

Mission: Explore

JOHN MUIR



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Dear Explorer,

These missions will help you follow in the footsteps of nature conservation's father figure - John Muir. They are for everyone who dares to explore the world with Muir's spirit of adventure and curiosity.

Inside 'Mission:Explore John Muir' you'll find 20 Muir-related missions, and some of Muir's words from over 100 years ago. Your challenge is to complete and record as many missions as you can. You can find plenty of other missions to do on the Mission:Explore website.

By the time you have completed your copy of this e-book you will have tracked, watched, listened, walked, imagined, immersed and even danced your way through wild nature on your doorstep and further afield.

Before you accept any missions in this book complete our Explorer Basic Training (from page 24) and make sure you have permission to carry out your plans.

It's time to explore.

**The Geography Collective
with The John Muir Trust**

MEJMO01

Walk 1000 steps ...

... to enjoy and explore your local natural surroundings. Be extra observant and look in all directions to notice nature.



Muir once walked 1000 miles to help understand and love the variety of nature around him.



MEJMO02

Get windswept

Find a windy place and stay there until you feel good, or your cheeks hurt. Write down how it makes you feel.



"The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

MEJMO03

Everything is connected

Sketch something that is alive, then draw in its connections to other living things. What does it eat and what eats it? Does anything live in or with it? What happens when it dies?



"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe."

MEJMO04

Open a mini National Park

Follow in the footsteps of John Muir - who helped create the world's first National Parks - and create one of your own.

Give someone else a guided tour of its special qualities.



Use string as your boundary.

MEJMO05

Learn to swim like a frog

Watch a frog swim then try and copy it when you go swimming. What other animals can you learn useful skills from?



Much of what John Muir learnt was self-taught by simply watching nature.



"One day's exposure to wilderness is better than cartloads of books."

MEJMO06

Explore weather

Wash up in the rain, play snap with snowflakes, jump in puddles, put on a shadow puppet play in the sunshine or invent other ways to experience weather up close and personal.



Muir climbed a tree in a storm to see what it would be like. Don't do the same - you might end up electrocuted, dead or worse.



"Never before did I enjoy so noble an exhilaration of motion and never before did these noble woods appear so fresh, so joyous."

MEJMO07

Nature's symphony

Make a piece of music inspired by sounds you hear outdoors. Perform it using natural things you find outside.



"Who publishes the sheet-music of the winds or the music of water written in rivers?"

MEJMO08

Act like a Victorian explorer

Walk everywhere carrying only a light blanket, tea, bread and a notebook and pencil.

Choose some plants and animals and make up your own names for them according to what they look like or what they do. Record them below.



MEJMO09

Dance to stay warm

Invent, choreograph and perform a dance to keep you warm on a cold night. You can take inspiration from John Muir – he danced a Highland Fling to keep warm and alert until dawn when trapped on the side of a mountain.

