

NEIGHBORHOOD NATURE DISCOVERY GUIDE



Become a Junior Ranger!

Help Jefferson County Open Space Park Rangers protect nature. Become a Junior Ranger by completing all the activities in this packet. This program can be complete at home, in your local park, or on your neighborhood trail. No need to go far to have fun and learn! Remember to stay 6 feet away from other people outside but you can walk close to your family. Upon completion have someone at home give you the oath on the last page of this booklet. **Be safe!**

Plan Ahead

Junior Rangers must always plan ahead before going on a walk. Circle 10 things that you think are most important to carry with you when you venture out into nature.



Answer key - the 10 Essentials include: navigation, extra clothing, sun protection, hydration, nutrition, protection, hydration, illumination, 1st Aid supplies, matches or lighter, multi-tool, soap and water or hand sanitizer

Crimes Against Nature

Become a Nature Crime Scene Investigator by searching for park violations. While hiking the trails or walking around your neighborhood look for things that are harmful to the environment and wildlife. Write down or draw what you find in the space below. How many violations did you find?

Hint: you can find park regulations on the website at <https://www.jeffco.us/1583/Regulations>

Getting Lost

Exploring nature can be lots of fun but it's no fun to get lost. Prevent this by always keeping at least two family members within sight. If you are hiking single file down the trail, make sure you can see the person in front of you and the person behind you. They should be able to see you as well.

Talk to your parents and make a plan in case you get lost or separated while in a park.

If you do get lost:

- ▶ Find a spot on or near the trail and sit down. Blow your whistle or call out periodically.
- ▶ Look around you for five things that are unique but don't leave your spot.
- ▶ Give the trees, plants, and rocks around you funny names.
- ▶ Watch and listen for wildlife like birds.
- ▶ Stay in the same spot. Your parents or a ranger will find you faster if you stay where you are.

What animals did you see today?

Write their names or draw them below. If you do not know their names, do some online research.

For help with bird identification use: [merlin.allaboutbirds.org](https://www.merlin.allaboutbirds.org) or the free [Merlin Bird ID app](#).

For help with insects: [insectidentification.org](https://www.insectidentification.org)

For help with butterflies: [coloradofrontrangebutterflies.com](https://www.coloradofrontrangebutterflies.com)

What plants or trees did you see today?

Write their names or draw them below. If you do not know their names, do some online research.

Leave No Trace in Open Space Matching Game

Rangers protect the parks with these messages. You can help nature in your neighborhood by following these guidelines. Draw a line connecting the message to its description.

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|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Be Careful with Fire | a. Stay on the main trail and watch where you walk. |
| 2. Respect Wildlife | b. Put litter in bags and put it in a trash can. |
| 3. Be Kind to Other Visitors | c. Leave berries, flowers, and insects for animals to eat. |
| 4. Know Before You Go | d. Only gas grills allowed in Jefferson County Open Space. |
| 5. Choose the Right Path | e. Don't forget extra clothes, water, snacks, and a map. |
| 6. Trash Your Trash | f. Watch animals from a distance and never feed them. |
| 7. Leave What You Find | g. Try to keep your voice low except in an emergency. |

Urban Wildlife Checklist

Mark off the animals you have you seen. As a bonus, find out which animals are native or nonnative.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coyote | <input type="checkbox"/> European Starling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cottontail rabbit | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Jay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Robin | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Pigeon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mule deer | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fox squirrel | <input type="checkbox"/> Monarch butterfly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie dog | <input type="checkbox"/> Other butterflies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullsnake |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow | <input type="checkbox"/> Any spider |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Meadowlark | <input type="checkbox"/> Any insect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lark Bunting | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird | |



JUNIOR RANGER PLEDGE

As a Jefferson County Junior Park Ranger,

**I promise to protect all parks by being a good steward of the land.
I will plan ahead, be safe, and respect wildlife and other visitors.
I will obey all park rules and be a good example to others.**