BRINGING THE DARK SKIES INSIDE WITH BUDDY BISON

In 2016, Big Cypress National Preserve was designated an International Dark Sky Place. It was the first national park site east of Colorado and 16th in the country to receive this designation.

Dark Sky Places are sites that preserve exceptional views of the starry skies by making efforts to minimize light pollution, protecting the surrounding area, and promoting tourism. The rangers at Big Cypress National Preserve adapted their outdoor light fixtures and developed light guidelines in order to improve and protect the quality of the night sky view that the preserve provides.

Tourists come from all over to see constellations that they wouldn't normally be able to see due to light pollution. Constellations are groups of stars that form a recognizable pattern. You can recreate the dark skies in your own home by creating flashlight constellations.
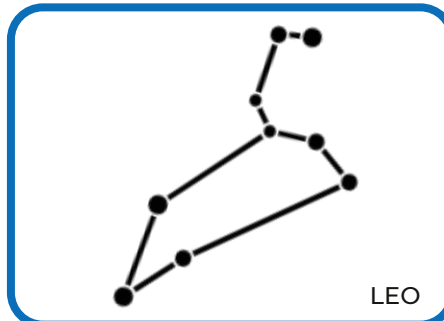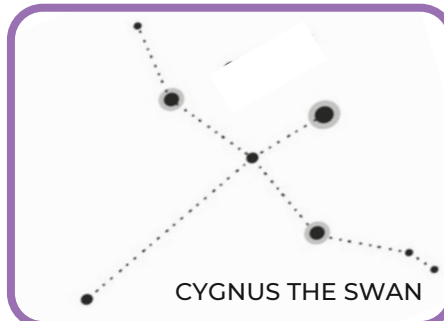
Follow these instructions to make your own.

SUPPLIES
- Black paper or card stock
- Scissors
- Flashlight
- Pencil
- Thumbtack
- Tape (optional)

BUDDY BISON
NATIONAL PARK TRUST

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Unscrew the top of your flashlight and remove the barrel. If your flashlight doesn't come apart skip to step 2.
2. Trace the wide end of the barrel/flashlight onto the card stock/paper using a pencil. This will be your circular constellation disc. You may need to use two layers of paper if your flashlight is bright.
3. Cut the disc(s) out as carefully as possible. Choose one of the constellations on the left. Mark the stars onto your disc.
4. Use a tack or a sharpened pencil to poke holes through the marks you have made.
5. Reassemble your flashlight, placing the disc on top of the barrel before screwing it back together OR tape the disc to the top of your flashlight.
6. Turn on your flashlight and shine it onto the wall in a darkened room.

CYGNUS THE SWAN

LEO

READY FOR MORE? TRY THIS: Research constellations that can be found in your area. Create constellation discs for them OR see if you can spot them in the sky.