

LOST DOG NATURE PRESERVE

THE FRONTERA LAND ALLIANCE

JUNIOR EXPLORER

NATURE PRESERVE

LOST DOG



DESERT WONDERS

What is Soil?

- Soil Super Ingredients: Organic matter from living things, minerals from eroded rocks, plus gases, water, and cool tiny organisms!
- Soil Layers (Horizons): Like a cake, soil has different layers that form over time.



Hey Junior Explorers!
Did you know that desert soil is like a superhero? It's full of amazing secrets that help everything in the desert live and grow.

Why is Soil Super Important?

- Home Sweet Home: Soil is where plants grow, storing their food and water.
- Nature's Recycling Bin: Soil breaks down waste and helps make the desert clean.
- Beneath Your Feet: We need soil to grow food, for animals to build homes, and for plants to grow, even for fun things like playing in the mud!

DESERT SOIL DETECTIVE

What's in Soil?

- Sand, silt, clay, and sometimes rock and gravel.



Soil Textures:

- Rock and Gravel: Helping water move through soil.
- Sand: Tiny grains that let water flow but don't hold much of it.
- Silt: Super fine particles that hold water better than sand.
- Clay: Teeny tiny particles that hold water and nutrients well but can be too tight for plant roots.



THE MASON JAR SOIL TEST!

Let's Experiment: Fill a mason jar with soil, add water, shake it up, and see how the soil separates into layers of sand, silt, and clay!

LOST DOG MYSTERIES

Look at each scrambled word and rearrange the letters to find words related to nature. Write down your answers and have fun discovering the secrets of nature in this exciting puzzle challenge!



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ANSWER SHEET (FLIP TO READ)

HIKE - PARK - BIRD - SAND - PLAY - BUSH - LEAF - ROCK - LOST - STEP

TOUCH-AND-FEEL I SPY GAME

This version of "I Spy" focuses on feeling different natural elements to understand their role in the ecosystem and how they might be affected by climate change.

How to Play:

As you walk through the preserve, use the prompts below to find and gently touch (without harming or taking anything from the preserve) various natural elements. Reflect on how these elements are essential to the preserve's ecosystem and how they might change with the climate.



I Spy with My Little Hand... Something Sandy: Feel the texture, it can tell a lot about the area's climate and history.



I Spy... A Smooth Stone: Notice the stone's coolness and weight. Rocks and minerals play a crucial role in the habitat.



I Spy... A Leaf from a Tree: Gently touch the leaf. Is it dry or moist? Leaves can show how trees adapt to different weather conditions.



I Spy... A Trail of Insects: Observe ants or other insects without touching them. Their pathways can indicate environmental health.

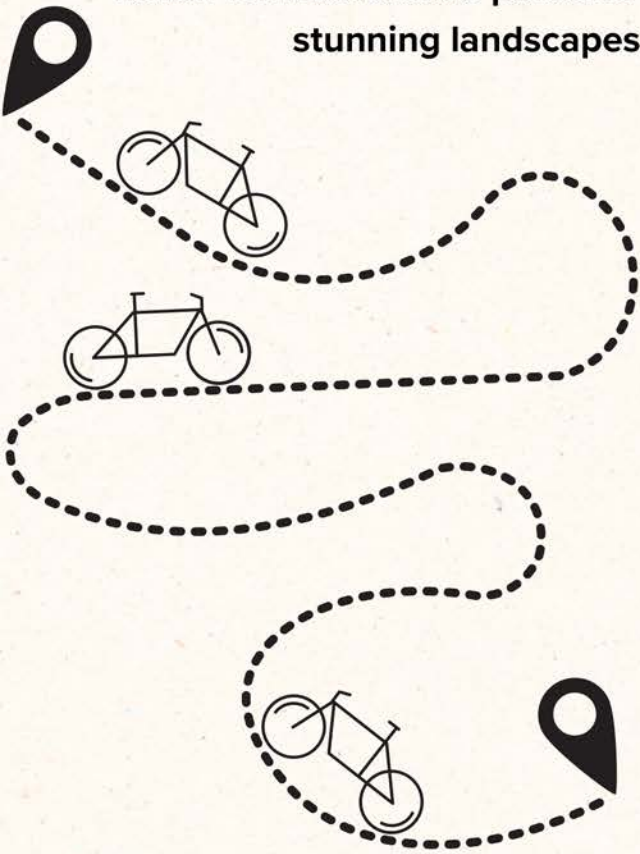
JUNIOR EXPLORER TIP!

