



# NIGHT OWL

**PURPOSE:** To help campers feel comfortable in the out of doors at night and to alleviate any fears they might have about being in the woods when it's dark.

**GROUP:** A group up to about 30 girls could be moved from activity to activity together. Larger groups could set up the activities as stations. Trails between stations may be marked with reflective tape, strips of white sheeting with pieces of aluminum foil crimped to ends, trail signs, compass directions, or follow the North star.

**AREA:** Area around your campsite. One optional activity requires access to water. A few of the activities work better in warm weather when insects are abundant.

**REQUIREMENTS:** Complete at least 6 requirements including the 3 that are starred to get the patch. Consider doing extra activities because the girls enjoy them so much.

## \* 1. SOUNDS OF THE NIGHT (OUTSIDE)

**ACTIVITY:** Good opener! Campers sit quietly in the dark and listen to sounds of the night. Begin by listening to routine camp sounds: squeak of the pump handle, closing of a cabin door, sounds of nearby traffic, footsteps through leaves, etc. Move the group away from tents/cabins. Freeze and listen. When group hears a sound they point their flashlights at it and turn them on. Whatever is making the sound should be caught in the crossbeams.

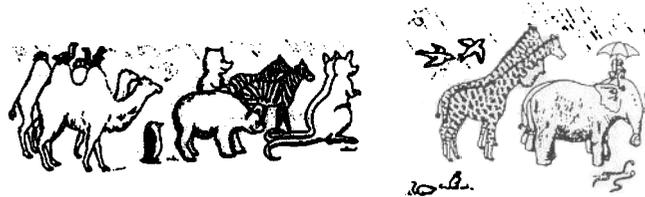
**EQUIPMENT:** Flashlights

**SUPERVISION:** A counselor to point out sounds and answer questions.

## \* 2. SHADOWS

**ACTIVITY:** Begin by pointing out natural shadows around you. Go on to learn more about shadows by having the kids experiment with shadows of their own. Given the proper lighting and a plain wall, kids will be enchanted with their ability to create hand shadows. Hold your hands a few feet from the wall. Adjust your arms and hands until the shadow pictures look the way you want. The further away from the wall, the larger the shadow figures become, but they won't be as sharp. Often the proper light set up already exists from a light shining through a window. Let kids experiment or give them general ideas. For example, have them all try to make a shadow that looks like a bird, butterfly, etc. Try having a scariest monster shadow contest to demystify the "scary" shadows they may see on their wall at night.

**EQUIPMENT:** Strong flashlight, light colored wall (building or tent) or sheet fastened to side of building or strung between two trees. If near camp parking, try using a car's headlights.



### 3. GAME: NOAH'S ARK

**ACTIVITY:** Hand out cards (or whisper a beastly name in the ear of each player). It is important that there be at least two of each species. Give all a few minutes to tune in to their creatures. Then set them loose to act out their animals by sound and movement. Everyone tries to find the creature(s) who are the same species as they are.

**EQUIPMENT:** 2 sets of cards with names and/or pictures of various creatures. Use endangered species, night creatures, mythical beasts, or whatever suits your fancy. Kids can help make up the cards earlier in the day (you don't have to tell them what it's for). If you don't have a chance to make up cards in advance, have a counselor with a list of beastly names whisper assignments to each player.

**SUPERVISION:** Counselor to assign names and to be sure game is played safely. Counselor may also have to pass judgment on whether or not the right "beasts" are grouped together.

### 4. GAME: SIMON SAYS

**ACTIVITY:** Played like the traditional "Simon Says" game where a leader stands in front of the group (all with flashlights) and gives instructions such as turn flashlight on, turn flashlight off, point light at toes, put light under chin and grin, etc. If she precedes the request with "Simon Says" the group does what she says. If she does not precede the request with "Simon Says", the group does not obey her. When about 5 people have been eliminated, the leader should pick her replacement from the remaining group and all should rejoin the game.

