

Junior Rangers and Park Explorers

Great Sand Dunes
National Park and Preserve



Name _____

Age _____

Great Sand Dunes

National Park and Preserve



Let's Get Started!



Ages 3-6	complete the 4 activities marked with a	Kangaroo Rat
Ages 7-9	complete the 6 activities marked with a	Bear
Ages 10-12	complete the 7 activities marked with an	Elk
Ages 13&up	complete the 7 activities marked with	Binoculars

To earn a badge or patch, you must complete all sections for your age group. After finishing all your sections, have a ranger or volunteer check your book at the Visitor Center. Then you'll take a pledge, and receive your official badge or patch from Great Sand Dunes!

Safety First!

Safety Checklist

As a Junior Ranger/Park Explorer, your job is to stay safe, and keep the park safe, too!

Check these off as you read them with your parent or guardian:

☐ ***The dunes can have extreme temperatures! Sand can get dangerously hot on summer days - explore in early morning or evening so you don't overheat or burn your feet and hands. In winter, temperatures can drop below 0 degrees F - wear warm layers of clothes.***

☐ ***Never explore the dunes if it looks stormy - lightning can strike at any time during a storm!***

☐ ***Never wander off alone.***

☐ ***Don't feed wildlife - human food hurts them. Keep wildlife wild.***

☐ ***Leave plants, animals, rocks, sand, and artifacts where they are.***

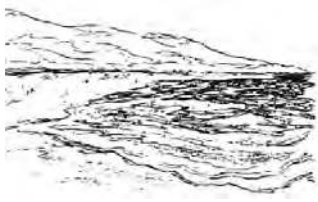
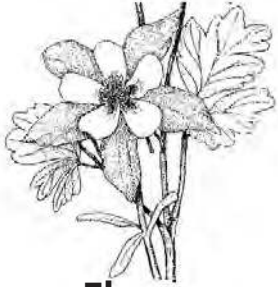
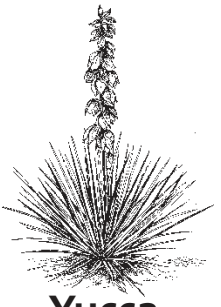
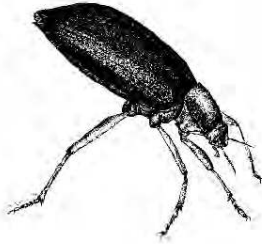
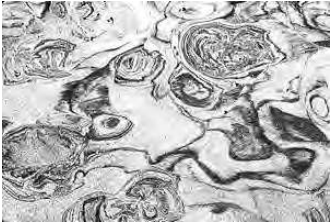
☐ ***To stay healthy in this high altitude, drink lots of water.***



Dunes Bingo

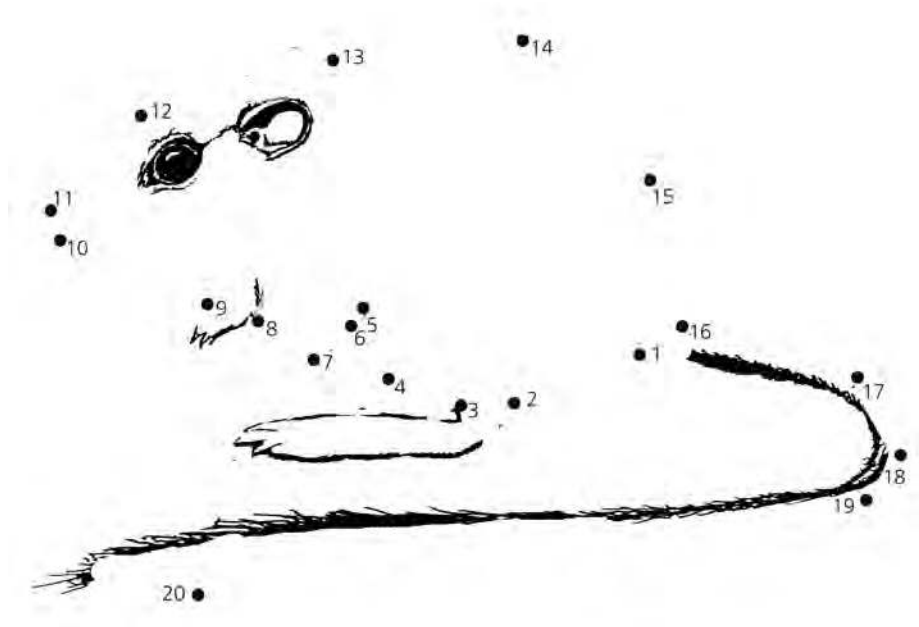
Savannah Park

Circle each thing as you see it in the park. To complete this section, you must find four in a row in any direction.

