

THANK YOU
FOR JOURNEYING THROUGH
RIDGEFIELD
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE!

YOUR ADVENTURES HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN.

PLAN YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE
WWW.FWS.GOV/REFUGE/STEIGERWALD-LAKE

Choose Your Own Adventure

Guided Fantasy Hike

Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

Oaks to Wetlands Trail



Our REFUGE IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE WHERE WE CAN SEE REAL HABITATS WHERE WILDLIFE LIVES FREELY.

HOWEVER, IT IS, ALSO, THE PERFECT SETTING FOR AN IMAGINATIVE FANTASY ADVENTURE THROUGH A WORLD UNLIKE OUR OWN!

ON THIS ADVENTURE, YOU MAY FACE CHALLENGES, WITNESS INCREDIBLE PLACES, AND POSSIBLY MEET SOME MAGICAL CREATURES.

THIS BOOKLET IS A GUIDE FOR THE STORY THAT YOU WILL CREATE.

IT IS UP TO YOU TO IMAGINE EVERYTHING ALONG THE WAY AND UNLOCK THE MAGICAL WORLD BEYOND.

THE BOLDED QUESTIONS WILL GUIDE YOU TO IMAGINE THINGS IN DIFFERENT PLACES ON THE HIKE.

*Good Luck
Adventurer*

After YOU MEET THE GRANDMOTHER TREE, YOU REALIZE YOU HAVE BEEN ADVENTURING FOR QUITE A WHILE. YOU STOP TO REST TO GET ENERGY FOR THE JOURNEY BACK.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE, AN ACORN FALLS FROM THE BRANCHES ABOUT YOU AND LANDS IN YOUR HANDS. IT GLOWS A BRIGHT YELLOW. YOU CAN FEEL THAT IT IS FILLED WITH THE MAGIC OF THIS FOREST.

CAN YOU LEAD YOUR ADVENTURING PARTY BACK TO WHERE YOU BEGAN?

DOES ANYTHING HAPPEN ON THE WAY BACK?

DO YOU SEE ANY OF THE FRIENDS YOU MADE?
DOES A DRAGON SWOOP DOWN OVERHEAD?
A CREATURE COME OUT OF THE GROUND UNDER YOU?
YOU FIND OTHER ADVENTURERS?

IF YOU DECIDE TO TAKE A DIFFERENT WAY BACK TO THE START, FLIP BACK TO PAGE 7!

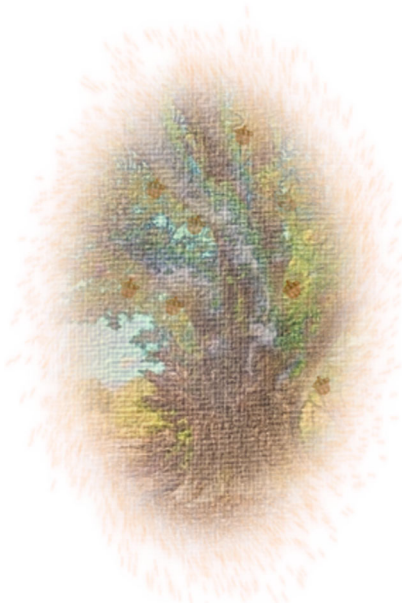
The PATHS MEET ONCE AGAIN.

YOU SWING AROUND THE CORNER AND NOTICE A GIGANTIC, ANCIENT OAK TREE HANGING OVER YOU. YOU SWEAR THAT YOU CAN SEE SMALL SPARKLES OF MAGIC IN ITS BRANCHES ABOVE YOU.

YOU HEAR IN YOUR MIND THE TREE TALK TO YOU, "COME OVER TO ME," IT SAYS.

YOU PLACE YOUR HAND ON THE TREE'S THICK OUTER BARK. IT SAYS, "I AM THE GRANDMOTHER TREE. TELL ME WHATEVER YOU WANT TO KNOW, AND I WILL SHARE MY WISDOM."

WHAT DO YOU ASK HER? WHAT DOES SHE TELL YOU?



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The adventure begins...



At THE BRIDGE THAT CROSSES INTO ANOTHER REALM. THIS IS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS.

BEYOND, LIES A LAND OF MYSTERY, WONDER, AND ENDLESS POSSIBILITY. MAKE SURE YOU ARE PREPARED FOR THIS ADVENTURE! YOU MAY WANT WATER, A SNACK, AND A MAP TO HELP YOU IN THE LANDS AHEAD.

AS YOU CROSS OVER, BEWARE OF THE METAL BEAST THAT SOMETIMES PASSES BENEATH! IT MAY ROAR AND RUN UNDER YOU. THANKFULLY, WE ARE SAFE ABOVE IT, ON THE BRIDGE.

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Welcome

TO RIDGEFIELD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE! THIS IS A MAGICAL PLACE HOME TO CREATURES AND LIFE OF ALL KINDS.

AS YOU COME UP TO THE FIRST LOOKOUT, LOOK AT THE LANDS WHERE YOUR GRAND ADVENTURE AWAITS.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

DRAGONS FLYING OVER THE TOPS OF TREE?
THE LIGHTS OF FAIRIES TWINKLING IN THE TREES?
GIANTS SLEEPING ON THE MOUNTAINS?
TREES GREETING THEIR NEIGHBORS?



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To the right...

