

WONDERS OF NATURE

## The Savannas

Savannas are hot, seasonally dry grasslands scattered with shrubs and trees. They mostly occur between a tropical rainforest and a desert biome often bordering a rainforest. They are also known as tropical grasslands as they don't get enough rainfall.

### Where are Savannas located?

Savannas are primarily located in Africa, Madagascar, Australia, South America, India and the Myanmar-Thailand region of South-east Asia.



### How do animals adapt to the Savannas?

The animals living in Savannas adapt to a great deal of variability in the food supply throughout the year. During and after the wet season and during the dry season when there's no food or water they rely on their adaptability techniques. Many savanna animals migrate for better adaptability.



### What animals inhabit the Savannas?

Savannas are inhabited by invertebrates like grasshoppers, termites and beetles to large mammals like lions, leopards, zebras, elephants, giraffes, hippopotamus, hyena, impala, jackal, etc. Birds like pigeon, dove, parrot, finch, wombat, etc. also inhabit the Savannas.



MINE MATTERS

## Gypsum



- Gypsum is a soft mineral composed of hydrated Calcium Sulfate, with the chemical formula  $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ .

- It is a major rock forming mineral

producing the largest mineral crystals on the planet which can dwarf people working in the gypsum mines.

- It is usually white, colourless, or transparent but is also found in shades of red, brown and yellow.

- When heated to 300-350 degrees Fahrenheit, gypsum is converted to Plaster of Paris. This conversion first began in the Montmartre district of Paris.

- In early 18th century, Gypsum was also used as fertiliser and soil conditioner.

- It is also used in foot creams, shampoos and hair products as it is water-soluble.

- Gypsum is a natural insulator and is warm to touch.

## The King's Dream world

MANMADE MARVELS

Neverland Valley Ranch – formerly known as the Sycamore Valley Ranch, was famously known for being home to American entertainer Michael Jackson from 1988-2005. This conceptual personalised park is nothing less than an engineering marvel of recent decades.

### Why was it named Neverland?

It was named Neverland after the fantasy island in the story of Peter Pan – a boy who never grows up. Through Neverland Ranch, Jackson wanted to recreate his childhood dream world that would help him relive his childhood that he missed due to early fame in life.

### Where is it located?

The Ranch is located in Santa Barbara County in California. The King of Pop converted an area of approximately 2,800 acres of rolling terrain into every kid's dreamland. Being one of the most famous

residences of its time, the Ranch was Michael Jackson's sanctuary and his fantasy land.

### How did the Ranch facilitate kid's fantasy concept?

The Ranch is a complete amusement and theme park replete with a zoo, a giant Ferris wheel, merry-go-round, zipper, spider, sea dragon, wave swinger, super slide, dragon wagon kiddie roller coaster and bumper cars. Jackson created this place where he could be a kid again and revive his childhood. A huge mansion with numerous rooms gives a glimpse of the lifestyle of the King of Pop. The rooms housed life-sized toys of superheroes, statues, Star Wars characters, elaborate costumes, a customized Rolls Royce limousine and an iconic collection of music equipments. The Ranch also houses a train and sub-station to move around this huge park.