			
Pine Tree	Creek	Flower	Yucca
			
Stars	Park Ranger	Mule Deer	Sand Dunes
			
Dunes Grass	Insect	Cactus	Tracks
			
Bird	Forest Trail	Mount Herard	Black Sand

Connect the Dots

Connect the dots around the outside of this animal that comes out at night here.
It can jump over your head!



The Rat's Race

Kangaroo rats use rooms in their burrows like people use rooms in houses.
Draw a line to help the kangaroo rat find its way up to the dunes.

Be an Artist

**On this page, draw your favorite scene or animal at Great Sand Dunes.
Borrow crayons or colored pencils from the Visitor Center for a color drawing!**

Explore the Dunes

Weather observations - describe the sky, temperature, wind, and any rain or snow during your visit: _____

Each dune has a gentle side where sand builds into ripples, and a steep side where sand slides down. On this picture, draw an arrow to show which direction the wind usually blows. Draw another arrow to show which way the water flows to carry the sand back to the valley.



Pick up a handful of sand, and notice the different sizes and colors. What colors do you see? List five of the colors:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

Why do you think the sand has different colors? _____

Write a poem about your time in the dunes:



I see _____

I smell _____

I taste _____

I hear _____

I feel _____

Dunes Exploration

Weather observations - describe the sky, temperature, wind, and any rain or snow during your visit: _____

Record the common or scientific names of 5 plant or animal species you observe. (Check the park map, or ask for information sheets on Common Plants and Endemic Insects.)

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

As you explore, look closely at the sand. Light, coarse sand washed down from the nearby _____ Mountains, while the dark, fine-grained sand originated across the valley in the _____ Mountains. Black _____ sand comes from both mountain ranges.

In your own creative words, write a short poem describing how the Great Sand Dunes were formed: _____

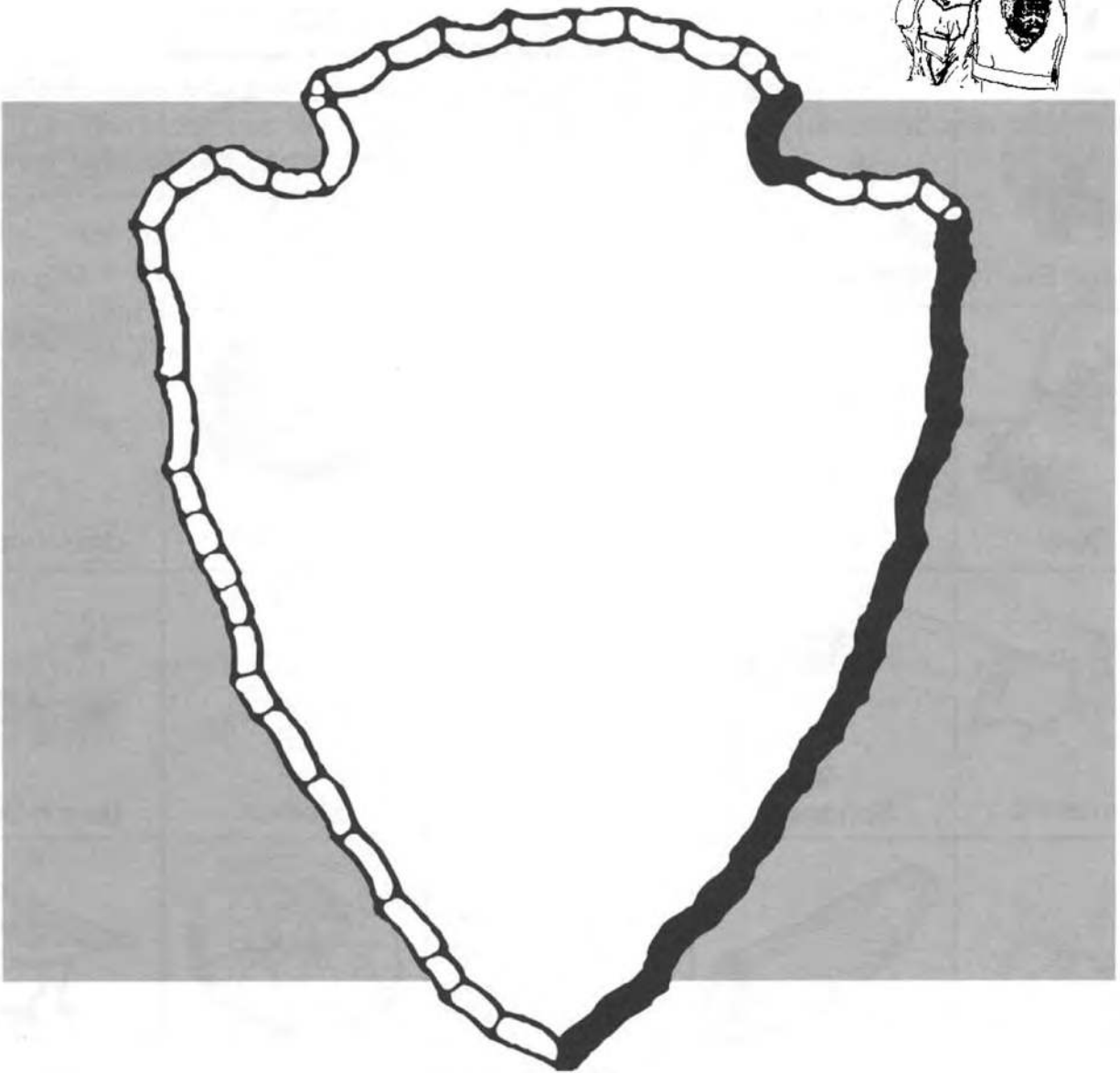
The Great Sand Dunes, and most of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, are federally designated wilderness. Describe how different the dunes would be today without that protection: _____