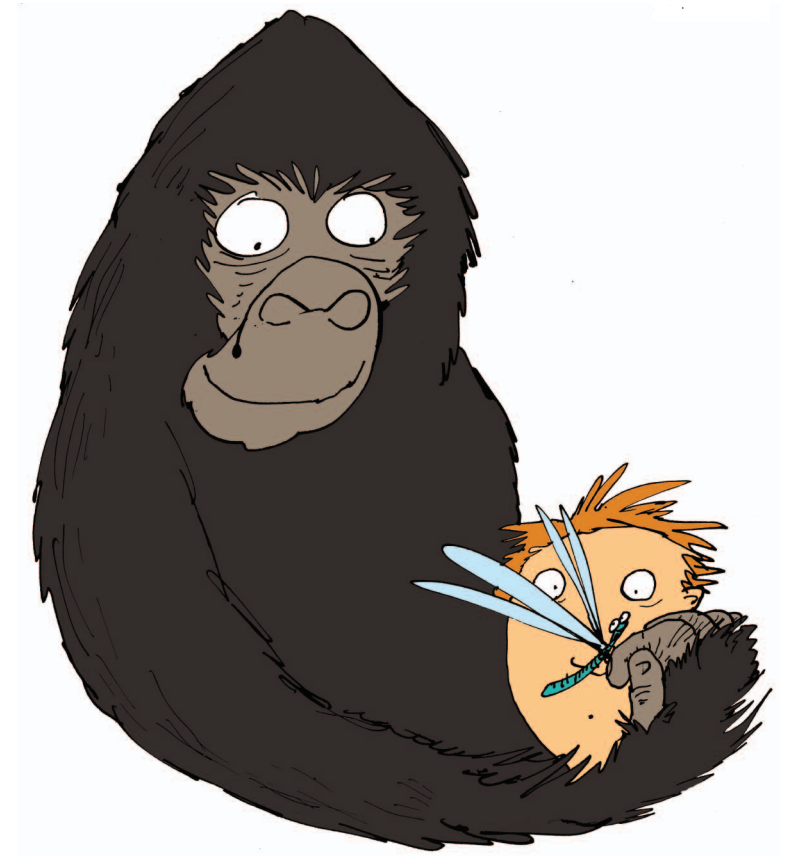


MEJMO10

Special spot

Find a natural place you like. Visit it frequently, over a number of hours, days, or weeks.

How does it change over time? What else visits your special spot?



MEJMO11

Follow a river ...

... from where it starts to where it finishes. Record your exploration's key findings on this timeline.



"Tracing rivers makes the most charming of travels. As the life blood of the landscapes, the best of the wilderness comes to their banks."

MEJMO12

Go barefoot ...

... on a beach, in a field, through mud and in a wood. Compare your tracks with the tracks of other animals you find.



Avoid sharp, pointy or generally nasty things on the ground.



"Native American Indians walk softly and they hurt the landscape hardly more than the birds and squirrels..."

MEJMO13

Go somewhere remote

Find a place where you can see no (or as little as you can) evidence of human activity. Make a map of how you got there.



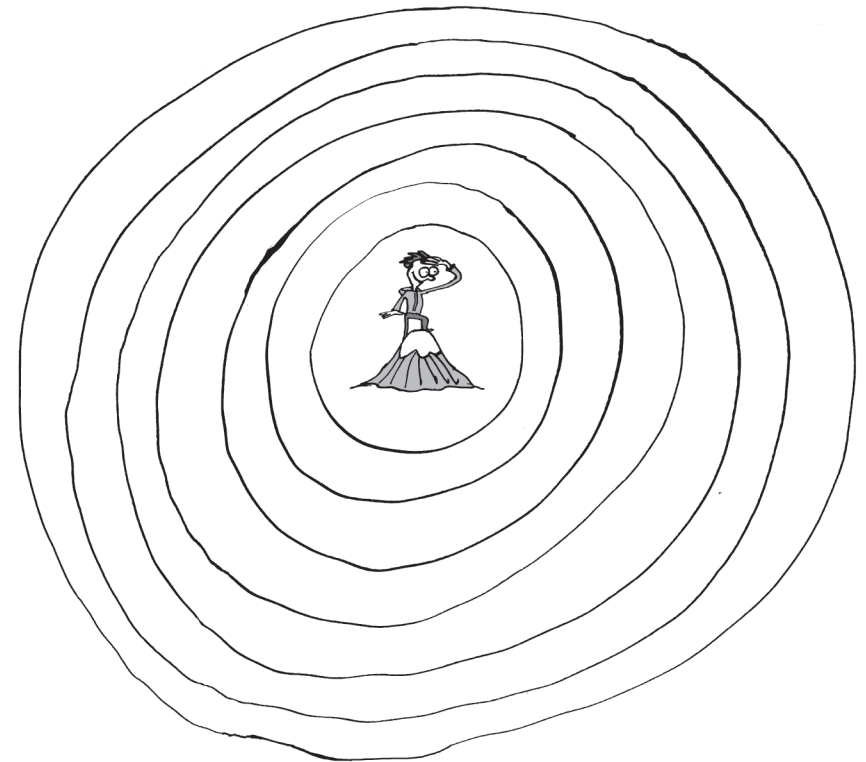
MEJMO14

Stand on top of a mountain

Climb a mountain or other high place. Enjoy the view. How far can you see? What do you recognise?



Try visiting www.nationalparks.gov.uk to find a high place near you.



"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings."

MEJMO15

Have vision

Go outside and draw what you think your surroundings would have looked like 150 years ago (when John Muir was alive) and what it will look like 150 years in the future.



