



Garden of the Gods
City of Colorado Springs
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
(719) 219-0108

Meet The Park

We look forward to meeting you and your students for our Garden of the Gods Education Program.

Checklist BEFORE you arrive:

- ◆ **Secure your transportation early!** We would not want your field trip cancelled for lack of transportation. Do you need permission slips?
- ◆ **Plan your travel time; indoor facility space is for 45 minutes only. Please be on time.**
- ◆ **Dress for the weather. Students may bring water bottles.**
- ◆ **Please do not pre-group your students** for the guided outdoor walk; we will arrange groups depending on our volunteer numbers.
- ◆ **Advise us in advance of students with special needs (i.e., wheel chair, hearing-impaired, medical issues, etc.).**
- ◆ **Parental leaders are not required. Parents who choose to come will be asked to observe, rather than participate, and will be charged \$2. No siblings or pets, please.**
- ◆ **Payment is due the day of your trip. Please provide cash or check payable to Friends of Garden of the Gods (FOGG). Teachers and paid aides are free. Sorry, we cannot accept credit cards.**

Please note that since we schedule more than one school program on a given day, you should plan to have lunch and other self-guided activities away from the Visitor Center itself. Health code rules do not permit outside food to be brought into the café. If you would like ideas on other areas in the Park suitable for your needs, please check with our staff.

Garden of the Gods Education Program Description: Meet the Park

Goal: To introduce students to the features that make Garden of the Gods Park a special place – emphasizing the relationship between the plants, animals, environment and the people both past and present. Program meets Colorado State Life Science Standard 3.

Program Agenda

- ◆ Program presentation days are Wednesday & Thursday, September through May. Program duration 2 hours: Time slots: **9:15-11:15**, and **11:55-1:55**
- ◆ Bus arrives at the Visitor & Nature Center, (1805 N. 30th St., Co Sp., CO 80904) at the designated time; and park parallel to the sidewalk under the large American flag north of the main entrance. Students unload and walk up the curved ramp entering the Visitor & Nature Center on the east side back door of the second floor. Bus remains at this location. **2 minutes, no bathroom breaks before movie.**
- ◆ Students enter the Visitor & Nature Center and proceed to the theatre to view theater program or slide show, "Wildlife in the Park" (choice is made at registration). Following the movie or slide show is a hands-on activity reinforcing State Life Science Standard 3. **40 minutes.**
- ◆ Return to bus and travel to north main parking lot in the Park. Unload at trail head. **18 minutes. This time can include a bathroom break at the Visitor & Nature Center before guided nature walk.**
- ◆ Staff will assign small groups of students to trained volunteer/staff guides for your guided nature walk in the Garden. **45 minutes.**
- ◆ Return to trail head to reload onto bus, exit from Garden of the Gods Park. **15 minutes.**
- ◆ If you are using **parent drivers**, please have car pools arrive slightly earlier, park on the north side of the building and **bring students to the sidewalk under the large American flag.** When all students have arrived we will escort them into the building at the designated time.



Meet the Park: Preparation for Field Trip

This program is designed for Kindergarten – 3rd grade students. Our introductory discussions focus on the local plants, animals, and their eco-systems. We conclude our program outdoors for the students to experience the Park first-hand. Your visit is motivational as a unit “kick off” or effective as a culminating activity in your instructional plans.



Included is a list of common species found in the Garden. The theme of the Meet the Park program is that the Garden of the Gods is a crossroads of plants and animals from the mountains, foothills and the plains life zones, making the area an especially unique mixture of species.



- ◆ Plains Life Zone: yucca, prickly pear cactus, cottonwood tree, prairie rattlesnake, coyote, and honey bees.
- ◆ Foothills Life Zone: gambel oak, three-leaf sumac, pinyon pine, juniper tree, mule deer, magpie, cottontail rabbit, red fox, black bear and bobcat.
- ◆ Mountain Life Zone: ponderosa pine tree, Douglas fir tree, bighorn sheep, and mountain lion.

In addition to the crossroads of plants and animals, the Garden of the Gods Park has also been a crossroads for many American Indians. Included with this packet is a brief history of the American Indians who have lived in the surrounding area of the Garden of the Gods. During our exploration of the Park we will discuss the Ute people, who for centuries have considered the Garden of the Gods area their winter home. Pikes Peak was once known as the Sun Mountain. The Tabeguache band of Ute is so named because Tabeguache means “the people of Sun Mountain. Remember to let students know that Ute people still live in Colorado and nearby states.



Pre and Post activities could include:

- ◆ **Collect pictures of people, plants and animals of the area**
- ◆ **Complete the “Travel log”¹.**
- ◆ **Have students do artwork or creative writing based on something that impressed them about their experience at the Park.**
- ◆ **Write a thank-you letter to the docent who led their guided walk.²**



Thank you, we had fun learning!