What place in your own community might benefit from better protection? _____



The Arrowhead

The arrowhead is the symbol of the National Park Service. You will see it in over 400 National Park Service units, on buildings and ranger uniforms. Below is the outline of the arrowhead. Find an arrowhead in the park and complete the drawing, showing the different elements that have special meanings.



Rangers protect many aspects of our national parks:

- The sequoia tree and bison represent plants and wildlife
- The mountains and water represent scenic beauty and recreation
- The arrowhead represents artifacts and history

NPS Word Search

Circle these words in the National Park Service word puzzle below.

BATTLEFIELD
CONSERVATION
MONUMENT
PRESERVE
PROTECTION
RECREATION
RIVERWAY
SCENIC
STEWARDSHIP
WILDERNESS

Q	T	N	A	R	D	M	R	I	M	S	C	P	P	U
W	M	C	W	F	M	I	A	U	S	O	F	I	Q	Q
W	V	S	U	O	V	O	N	E	N	N	Q	N	E	M
P	F	S	D	E	M	V	N	S	U	H	A	O	O	W
O	C	G	R	L	G	R	E	U	B	P	W	I	M	K
S	F	W	K	B	E	R	X	R	M	D	S	T	R	G
C	A	B	Z	D	V	I	O	Q	J	E	T	C	N	P
Y	I	S	L	A	N	X	F	F	H	R	N	E	J	R
Q	X	I	T	K	O	W	X	E	O	T	P	T	F	E
F	W	I	G	Y	R	Q	T	L	L	P	T	O	C	S
P	O	P	L	C	L	S	N	B	K	T	Q	R	O	E
N	R	E	C	R	E	A	T	I	O	N	T	P	S	R
M	L	F	O	Q	I	X	C	M	O	G	V	A	Z	V
P	I	H	S	D	R	A	W	E	T	S	D	L	B	E
C	I	N	E	C	S	Y	X	Z	G	P	Y	C	Q	N

Habitat Match

(next page)

At Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, there are many different types of habitats – places where plants and animals find food, water, and shelter. On the next page, label the different habitats and name the animals in each section.



Look on the back of your park map to find **Habitat Match** answers:

Dunes

Extreme heat in the summer, high winds, and a lack of water make survival a big challenge in the dunes.



I am the only mammal that can live all the time in the dunes. My body makes water from my food, so I never have to take a drink! I am a: _____



My long legs keep me off the sand when it's very hot. I don't live anywhere else on Earth! I am a: _____

Streams and Wetlands

Mountain snow melts into streams that end in wetlands around the dunes.



