National Parks are special places set aside by the American People to conserve the scenery, preserve the natural and historic objects and protect the wildlife in each park and to provide for the enjoyment of these resources in a way that leaves them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. More than 130 years ago, Yellowstone became the world's first National Park. By 1916, thirty-five other parks and monuments were set aside leading Congress to create the National Park Service. Today, there are nearly 400 National Parks cared for by dedicated men and women, working to conserve and protect America's natural, cultural and historic resources for future generations. National Parks hold promises for the future and paths to the past. More than 170 million times a year, Americans visit their National Parks for fun, inspiration, recreation and renewal.

Explore, Learn, Protect

National Park Junior Ranger Programs connect young people to their National Parks. The National Park Junior Ranger Motto is “Explore, Learn, Protect.” These three words capture much of the history of the National Park Service.

Explore
Interest and care lead kids and families to discover places they want to learn about.

Learn
Families learning together about special places like National Parks fosters a connection and a bond.

Protect
By exploring and learning about National Parks, people gain an appreciation for these special places and feel a personal responsibility to protect them today for tomorrow.

In this issue of the Junior Ranger Gazette you will learn about people and places that represent the Junior Ranger Motto: Explore, Learn, Protect.
National Parks are home to a variety of sea creatures including manatees, seals, seahorses and pelicans just to name a few. In many National Parks you can spend a day boating, snorkeling and swimming in waters to discover these amazing creatures.

Biscayne National Park in South Florida is the largest marine park in the National Park System. There are more than 500 species of fish in Biscayne. The waters around the park have seen the likes of pirates, Native Americans, world explorers and presidents. Many visitors to Biscayne visit coral reefs. Some experience reefs through the windows of a glass bottom boat while others swim with a snorkel and mask to see different species living in its protected waters.

At Channel Islands National Park off the coast of Southern California, half the park is underwater. The park protects 176 miles of untouched coastline. The Santa Cruz Basin is deeper than Arizona's Grand Canyon. Channel Islands National Park encompasses five remarkable islands (Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, San Miguel, and Santa Barbara). The islands boast hundreds of sea caves, including one of the world's largest and deepest named Painted Cave on Santa Cruz Island. During the summer, the park is visited by the largest herd of blue whales in the world. The islands provide a safe home for California sea lions, harbor seals, Guadalupe fur seals and Northern fur seals.

Virgin Islands National Park in the U.S. Virgin Islands has no rivers, lakes or streams. Instead, salt ponds provide important habitats for crabs, lizards and birds. Five species of bats live in the park eating fruit, insects and some fish. During the winter months, migrating, endangered Humpback whales and their calves visit the park waters while endangered Hawksbill turtles nest on the beaches. If you're lucky you may see nests hatch with more than one hundred haly turtles heading to the sea! At Reef Bay you can find the Taino Indian petroglyphs, just one of more than 500 historic structures in Virgin Islands National Park.

Hawaii's National Parks preserve the rich history and culture of the islands and their unique variety of plants and animals. Plants and animals that are special to a particular region, country, or period of time are known as the region's flora (plant species) and fauna (animal species). This is important because Hawaii's National Parks provide a safe habitat for these species to survive and continue to grow.

Located on the island of Maui, Haleakala National Park starts at the beach and rises all the way to the top of the mountain, measuring 9,195 feet high. While it may feel like tropical temperatures on the beach, the higher you climb, the cooler it gets.

Kilauea and Mauna Loa, the two most active volcanoes in the world, are located in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. While Mauna Loa last erupted in 1984, Kilauea has been erupting regularly since 1983. On March 29, 2008, for the first time in 24 years, Kilauea's main crater erupted and scattered debris over about 77 acres.

The Kalapapa peninsula is located on the north shore of the island of Molokai and is isolated by water and steep cliffs that reach 5,000 feet high. The limited access to the peninsula has helped Kalapapa maintain its native plants and animals.

The ancient temple Pu'ukohola Heiau was built for the war god Keko'iokulike. Worshippers made sacrifices to the war god inside of the temple. During this time, the temples of war were the center of Hawaiian religious beliefs.

The Ala Kahihi National Historic Trail is 17 miles long and passes through many cultural and ecologic sites. While traveling down this trail it is common to spot native sea turtle habitats. Since Hawaii is home to many endangered plants and animals you may have an opportunity to see some of these species.

Half of Kaloko-Honokohau National Park is under water. The coral reefs are home to fish, invertebrates and marine algae. On land, bird fields date back to eruptions that occurred 1,000 to 1,700 years ago from the volcanoes known as Hawaii.
When you imagine a cave you might think of dark passageways, damp walls and other mysterious creatures but there is much more. Caves are very important structures playing a key role in our environment. Most caves are formed in limestone, created by a combination of chemical processes, water erosion, tectonic forces, microorganisms and pressure. The National Park Service protects several caves, welcoming visitors to tour and explore these amazing underground environments.