MEJMO16

Make a trail ...

... and lead some blindfolded friends through it.
Ask them to repeat the trail without the blindfold.
Do they notice different things each time?



Make sure your trail is clear of spiky stuff, things to trip over or hairy Highland cows.



MEJMO17

Stand up for nature

Find a plant that is being damaged, hurt or restricted in some way. Write an email on its behalf to someone who might be able to help or a friend. Can you rescue it? Draft your email below.



MEJMO18

Stare at the stars

Lie under the stars, no shelter allowed! What did you see and how did you feel?



Visit www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk for star gazing tips and links.

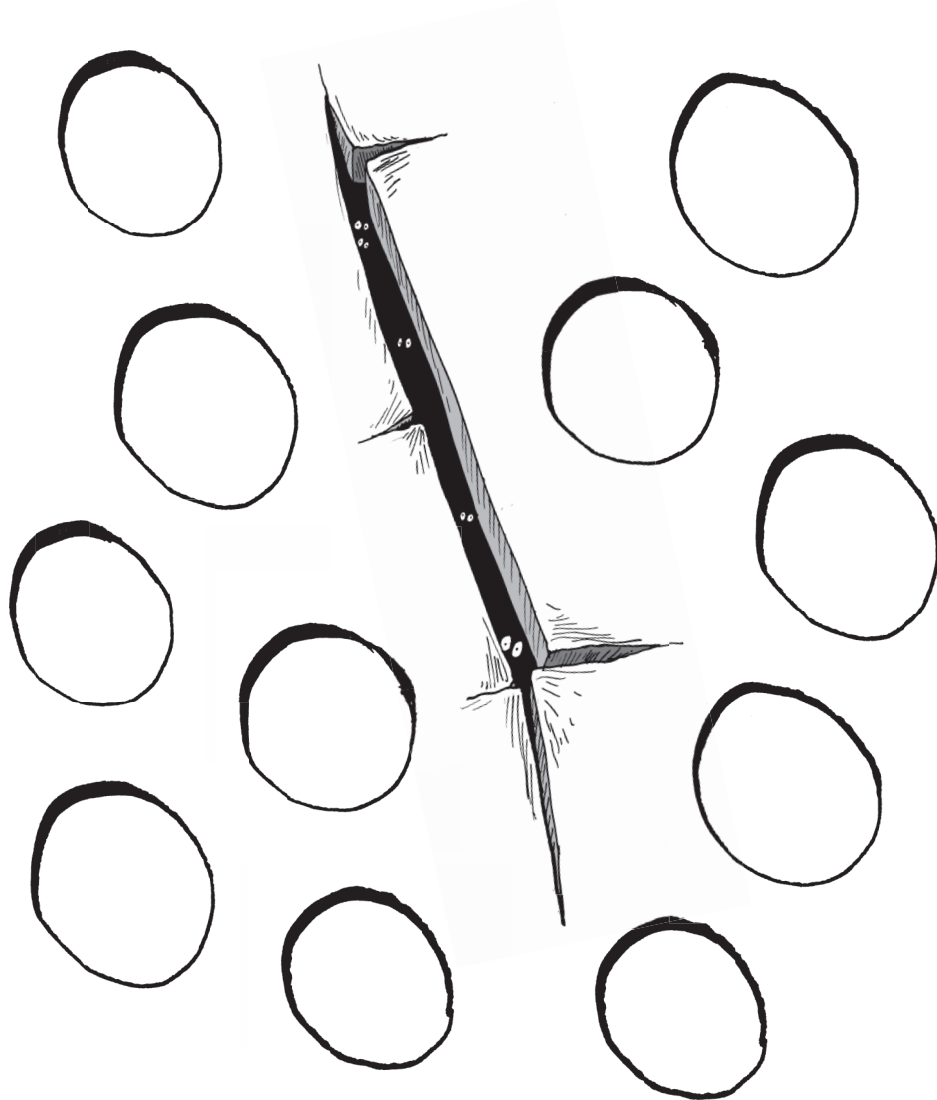


"Nature's sources never fail...the sky its ceiling, the mountains its walls."