**EQUIPMENT:** Flashlights for each participant.

**SUPERVISION:** Counselor to be sure lights are not shined in people's eyes.

### 5. GAME: BLIND EAGLE

**ACTIVITY:** One player, the "eagle", stands blindfolded in the middle of the field, holding the flashlight. (Make sure blindfold does not cover her ears.) An assistant stands next to her. The other players form a large circle around the edge of the field and, on a given signal, begin to stalk toward the eagle as silently as possible. If the eagle hears anything, she aims her flashlight in the direction of the sound, snaps it on and yells, "Freeze!" All players stop immediately. The eagle's assistant looks to see if any players have been caught in the ray of light. If so, they must go back to the edge of the field and start over. When they are in position, the assistant says, "Okay" and the remaining players continue stalking forward. The first one to touch the eagle without being spotlighted is the winner and gets to be the eagle for the next game.

**EQUIPMENT:** Blindfold and a strong flashlight

**SUPERVISION:** Counselor to be sure game is played safely.

## 6. GAME: HIDE AND GO BEEP

**ACTIVITY:** Everyone in the group hides except for the person who is it. Hidden players must "Beep" every thirty seconds (count silently to thirty between beeps). The person who is it must locate them by sound alone.

**EQUIPMENT:** None

**SUPERVISION:** Counselor to be sure game is played safely.

## 7. WHAT INSECTS ARE ATTRACTED TO LIGHT?

**ACTIVITY:** Four participants cover their flashlight lenses with colored cellophane. Each participant watches while shining his flashlight beam on a piece of white paper.

(Activity may not be suitable for cold-weather camping.)

**EQUIPMENT:** Large sheets of white paper, 4 pieces of colored cellophane and 4 rubber bands

**SUPERVISION:** A counselor to give directions and answer questions.

## 8. WHAT WATER CREATURES ARE ATTRACTED TO LIGHT?

**ACTIVITY:** Participants lie on their stomachs on a dock and shine their flashlight beams into the water.

**EQUIPMENT:** Flashlights

**SUPERVISION:** Lifeguard

## 9. STARS

**ACTIVITY:** Locate the Big Dipper, the North Star, and the Little Dipper.

**EQUIPMENT:** Attached handout or other book on constellations.

**SUPERVISION:** Counselor to help identify stars.

## 10. SWEET DREAM BRACELET

**ACTIVITY:** Make a bracelet/anklet to bring sweet dreams

**EQUIPMENT:** See attached handout for supplies and directions.

## \*11. SOUNDS OF THE NIGHT (INSIDE)

**ACTIVITY:** This is a good closer. Campers get ready for bed and when they are all in their sleeping bags have them share a little of what they have learned. Then have them quiet down and listen again to the sounds of the night. Be sure to point out the sounds they might hear during the night: creak of bunk bed as someone gets in and out of it, hum of refrigerator, slamming of car door, squeak of cabin door, footsteps, etc. This is also a good time to point out shadows they can see from their sleeping spot and to show them how the shadows can move. You can sing "Taps" or another soft song if you like, wish them "Goodnight" and hopefully you all can get a full night's sleep!

**EQUIPMENT:** None

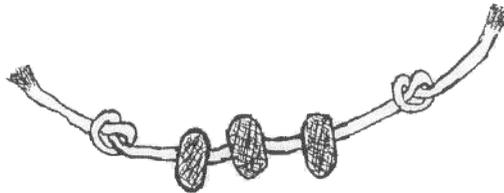
**SUPERVISION:** Counselor to point out sounds.