With more than 365 known miles, Mammoth Cave National Park near Cave City, Kentucky, has the longest known cave system in the world. If you joined the second longest cave, Jewel Cave in South Dakota at 141.87 miles long and the third longest cave in the world, Optimisticheskaya in the Ukraine at 91 miles long, Mammoth Cave would still be longer by almost 100 miles.

Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico contains 113 caves located in the Guadalupe Mountains. The caves found in Carlsbad Caverns were formed when sulfuric acid dissolved the surrounding limestone, creating some of the largest caves in America.

Oregon Caves National Monument is located in the Siskiyou Mountains in southwest Oregon. Instead of limestone, this cave was formed by the faulting and folding of marble. Today carbon dioxide and water mix to make a very weak acid referred to as "acid dew." The acid mixture slowly eats away at the marble walls causing the cave to continuously grow.

There are more than 1,100 species of bats throughout the world. Bats are found on every continent except Antarctica.

Bat wings are modified forelimbs, making them the only mammals in the world that can truly fly.

A bat's knees bend backwards, making in-flight navigation easier and enabling it to hang upside down.

A bat's wing is thinner than a bird's, allowing them to move faster and with more precision.

Bats are nocturnal, roosting during the day (in caves, crevices, burrows, buildings and trees) and eating at night.

Insects are the most common source of food for bats, although certain species feed on fruit, pollen, nectar or blood.

Bats use sound to navigate in the dark. They make noises with their nose or mouth and listen for the echoes to bounce off objects in their path.
Death Valley National Park

Death Valley National Park protects 5.5 million acres across California and Nevada making it the hottest and driest place in North America. In the summer the highest temperatures usually run above 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall in Death Valley averages less than two inches a year and there have been some years of NO recorded rainfall. Despite the harsh environment, more than 1,000 kinds of plants live within the park. The plants are able to survive because they adapt to desert life and can survive on very little water. The best time to see the blooming flowers in Death Valley National Park depends on the rain conditions. If rain falls in several storms throughout the winter and spring, the flowers may bloom in late March and early April in the park’s low elevations.

Badlands National Park

Badlands National Park in southwestern South Dakota contains evidence of animals that lived more than 37 million years ago. The fossils found in this area have been linked to the modern day rhinoceros, horse, pig and cat. One of Badlands National Park’s most famous archeological digs is the Pig Wallow Site, nicknamed the Big Pig Dig. So far, 18 ancient animal species have been discovered at this site leading scientists to believe that millions of years ago the area served as a watering hole.

White Sands National Monument

Located in New Mexico’s Tularosa Basin, White Sands National Monument protects 488 square miles of gypsum sand dunes. A basin is described as a hollow dip in the earth’s surface that is surrounded by higher land. The Tularosa Basin is bordered by the San Andres Mountains to the west, and Sacramento Mountains to the east. Both mountains have thick layers of sedimentary rock and one of the layers is made out of a rock called gypsum.

Gypsum is different from other rocks because it dissolves in water. When rain falls on the surrounding mountains, the gypsum dissolves and runs down the mountain into the Tularosa Basin. Since the Tularosa Basin does not have an outlet to the ocean, runoff from the mountains containing dissolved gypsum gets trapped in the basin. After several million years this process created the landscape of White Sands National Monument.

Washington Monument

Did you know...

- There are 896 steps in the Washington Monument. There were originally 897, but one step was removed to make the monument more accessible.
- The monument reaches 555 feet, 5 1/8 inches high with the base measuring 55 feet, 1 inch wide. The monument is roughly 10 times larger than it is wide and is modeled after the Egyptian Obelisk.
- Visitors to the National Monument will notice a change in the stone color about halfway up. This is because the original construction stopped due to lack of funds. When construction started again 24 years later, the builders returned to the same quarry to cut more stone to finish the project. This time around, they had to dig deeper which resulted in a stone of a slightly different color.
- Inside the monument you will find commemorative stones donated by state, civic, and international organizations. The most famous stone, donated by the Vatican, was allegedly stolen in 1854 and destroyed. A replacement stone was added in 1962.
A LOOK BENEATH YELLOWSTONE LAKE

At twenty miles long, Yellowstone Lake is the largest natural mountain lake in North America. It is so big that from certain lookout spots visitors often think they are looking at the ocean. Yellowstone Lake is a popular destination for park visitors who travel here to fish, swim, hike and enjoy its beauty.

