

NPS / Jacob W. Frank

Natural Wonders

Some of the most glorious places on Earth belong to *you*. These amazing sites are all part of our national park system.

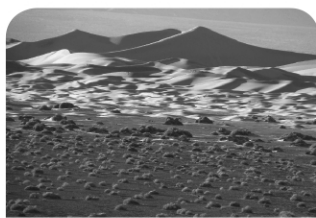
Geography Awareness Week is Nov. 10 through 16 this year. To celebrate, The Mini Page takes you on a tour of a few of America's most beautiful and varied natural sites.

Denali

The highest mountain in North America, Denali, at 20,310 feet, is in Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska. "Denali" means "high one" in the language of the Athabascan native people.

Death Valley

The hottest, driest and lowest spot in North America is in Death Valley National Park in California. It has desert, snow-covered mountains and canyons. Many of its plants cannot be found anywhere else in the world.



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Dry Tortugas

Seven islands made of coral reefs and sand form the Dry Tortugas off the coast of Florida. "Tortugas" is Spanish for "sea



NPS photo

turtles." The islands were discovered by explorer Ponce de Leon in 1513.

Although these islands are surrounded by the sea, explorers called them "dry" because they have no fresh water for drinking.

Assateague Island

Wind and waves are always building up or tearing down the land on Assateague (AS-a-teeg), off the shores of Virginia and Maryland. Storms can change the shoreline in a few hours.



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Assateague is famous for its wild horses. They are the descendants of horses brought over by Colonists in the 1600s.

Channel Islands

Five islands and the surrounding ocean off the California coast make up Channel Islands National Park.

The kelp forest (seen here) in the ocean around these islands provides a home for about 1,000 types of animals and plants. Kelp is a type of large seaweed that grows deep below the surface of the sea.



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Tallgrass Prairie

Tallgrass prairie once stretched from what is now Indiana to Kansas, from Canada to Texas. Most of the remaining prairie is in Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Kansas.

Glacier Bay

Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska was covered by ice just 200 years ago. The bay then was a small five-mile break in a glacier that was 20 miles wide, 100 miles long and 4,000 feet thick in places. Only about one-fourth of that area is still under ice today.



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Resources



On the Web:

- [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov)
- bit.ly/MPNatGeo

At the library:

- "National Parks of the U.S.A." by Kate Siber

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of natural wonders are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



ASSATEAGUE,
CANYON, CORAL,
DENALI, DESERT,
FOREST, GEOGRAPHY,
GLACIER, ISLAND, KELP,
MOUNTAIN, NATIONAL,
NATURAL, PARKS, REEF,
SITES, TALLGRASS,
TORTUGAS, WONDER.

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

Cook's Corner

Polar Bear Smoothie

You'll need:

- 1/2 cup water or coconut water
- 20 to 25 almonds or cashews, or 1/4 cup almond butter

- 1 banana (frozen is best), broken up
- 5 ice cubes



What to do:

1. Put all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Add more ice cubes to make it creamier, if you like. Serves 1.

Adapted from "The Help Yourself Cookbook for Kids" with permission from Andrews McMeel Publishing ([andrewsmcmeel.com](https://www.andrewsmcmeel.com)).

* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. long trip (7) _____
2. bushy-tailed little animal (8) _____
3. fire station leader (5) _____
4. something to fix a hole (5) _____
5. split (6) _____
6. it's used to make bread (5) _____
7. white kind of bear (5) _____

DE	SQU	AR	VI
FL	DI	CHI	PAT
EL	CH	OUR	NEY
EF	JOUR	POL	IRR

Answers: Journey, squirrel, chieft, patch, divide, flour, polar.



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Mini Jokes



George: Where do pianists go for vacation?
Greta: The Florida Keys!

Eco Note



Glaciers form in areas with large amounts of rain and extremely low temperatures. When snow accumulates, it compacts underlying snow layers from previous years into solid ice. Glaciers cover 10% of our world's total area. Glacier and polar ice store more water than all the world's lakes, rivers and the atmosphere combined. When glaciers melt, sea levels rise and seriously affect coastal communities and islands. Rising sea levels can inundate wetlands and other low-lying lands.

adapted from [epa.gov](https://www.epa.gov)

For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles that are related to geography.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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