I am a shore bird with a long pointed beak to catch bugs and fish in water. I am an: _____

I live in streams or ponds in the sand. I use my teeth for many things. I am a: _____



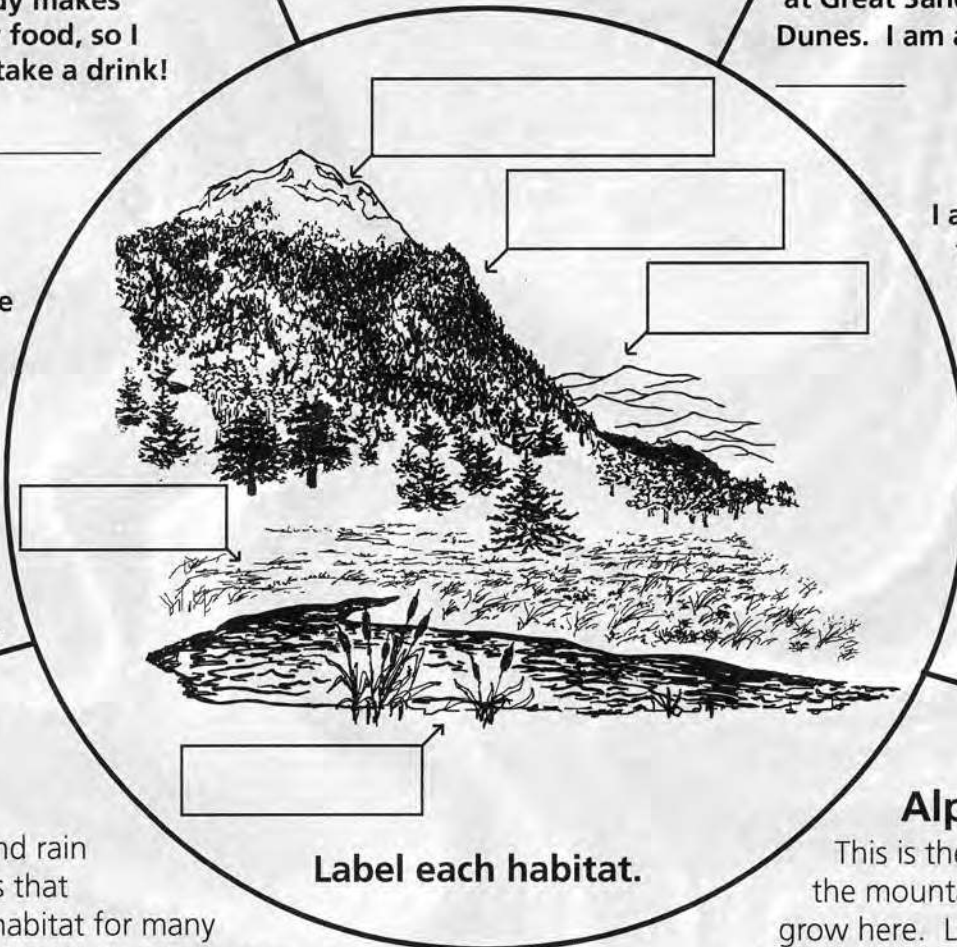
I am the tallest animal at Great Sand Dunes. I am an _____

Grasslands

There are few trees in the high grasslands, but lots of space to run.



I am camouflaged to blend in with sand and grass. I eat ants and beetles. I am a: _____



Label each habitat.

Forest

Lots of snow and rain help grow trees that provide shady habitat for many animals. At different elevations, you will find different types of trees.

I live in the tops of trees and eat the seeds and bark of ponderosa pines. I am an: _____



I am an omnivore. I eat meat, berries, and other plants. I hibernate in the winter. I am a: _____



I am a small animal in the rabbit family. All summer, I collect plants to eat during the long winter. I am a: _____

I climb the highest mountains and eat alpine plants. I am a: _____



Alpine Tundra

This is the highest part of the mountains. Trees can't grow here. Lots of snow and rain fall, and plants hug the ground for warmth.

Passport Stamp



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service



has completed all requirements to be a

National Park Service Ranger or Volunteer

*“As a Junior Park Ranger/Park Explorer, I promise to keep nature clean and beautiful;
to protect plants and animals; and to learn more about national parks.”*