Scientists and geologists travel to Yellowstone Lake for different reasons. They come to study the geology beneath the lake. Mapping the floor of Yellowstone Lake requires the use of remote control devices, sound waves and scuba gear to scan the bottom. Research has revealed a variety of fault lines (cracks in the earth’s crust), hot springs and craters beneath the lake. In fact, the landscape under the lake is similar to the terrain you find throughout the rest of the park.

Scientists and geologists have also discovered they can watch the lake for signs of volcanic eruptions. The lake bed’s rise and fall can unleash steam explosions and wild waves.

Scientists predict an eruption could occur sometime within the next 100,000 years. Scientists do a great job of monitoring volcanic activity to make sure visitors at Yellowstone are always safe.

BIRDS

Inside many National Parks you can find fascinating and rare species of birds you may not see everyday. Big Bend National Park in Texas is home to more species of birds than any other National Park in the United States. Researchers and observers have reported and documented 450 species of birds inside the park, from small thrushes to large herons and great horned owls.

The Great Road Runner is the most famous bird that lives in Big Bend National Park. A member of the cuckoo family, the Road Runner would prefer to run rather than fly, reaching speeds of more than 30 mph. However, if threatened the Road Runner can take flight for short bursts.

The Anhinga is a diving bird that can dive under water to catch fish and swim by using its webbed feet to propel itself. Its feathers are specially designed to allow them to dive. The feather allows water into tiny spaces allowing the Anhinga to easily glide underwater. In Everglades National Park, the Anhinga Trail is one of the great places to view Anhingas. Here you can get close enough to view them swimming after fish, warming up in the sun or nesting.
Mary Bomar has been a part of the National Park Service for almost two years. In October 2006, Director Bomar was named the 17th Director of the National Park Service and now leads a team of 15,000 employees and 14,000 volunteers in preserving 391 sites across America. Since she joined the National Park Service, Director Bomar has held a variety of leadership positions including the Regional Director of the National Park Service Northeast Region, Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park and Oklahoma City National Memorial, State Coordinator for Oklahoma, and Assistant Superintendent at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Director Bomar oversees the preservation of America’s National Parks for current and future visitors.

For twelve years now, I’ve been visiting National Parks beginning at Biscayne National Park. My list includes: Everglades, Yellowstone, Yosemite, Biscayne, Sequoia and Kings Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, Cumberland Gap, Channel Islands, Death Valley, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. One of my unforgettable experiences was backpacking in Great Smoky Mountains National Park when a doe and its fawn came up to me and licked my hands and face for a long time! I have also hiked many miles in countless places including Mount Katahdin in Maine, the northern end of the Appalachian Trail. I’ve experienced many fun and interesting things in the parks including fishing, swimming, backpacking, white water rafting, rock climbing and volunteering. My favorite National Park is Cumberland Gap where I toured Gap Cave with my grandparents and was impressed by the awe-inspiring beauty deep inside the cavern and its commanding darkness.

I think it is important to protect the National Parks as they are full of beauty that everyone may enjoy as well as some of the last places where animals can roam freely. As a Junior Ranger, I learned to love the parks, learned how to care for them and learned to share the experiences inside the parks with others, helping to keep the parks an environment of fun for all – people and animals alike.
PARK RANGERS

PARK RANGERS IN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HAVE SOME OF THE COOLEST JOBS YOU COULD IMAGINE!
FROM FLYING IN A HELICOPTER OVER GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK TO MONITORING THE VOLCANOES IN HAWAII VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK, AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARK RANGERS DO IT ALL!

GREG SANTOS monitors the volcanoes in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. He hikes for miles over lava flows looking for red lava and marking trails that have become hazardous. Greg's favorite part of the job is having the opportunity to see molten lava flow down the mountainside, over the ground and into the sea.

ROB DEFOE, National Capital Region Chief Horticulturist, predicts when the National Cherry Blossoms will bloom. The famous flowering cherry trees are located around the Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C. Before accepting his current position more than 10 years ago, Rob was a Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya, and a horticulturist at the National Arboretum and the U.S. Botanic Garden.

DAVE L. PATE works at Carlsbad Caverns National Park as a Supervisory Physical Scientist, and a well-known cave specialist. He spends his days overseeing cave exploration, research and restoration among other things. While Dave loves working in the magnificent caves of Carlsbad Caverns, sometimes he is forced to see caves in poor condition. Luckily, he and his team work on identifying the problem and finding ways to preserve these places for the future.

JAY LUSHER is the Helicopter Program Manager for Grand Canyon National Park. His job includes everything from search and rescue to wildland fire response. Jay puts out forest fires and sometimes even starts them. In order to keep the forest healthy, fires are necessary. Special ping pong balls are dropped from the helicopter and ignite once they hit the forest floor. Before working with the National Park Service, Jay spent his summers fighting forest fires across the country.

