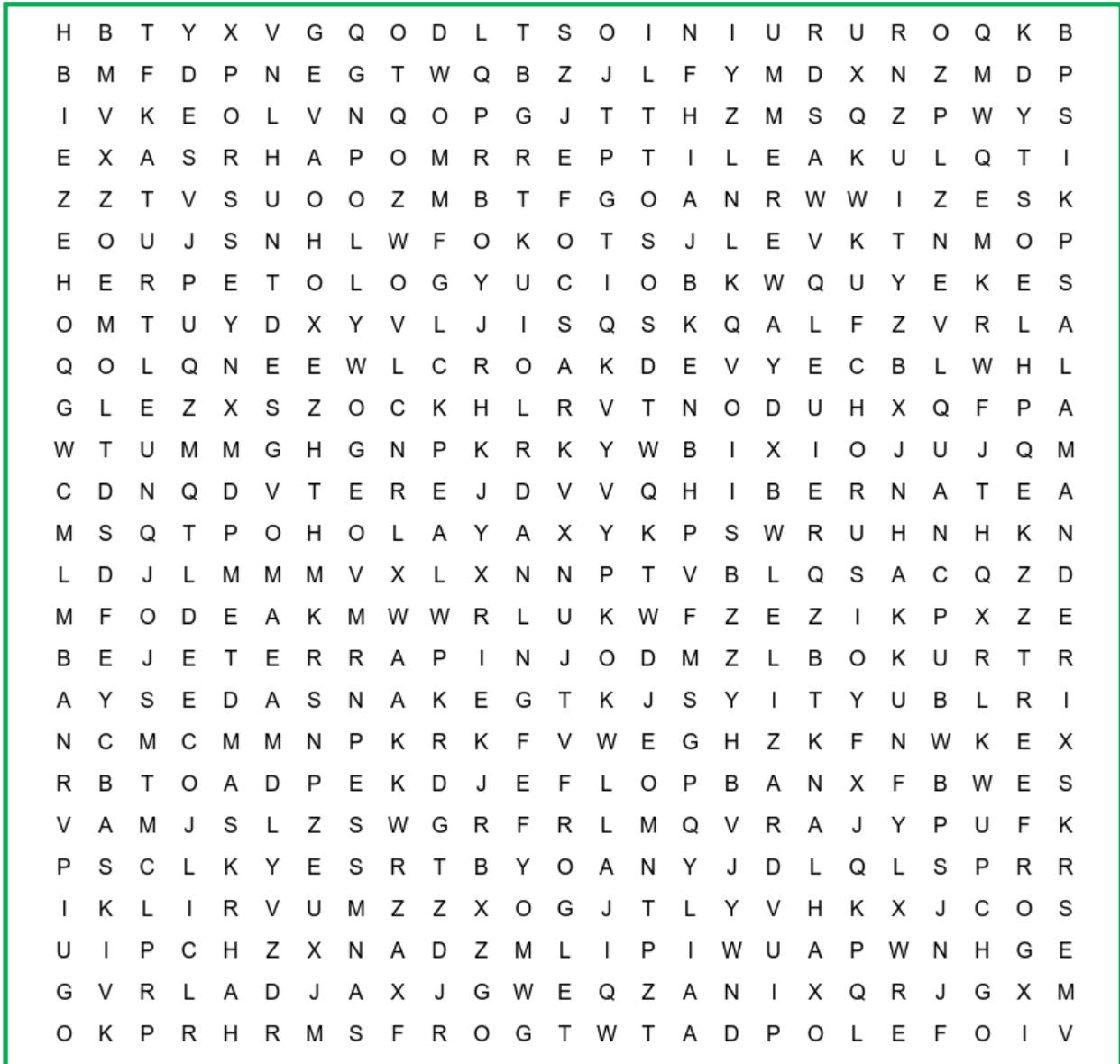
3. The Atlantic Ocean is saltwater, but Back Bay is _____ water and supports bass and crappie fish species.
6. Yellow-bellied sliders are the most common type of _____ in the park.
7. The only venomous snake at False Cape. Named after the white warning color inside its mouth.
8. Animal that eats small rodents and howls to communicate.
9. A raptor (bird of prey) that nests on platforms around the park and eats mainly fish.
11. Over 180 of these happened off our coast when ships got too close to shore and crashed on a sandbar.

Down

1. Hike, _____, or boat. The only ways to get yourself to False Cape.
2. Great-horned _____. The largest nocturnal bird in the park.
4. _____ Cove. Area of the park named after a family that lived in the area in the 1800s.
5. _____ Ocean. What body of water is on the eastern boundary of the park?
7. Grab your sleeping bag and tent, False Cape has 30 of these.
10. Loblolly _____ and Live Oak are the two most common trees to find in the park.

Hidden Herpetology

Activity: Find the hidden words all about herpetology, or the study of reptiles and amphibians.



Ask an adult or Park Ranger to help you learn what these words mean!

Kit List:

Croak
Frog
Gills
Newt
Scale
Shell
Skink
Snake
Song
Toad

Pup List:

Bask
Chorus
Froglet
Keratin
Lizard
Molt
Reptile
Tadpole
Treefrog
Turtle

Fox List:

Amphibian
Herpetology
Hibernate
Metamorphosis
Pollywog
Salamander
Terrapin
Tortoise
Venomous
Zoology

Take Only Memories!

Look back at all you have done at the park. What was your favorite thing? Did you have s'mores, or take a hike? Did you see any wildlife or get to meet new friends?

Activity: If you were going to send a postcard to a friend about all the adventures you had at the park, what would you share with them? Write it on the postcard below!

Virginia State Parks



TO:



Each Virginia State Park has its own story with unique histories, cultures, and landscapes. And with parks all across the Commonwealth, from the mountains to the ocean, there are endless opportunities for adventure and fun just steps away from your front door.

Certificate of Completion

Has successfully completed the activities of the
Junior Ranger Program and is hereby proclaimed an official

False Cape State Park Junior Ranger

Virginia State Parks



Park Ranger

Date