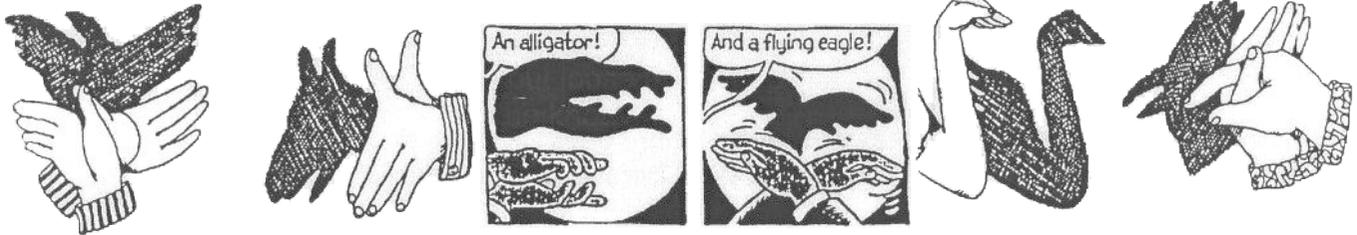


## SWEET DREAM BRACELETS

- Cut a 12 to 18 inch length of leather lacing (which can be bought by the spool). The length will vary somewhat depending on the age/size of the girls and whether it is to be used as a bracelet or anklet. Leather shoestrings may also be used.
- Tie an overhand knot about a third of the way into the lacing. String three pony beads in the middle of the lacing and tie another overhand knot on the other side of the beads to hold them in place. A glow-in-the-dark bead is fun to use for the center bead. Each time an overhand knot is tied, a wish may be made.
- Have a friend tie the leather on to your wrist or ankle (with a square knot) tight enough so it won't fall off but loose enough to allow room for the leather to shrink with water and age. Tie the knot very tightly.
- Making this bracelet brings sweet dreams and keeps bad dreams away. If the bracelet is worn for one year, at least one of the wishes will come true.



## HAND SHADOWS



## NOAH'S ARK

**FARM ANIMALS:** cows, hens, roosters, sheep, horses, geese, ducks, turkeys, pigs, dogs, cats, mice, goats, etc.

**BIRDS:** bobwhite (quails), owls, whippoorwills, hens, roosters, geese, ducks, turkeys, loons, crows, parrots, woodpeckers, chickadees, cuckoos, etc.

**CREATURES OF THE NIGHT:** owls, mosquitoes, frogs, crickets, wolves, skunks, coyotes, bobcats, bats, etc.

**WILD ANIMALS:** lions, bears, wolves, giraffes, camels, elephants, monkeys, bees, hyenas, snakes, hippopotami, rhinoceroses, crocodiles, kangaroos, etc.

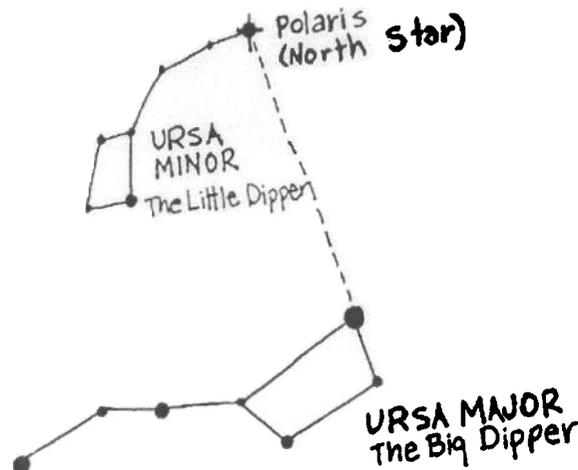


## STAR STUDY



Vikings called it the "lodestar". Navajo Indians called it "the Star That Does Not Move". Chinese knew it as "the Great Imperial Ruler of Heaven". Arabs called it "Al Kiblah" and the early Greeks named it "Phoenice". Today people call it the North Star, Polaris, or the Pole Star. No matter what name is used, most people in the earth's Northern Hemisphere know it is the "most useful star in the heavens." It is important for us to know the North Star because it is situated in the heavens almost directly above our North Pole. You'll always find it in the same place - night after night, hour after hour. For those of us who live in the Northern Hemisphere, the North Star never sets, but is always in our sky.