LAURA STURTZ works as the Sub-District Interpreter at Cape Hatteras National Seashore educating visitors about the historical importance of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. For more than 100 years, the lighthouse has warned sailors of the dangerous sandbars of Diamond Shoals. This spot is also known as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic." Laura and her team make sure the public is aware of the importance the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and lightkeepers have had on American history.
THADDEUS KO SCI USZ K O NATIONAL MONUMENT:
The smallest National Park in America is the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Monument in Philadelphia. Thaddeus Kosciuszko first came to America during the Revolutionary War to help the colonies gain independence from Great Britain. He served in the Continental Army as a Colonel of Engineers. It was his job to secure important areas around Pennsylvania by ordering the construction of forts and military camps to protect the soldiers and citizens of Pennsylvania. This National Monument preserves the bedchamber that the wounded freedom fighter spent most of his time in once he returned from war. He had frequent visitors including Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed Thaddeus "as pure a son of liberty as I have ever known."

Joshua Tree National Park:
Joshua Tree National Park is home to California's state reptile, the desert tortoise. This ancient species is estimated to be 15 million years old. In order to escape the heat of the desert, the desert tortoise spends 95 percent of its time underground.

Wright Brothers National Memorial:
The 60-foot granite memorial in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina stands tall, marking the site of the first controlled powered flight. Wilbur and Orville Wright are credited for the birth of the aviation age. On a cold windy December day in 1903 the Wright brothers decided to test their latest flying machine. The 12-second flight went down in history as one of the many accomplishments of the Wright Brothers.

Big Bend National Park:
Big Bend National Park got its name from the location on the bend of the Rio Grande, the river that serves as a natural border between the United States and Mexico.
Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Despite the name, the "smoke" in Great Smoky Mountains National Park isn't smoke, but a fog that comes from rain and evaporation from trees. The high peaks of the Smokies average 85 inches of rainfall each year.

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve:

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve in Alaska stores more freshwater than all the world's lakes, rivers, groundwater and atmosphere combined. This large supply of freshwater is frozen in the glaciers and polar ice surrounding the area.

CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK:

At 1,943 feet deep, Crater Lake is the deepest lake in the United States and the seventh deepest in the world. With no inlets or outlets to a larger body of water, the lake depends solely on precipitation which averages 533 inches a year.

Fire Island National Seashore:

The origin of "Fire Island" is unknown still to this day. There are several hypotheses that explain how the island received this name, but no one knows for sure. One belief is that hundreds of years ago, land-based pirates, or "wreckers," would build fires to tempt cargo ships to come onto shore.
Every winter the park's interior is patrolled by rangers on dogsleds. Healthy, enthusiastic and obedient huskies pull the sled an average of 3,000 miles every year.

Named after pirate and patriot, Jean Lafitte, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve encompasses the French Quarter, the swamps of Barataria Preserve and the Chalmette Battlefield.

The most notable characteristic of Rocky Mountain National Park is its miles of Alpine Tundra, or "the land above the trees." This land is accessible by the Trail Ridge Road, the highest road in any National Park.

Almost half of America's population can trace their ancestry through the books in Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Beginning in 1892, Ellis Island processed more than 12 million immigrants until the station closed in 1954. The Statue stands 305 feet, 1 inch from the ground to the tip of the flame. It is the equivalent height of a 22-story building.

Dry Tortugas National Park is almost 70 miles off the coast of Key West, Florida. Despite the isolation, American crocodiles have been found living in the waters of the islands.
Bandelier National Monument:

Mule deer live in Bandelier National Monument year-round. A mule deer is born with spots but loses them after its first few months of life. The spots provide camouflage for the fawns when their mothers leave them to find food.

White House Easter Egg Roll:

The White House Easter Egg Roll is a unique tradition that began more than one hundred years ago. The event takes place the Monday after Easter on the White House South Lawn. Although many celebrities attend this event, the most popular guest is the White House Easter Bunny. Each child attending the Egg Roll receives a colorful wooden egg signed by the President and First Lady.
The National Park Foundation believes it is critical that all children have the opportunity to experience America through their National Parks. Programs like Junior Rangers encourage kids to explore the natural world around them, learn about the history and diverse culture of America and protect these special places for future generations.

To find out how you can help support Junior Rangers visit: www.nationalparks.org

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Unilever is proud to be the longest-standing corporate partner of the National Park Foundation and a Proud Partner of America's National Parks – delivering sustainable solutions to infrastructure needs, educating youth about environmental sustainability, and supporting volunteer activities to protect the Parks for future generations. At Unilever, we believe we can do well by doing good.

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