



# Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the April 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

## A LITTLE ROCKY

Check out the creative ideas for making things with rocks in “Dear Ranger Rick” (page 4) and “Make an Inuksuk” (page 13). Then take students on a search for special rocks of their own. Read *If You Find a Rock* by Peggy Christian (Harcourt, 2000) or *Everybody Needs a Rock* by Byrd Baylor (Aladdin, 1985) to set the scene. Use your rocks for projects or simply enjoy their shapes, textures, and patterns.

## MOTIVATING MASCOTS

On page 22 in “The Buzz,” you can read about how a cat mascot motivated people to ride trains in Japan. Challenge students to invent an animal mascot for something they’d like to inspire people to do. (It doesn’t need to be a live animal.) For instance, how about an earthworm for your school’s recycling program or a frog for a water conservation campaign?

## JUST FOOLING

Read about spaghetti trees in “The Buzz” (page 22). Then invite students to come up with more silly April Fool’s reports based on natural phenomena. (For additional examples, check out the exploding maple trees at [npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4571982](http://npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4571982) and others at [museumofhoaxes.com](http://museumofhoaxes.com).) Compile your group’s reports in an audio or video broadcast or a written newsletter, and then share the fun with families or students in another class. Can you fool them?

## MIGRATION CHASIN’

Have students trace the record-holding flight of a bar-tailed godwit on a globe. (See page 23 in “The Buzz.”) Then find out where some common migratory birds in your area travel to and from. Trace these routes as well, and show students how to use the globe’s scale to estimate the distance each species flies.

## WINNING INVENTIONS

Were your students inspired by the examples of biomimicry in “Nature Did It First” (pages 24-29)? A group called The Biomimicry Institute is sponsoring a contest for students. Classes can submit ideas for inventions modeled after things in nature. For details, contact Sam Stier at [sam@biomimicryinstitute.org](mailto:sam@biomimicryinstitute.org). You can find more resources for teaching about biomimicry, including a new music CD, at [biomimicryinstitute.org](http://biomimicryinstitute.org).

## PLAN A PARK TRIP

Read about Russell’s adventure in “Into the Everglades!” (pages 33-39). Then have students choose a national park they’d like to visit and plan an imaginary trip. How would they get there? What equipment would they need? What would they see and do? Ask them to create a trip log answering these questions.

## WILD MENU WORD SEARCH

Check out the word search on page 40 in the “Fun on the Run” games. Each hidden word is an item that a bear might eat. Take students on a walk around the schoolyard or neighborhood and list all the foods you can find there—foods for any kind of wild creature (acorns, berries, nectar, etc.). Then use the words to make your own word search.





# HUMMERS CONTINUED

Read "Backyard Hummers" (pages 18-21 in the April 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*).  
Then imagine what Zen the black-chinned hummingbird might say next in his journal.

Write some entries for the days after the story ends.

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# COMPARE A HARE

Read about rabbits and hares in "Meet the Hip-Hop Gang" (pages 6-12 in the April 2009 issue of *Ranger Rick*). Where the circles overlap, list things the two animals have in common.

Outside the overlapping area, list things that make them different from each other.