MEJMO19

Micro-explore

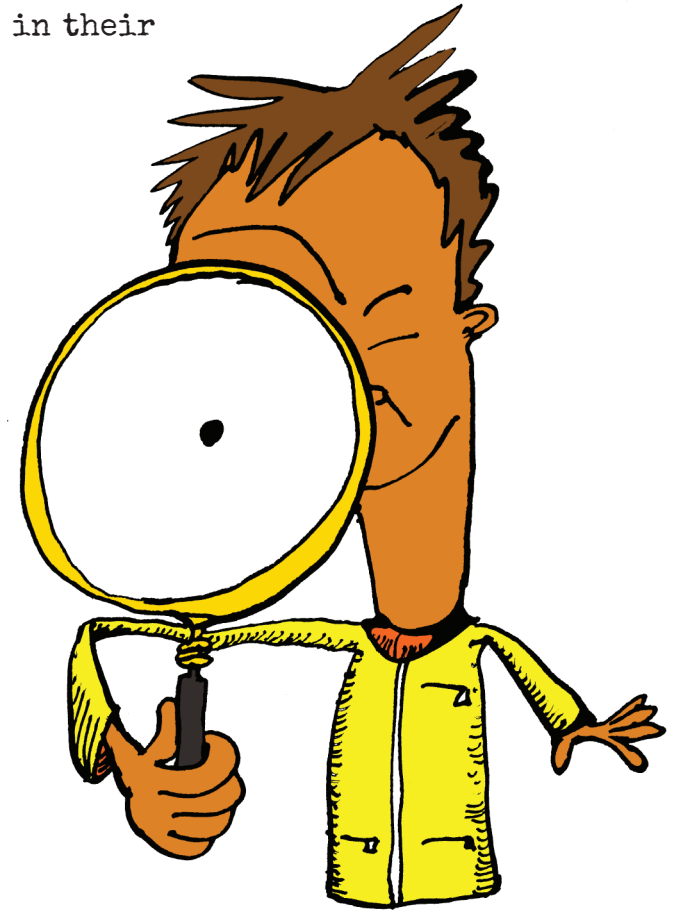
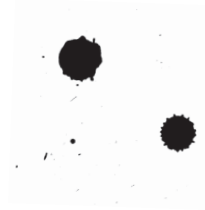
Explore a crack in the pavement, wall or other small place. Fill in this page with tiny sketches of this newly-discovered micro world.



MEJMO20

'Small Five' safari

Choose five small creatures that live close by. Using tracking, stealth and your local knowledge take others on a guided safari to see your 'Small Five' in their natural setting.



"I care to live only to entice people to look at Nature's loveliness."

Basic Training

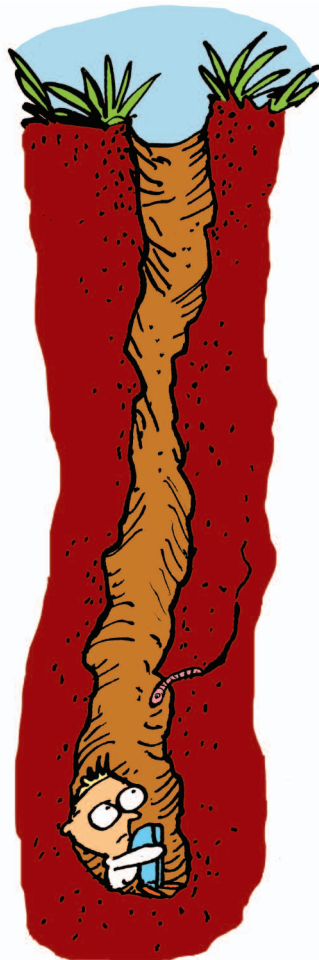
To help you explore nature without falling into a well, freezing/boiling yourself to death or being poisoned, complete this basic training.

Staying safe

You are going to die. This shouldn't come as a shock to you, but we'd prefer it if you died a long time from now and without making too much of a mess. To increase your chances of enjoying successful explorations we've cooked up some basic training for you. Follow these tips and you'll be more likely to come back alive.

Taking risks

Taking sensible risks is a normal part of life. Taking risks can increase your chances of being healthy, interesting and knowledgeable. Do be creative, try new things and risk failing but don't be stupid. Use all your senses to see and avoid dangerous stuff.