As we explore Lost Dog Nature Preserve, remember to only use your eyes and cameras to discover its wonders! Let's leave everything just as we find it to protect our beautiful nature.



PEDAL POWER

Gear up for an adventure on wheels! The Lost Dog Nature Preserve is not just a haven for hikers but a paradise for mountain bikers too. With trails winding through stunning landscapes, it's the perfect place to ride and explore.



Trail Highlights:

Diverse Paths: From beginner-friendly routes to challenging terrains, there's a trail for every skill level.

Scenic Beauty: As you bike, enjoy breathtaking views of the desert, with its unique flora and fauna.

Well-Marked Trails: Clear signage helps keep you on track and safe as you navigate the preserve.



Helmet Heroes: Always wear your super helmet! It's like a superhero shield for your head. And don't forget your water bottle – superheroes need to stay hydrated!



Trail Guardians: Ride only on paths with signs. It's like following a treasure map – it keeps you safe and protects the secret homes of plants and tiny critters.



Animal Spotters: Keep your eyes peeled for cool animals! If you see them, wave hello from a distance. Remember, we're guests in their home.

EXPLORER JOURNAL ENTRY

Read the journal entry about Lost Dog Nature Preserve, then answer the five questions based on the details in the entry.

Today's expedition to the Lost Dog Nature Preserve in El Paso was unforgettable! From the moment we arrived, the desert's beauty was striking. The first thing that caught my eye was the vibrant array of ocotillo plants, their spiky arms reaching toward the clear blue sky.

We embarked on a trail that wound through the rugged terrain, offering glimpses of various plants and animals unique to this desert landscape. I was thrilled to spot a quick jackrabbit darting into the underbrush.

Our guide pointed out the fascinating geology of the area, including ancient rock formations that seemed to tell stories from a time long past. We learned about the desert's ecosystem, how plants like the prickly pear cactus survive in such arid conditions, and the role of arroyos in shaping the landscape.

Reaching a high point in the preserve, the view of the entire canyon unfolded before us. Leaving the preserve, we were mindful to keep it pristine, embodying the spirit of true explorers. What an incredible day of learning and adventure!

Questions:

1. What plant first caught the explorer's attention?

2. Which animal did the explorer see?

3. What did the guide explain about the desert?

4. What was the view from the high point?

OCOTILLO OASIS

Discover the amazing ocotillo, a true desert survivor and a star of the Lost Dog Nature Preserve! These fascinating plants are not just pretty to look at—they're full of surprises.

Ocotillo Fun Facts:

What's an Ocotillo?

It's a plant that looks like a bunch of spiky, green sticks shooting straight up into the sky!

Desert Magic:

After rain, ocotillos quickly grow small leaves and bright red flowers, making them look like nature's fireworks.

Home Sweet Home:

Ocotillos provide food and shelter for birds, insects, and other desert wildlife.

CONGRATULATIONS ON COMPLETING THE JUNIOR EXPLORER BOOKLET!

Scan the QR code to receive your Digital Certificate from The Frontera Land Alliance. We're proud to officially call you a **Junior Explorer!**

SCAN ME!



YOU DID IT!

Write your name here

As we close our journey through Lost Dog Nature Preserve, let's cherish its beauty and the community's effort in its preservation. Voted for protection in 2019, Lost Dog is a vital part of El Paso's natural heritage, offering refuge for diverse plants and wildlife. As Junior Explorers, you're guardians of this treasure. Remember, each visit, each discovery adds to the story of conservation and connection with nature. Keep exploring and learning with The Frontera Land Alliance, and help protect our precious natural world.

On the Lost Dog Trail, you can play detective and spot hidden desert treasures like the sneaky Texas horned lizard!



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