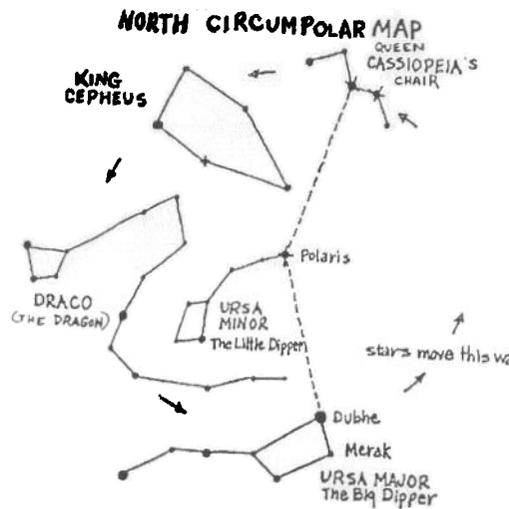
One way to begin star study is to learn to locate the Big Dipper and through its pointers to find the North Star. There are four stars in the bowl of the Big Dipper and three in the curved handle. A line drawn through the outer two stars of the bowl, if extended, would touch the North Star.



The Big Dipper points to the North Star and seems to revolve around it counterclockwise every twenty-three hours and fifty-six minutes. This appearance is caused by the fact that we ourselves on the planet Earth are revolving from west to east. The Big Dipper and the other polar constellations are the night clock of the sailors of the Northern Hemisphere. For though this great polar clock has its hands moving around the wrong way, it gains time with such regularity that anyone who understands it is able to compute exact time by it.

The Little Dipper lies much nearer the North Star than does the Big Dipper. In fact, the North Star itself is the end of the handle of the Little Dipper. The bowl of the Little Dipper is above or below the North Star according to the hour of the evening and the time of the year, for it apparently revolves about the North Star, as does the Big Dipper. The two Dippers open toward each other and as someone has said, "They pour into each other."

The Big Dipper is a part of a constellation called Ursa Major (the Great Bear); and the Little Dipper is the Little Bear, the handle of the dipper being the bear's tail. There is an ancient myth telling the story of the Big and Little Bears. A beautiful mother called Callisto had a son whom she named Arcas. Callisto was so beautiful that she awakened the anger of Juno, who changed her to a bear. When her son grew up he became a hunter, and one day would have killed his transformed mother. Jupiter seeing the danger of this crime caught the two up into the heavens, and set them there as shining stars. But Juno was still vindictive, so she cast a spell, which never allowed these stars to rise and set like other stars, but kept them always moving around and around.



Queen Cassiopeia's Chair is on the opposite side of the North Star. It consists of five brilliant stars that form a W with the top toward Polaris. There is a less brilliant sixth star which finishes out half of the W into a chair seat, making a very uneasy looking throne for a poor queen to sit upon.

King Cepheus is Queen Cassiopeia's husband, and he sits with one foot on the North Star quite near to his royal spouse. Cepheus is not such a shining light in the heavens, as is his wife, for his stars are not so brilliant. Perhaps this is because he was only incidentally put in the skies. Queen Cassiopeia, who was a vain and jealous lady, boasted that she and her daughter Andromeda were far more beautiful than any goddesses that ever were, and thus incurred the wrath of Juno and Jupiter who set the whole family "sky high" and quite out of the way.

Lying between the Big and Little Dippers and extending beyond the latter is a straggling line of stars, which, if connected by a line, make a very satisfactory dragon. Nine stars form his body and three his head, the two brighter ones being the eyes. Draco is best seen in late spring and early summer when it is highest above the northern horizon

Information for this handout came from: *Handbook of Nature Study* by Anna Botsford Comstock; *The Night Sky Book* by Janie Jobb; and *Stars* (a Golden Nature Guide) by Herbert Zim and Robert Baker