As YOU MOVE THROUGH THE FOREST, THE TREES REACH OUT AND TRY TO GIVE YOU A HUG AS YOU PASS BY THEM. BIRDS, FAIRIES, AND THE CHATTERS OF LIFE ECHO IN THE TREETOPS ABOVE YOU.

YOU LOOK UP AND SEE AN ENTIRE VILLAGE WITHIN THE TREES! SMALL WOODEN HOUSES NESTLE IN THE BRANCHES, LINKED TOGETHER WITH BRIDGES. CREATURES WALK AND FLY FROM OAK TREE TO OAK TREE GREETING EACH OTHER AS THEY PASS.

AS YOU WALK, YOU SEE A SONGBIRD AND A FAIRY ARGUING ABOUT WHO GETS TO EAT THE SNOWBERRIES, BLACKBERRIES, AND OSOBERRIES WHEN THEY ARE IN SEASON!

HOW CAN YOU HELP THEM RESOLVE THEIR PROBLEM?

IS SOMETHING ELSE IN THE FOREST THEY COULD EAT?

IS THERE ANY FOOD YOU COULD GIVE THEM?



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To the left...

As YOU PASS BY THE LAKE, YOU NOTICE A CITY WITHIN THE WATER, FILLED WITH CREATURES SWIMMING BETWEEN THEIR HOUSES.

YOU HEAR MUSIC COMING FROM THE WATER AS THE CREATURES PLAY HAPPILY, CELEBRATING THE DAY BEFORE THEM. LARGE BIRDS WITH LONG LEGS WADE AND TRY TO GRAB CRITTERS WHEN THEY LEAST EXPECT IT. FROGS, SALAMANDERS, NEWTS, AND BUGS HIDE IN THE GRASS NEARBY.

SOME OF THE FROGS, SALAMANDERS, AND NEWTS LAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PAVED PATH AHEAD, AWAY FROM THE WATER.

THEY SAY THERE IS A SNAKE GUARDING THE PATH AHEAD, NOT LETTING THEM PASS!

THEY NEED YOUR HELP TO GET THROUGH.

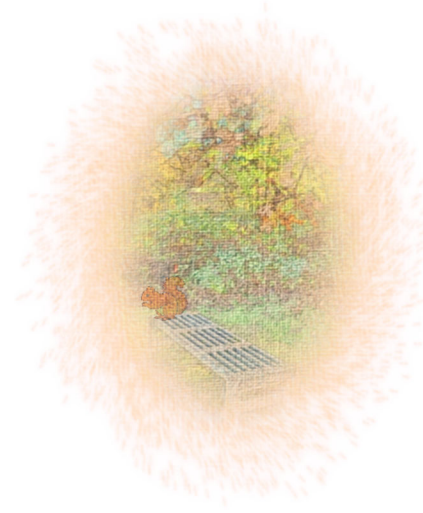
HOW WILL YOU HELP THEM WITH THE SNAKE?

WILL YOU DEFEAT IT IN A HEROIC BATTLE?
USE YOUR WORDS TO CONVINCE IT TO MOVE?

(THEN GO TO PAGE 10)

Now, WE ARE READY TO CONTINUE WITH THE ADVENTURE.

YOU APPROACH A LARGE OAK TREE ON THE LEFT OF THE PATH WITH A BENCH TO THE RIGHT UNDERNEATH ANOTHER TALL OAK TREE.



YOU LOOK TO THE RIGHT AND SEE A SQUIRREL SITTING ON THE BENCH. AS YOU WALK UP, IT STARTS TALKING TO YOU.

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

DOES IT NEED YOU TO GO ON A QUEST FOR IT?
IS IT LOST AND NEED YOU TO TAKE IT HOME?

After TALKING TO THE SQUIRREL, YOU CONTINUE WITH EVEN MORE ENERGY THAN BEFORE!

YOU PASS BY A LARGE WOODEN HOUSE WITH ART ON THE FRONT. YOU TAKE A MOMENT TO MARVEL AT A HOME OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS MAGICAL PLACE.

AS YOU STAND THERE, A COLUMBIAN WHITE-TAILED DEER WALKS OUT OF THE TREES TOWARD YOU. IT IS A BEAUTIFUL ANIMAL WITH LARGE ANTLERS THAT HANG OVER YOUR HEAD.

THIS CREATURE DOES NOT SPEAK A WORD BUT STARTS WALKING DOWN THE PATH AND WANTS YOU TO FOLLOW IT.

WHAT DOES IT SHOW YOU?

A SECRET PATHWAY TO ITS HOME?

A COLLECTION OF BERRIES TO SHARE?

ANOTHER MAGICAL SECRET?



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Once THE DEER SHOWS YOU SOMETHING, YOU CONTINUE THE PATH AHEAD OF YOU.

YOU APPROACH A FORK IN THE PATH AND DECIDE TO GO STRAIGHT ALONG THE PAVED PATH.

BUT THEN, YOU FIND ANOTHER FORK IN THE ROAD! YOU MUST DECIDE WHERE TO GO NEXT.



On your left, A PAVED PATH CARRIES YOU BY A LAKE. YOU NOTICE SOME FROGS, SALAMANDERS, AND NEWTS ALL IN A CIRCLE TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING. (TO PAGE 8)

On your right, A PATH LEADS INTO THE FOREST WITH TREES HANGING OVERHEAD. YOU SEE A SMALL SONGBIRD ARGUING WITH A FAIRY OVER FOOD IN THE FOREST. (TO PAGE 9)



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