Emergency contacts

Make sure you know who to contact in an emergency.

Emergency contact 1:

Emergency contact 2:

Emergency contact 3:

Emergency services: 999

Emergencies

If the mission goes pear-shaped, follow these three steps:

1. Don't panic!
2. Call your emergency contact, tell them what has happened, where you are, and follow their advice.
3. Stay where you are and wait for them to arrive, unless advised otherwise by a teacher or another adult who knows what they are doing.



You and your team

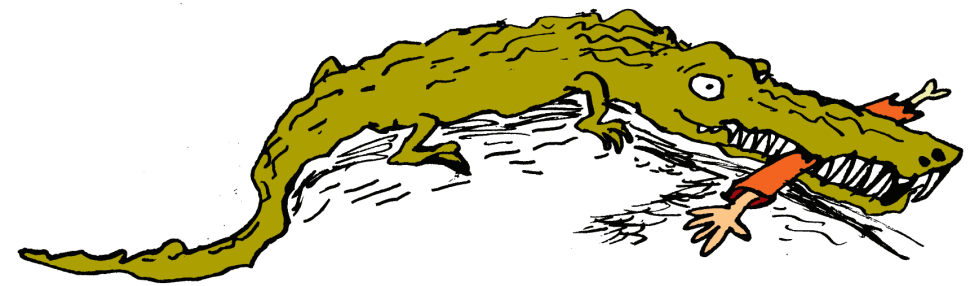
All the best explorers have rules that they never break. Here are some to help you keep your head on:

- Only attempt a mission if you can do it reasonably safely.
- Follow the instructions on warning signs and follow any other rules that you know about.
- Look after your mates – don't be persuaded to take silly risks.
- If you get injured tell someone who knows what to do.
- Never go anywhere with a stranger.
- Don't stick anything in your mouth if you don't know what it is. You don't want to be poisoned and start puking up over everything.
- Cars are the deadliest beasts around. Avoid crossing roads, but if you have to, use a pedestrian crossing and make sure the way is clear.



People, wildlife and places

- Protect and care for all people, animals, plants and places you visit.
- Leave no trace of ever being in a place or completing a mission. Leave everything, from gates and hedges to ruins and parrots, as you find them.
- Dispose of rubbish appropriately or take it home with you.
- Don't touch plants or animals if you don't know them personally. They might bite, scratch, sting or poison you!
- Say hello to the people you meet. They'll like that and you'll like it when they say hello back.
- Be honest and take responsibility if things go wrong. You'll get far more respect.



About John Muir

John Muir was born in Scotland in 1838 and moved to America aged 11, where he died in 1914. As a child he developed a deep love of the natural world. Later on, he became aware of threats to wild places and helped set up National Parks.

Muir was a bit of an all-rounder. He was an explorer and adventurer, a mountain climber, a botanist, a writer, and a dreamer. Muir went on adventures like a 1000 mile walk and tying himself to a tree-top in a storm. He also had a very impressive beard.

Muir might seem a distant historical figure to some, but his message – that we all need to experience, enjoy and care for wild places – is as relevant today as it ever was.

About the John Muir Trust

The John Muir Trust is the UK's leading wild land conservation organisation. It has a vision that:

- Wild places are valued by all members of society
- Wild land is protected throughout the UK

It runs the John Muir Award for free to help people of all ages and backgrounds connect with wild places.

Visit www.jmt.org to find out more.

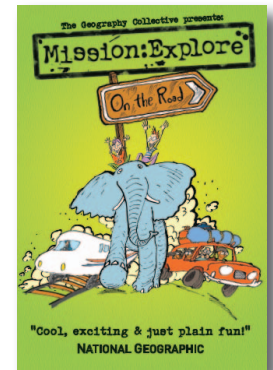
About Mission:Explore



Mission:Explore is a special kind of training for guerrilla geographers, experimental explorers and crafty cooks.

Discover missions through our books and website.

Visit MissionExplore.net for loads more missions, to win points and to earn badges.



About the illustrator



Tom Morgan Jones' work crops up in all manner of places like children's books, the backs of buses, the sides of milk cartons and all over satirical board games. Tom draws with a dip pen, often making an inky mess, which is why he called his website www.inkymess.com.

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