¹ Travel Log sheet is included in packet download

² Send letters to Garden of the Gods Visitor Center
Attn: Bret Tennis
1805 North 30th Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

History of the Garden: Native American Crossroad by Lenore Fleck³

Geography can be a major determinant of history. The sheltering rocks of Garden of the Gods, nestled at the foot of Ute Pass, were a landmark for Native American peoples for centuries during their seasonal travels.

The Ute camped in Garden of the Gods up through the 1870's. Their nomadic culture was adapted to the challenging conditions of the Rocky Mountains – long winters and a short growing season, periodic drought, and poor soil. They moved with the seasons, from the lush higher elevations in the summers to the lower, drier, more sheltered areas in the winter, following the game animals and harvesting wild plants. The Ute were composed of several bands with overlapping ranges of travel.

Unlike many Native American Nations, the Ute have no legends of migration from other regions; tradition holds that they have always lived in the mountains of Colorado and Utah. Sometimes the Ute ventured out onto the plains river courses to hunt buffalo, but the mountains were their stronghold.

The Ute were among the first Native Americans to obtain horses brought by the Spanish, through trade and a result of the Pueblo Indian revolt in New Mexico in 1680. They became excellent horsemen and spread horses northward to the Nez Perce, Arapaho, Cheyenne and others, triggering a transformation in the lifestyles of many groups of American Indians. Horses made travel and hunting much easier. When the Ute moved camp, teepee poles and skins were made into a travois, like a stretcher, which was piled with belongings and pulled behind a horse. The ends of the poles dragged on the ground and helped wear ruts on their trails, such as the Ute Pass west from the Garden of Gods up through Woodland Park and into the South Park hunting grounds.⁴

American Indian Nations of the Plains, first Apache, then Comanche and finally Cheyenne and Arapaho also spent time in the Pikes Peak region. All these groups had their origins elsewhere, but migrated into Colorado as European and American settlement pressed in from the East Coast. Here they found ample game and other resources. The Cheyenne and Arapaho inspired the stereotypical image of the tall Native American horsemen of the Plains.



The Front Range was territory where the Plains people and the Ute came into conflict. From historic times, there are accounts of men of these groups raiding each other to steal horses. Sometimes, on the way up Ute Pass for hunting, they would stop at the natural springs of the Manitou, purportedly to pay tribute to the spirits of the waters. Interestingly, "Manitou" was not the name used by any of these people for their deity; it is a name borrowed by town founders from the poem "Hiawatha" written by Longfellow about the Algonquin.

³ People of the Shining Mountains, by Charles S. Marsh. Pruett Publishing Company 1982.

⁴ The Ute Pass trail is now the portion of Highway 24 from Manitou Springs to Woodland Park, CO.

Travel Log

Garden of the Gods - Meet the Park

Traveler's Name _____

Central Garden Area Walk



1. Name places that animals can make homes in the Park.

2. What kind of animals might live in the holes in the rocks?



3. Why would the holes in the rocks make good homes for some animals?

4. Name a predator animal you might see in the Park.

5. Name a prey animal you might see in the Park.

6. What kind of bird builds a nest with a roof, a front door, and a back door?

7. What happens if people keep walking on the grass and plants growing in the Park?

8. Name things animals use the plants and grass for.

9. What animals might you see if you visited the Park at night?



10. What do we call animals that come out at night?

11. Name animals that you usually do not see in the Park during the winter.

12. Do you see plants growing on the rocks? How did the seeds for those plants get on the rocks?

13. Why have we built the trash cans so strong in the Park?



14. Why is it important to always put your trash in the trash can?

15. On the back of this paper draw your favorite rock, plant, or animal you saw at the Garden of the Gods today.

Travel Log Answer Key

Garden of the Gods – Meet the Park

Central Garden Area Walk

1. Name the places that animals can make homes in the park. **Trees, in and under bushes, holes in the rocks.**
2. What kind of animals might live in the holes in the rocks? **Birds, bats, insects.**
3. Why would the holes in the rocks make good homes for some animals? **They provide protection from predators and the weather.**
4. Name a predator animal you might see in the Park. **Falcons, hawks, coyote, fox, mountain lion, bobcat.**
5. Name a prey animal you might see in the Park. **Mule deer, rabbit, squirrel, chipmunk, birds, lizards**
6. What kind of bird builds a nest with a roof, a front door, and a back door? **Magpie**
7. What happens if people keep walking on the grass and plants growing in the Park? **The plants will die, leaving less habitat for wildlife; the park will wash (erode) away; the park will not be left natural.**
8. Name things animals use plants and grass for. **Food, shelter, homes, nests**
9. What animals might you see if you visited the Park at night? **Bats, skunks, raccoons**
10. What do we call animals that come out at night? **Nocturnal**
11. Name animals that you usually do not see in the Park during the winter. **Bears, snakes, bats, some types of birds**
12. Do you see plants growing on the rocks? How did the seeds for those plants get on the rocks? **Birds and wind**
13. Why have we built the trash cans so strong in the Park? **So bears and other animals can't get into the trash**
14. Why is it important to always put your trash in the trash can? **So you are not littering, and not attracting wild animals, who should find their own natural foods.**