

Boy Scouts Merit Badge Program

The Wildlife Learning Center helps scouts to achieve their merit badges and heighten their appreciation of the natural world!

Aspiring Eagle Scouts, be sure to visit “Denali” our rescued Bald Eagle!



The following badge requirements, taken directly from the Boy Scout manual, can be fulfilled at the Center:

Animal Science

1. Find out about three career opportunities in animal science. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

Bird Study

1. Explain the need for bird study and why birds are useful indicators of the quality of the environment.

2. Show that you are familiar with the terms used to describe birds by sketching or tracing a perched bird and then labeling 15 different parts of the bird. Sketch or trace an extended wing and label six types of wing feathers.

Environmental Science

1. Do ONE activity in EACH of the following categories (using the activities in this pamphlet as the basis for planning and carrying out your projects):

a. Ecology

1. Discuss what is an ecosystem. Tell how it is maintained in nature and how it survives.

e. Endangered Species

21 Do research on one species that was endangered or threatened but which has now recovered. Find out how the organism recovered, and what its new status is. Write a 100-word report on the species and discuss it with your counselor.

2. Find out about three career opportunities in environmental science. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

Insect Study

1. Tell how insects are different from all other animals. Show the differences between insects, centipedes, and spiders.
2. Point out and name the main parts of an insect.
3. Describe the characteristics that distinguish the principal families and orders of insects.
4. Compare the life histories of a butterfly and a grasshopper. Tell how they are different.
5. Tell the things that make social insects different from solitary insects.
6. Tell how insects fit in the food chains of other insects, fish, birds, and mammals.

Mammal Study

1. Explain the meaning of “animal,” “invertebrate,” “vertebrate,” and “mammal.” Name three characteristics that distinguish mammals from all other animals.
2. Explain how the animal kingdom is classified. Explain where mammals fit in the classification of animals. Classify three mammals from phylum through species.
- 3c. From study and reading, write a simple history of one nongame mammal that lives in your area. Tell how this mammal lived before its habitat was affected in any way by man. Tell how it reproduces, what it eats, what eats it, and its natural habitat. Describe its dependency upon plants, upon other animals (including man), and how they depend upon it. Tell how it is helpful or harmful to man.
4. Trace two possible food chains of carnivorous mammals from soil through four stages to the mammal.
5. Work with your counselor, select and carry out one project that will influence the numbers of one or more mammals.

Reptile and Amphibian Study

1. Describe the identifying characteristics of six species of reptiles and four species of amphibians found in the United States. For any four of these, make sketches from your own observations or take photographs. Show markings, color patterns, or other characteristics that are important in the identification of each of the four species. Discuss the habits and habitats of all 10 species.
2. Discuss with your merit badge counselor the approximate number of species and general geographic distribution of reptiles and amphibians in the United States. Prepare a list of the most common species found in your local area or state.
3. Describe the main differences between:
 - a. Amphibians and reptiles
 - b. Alligators and crocodiles
 - c. Toads and frogs
 - d. Salamanders and lizards
 - e. Snakes and lizards
4. Explain how reptiles and amphibians are an important component of the natural environment. List four species that are officially protected by the federal government or by the state you live in, and tell why each is protected. List three species of reptiles and three species of amphibians found in your local area that are not protected. Discuss the food habits of all 10 species.
5. Describe how reptiles and amphibians reproduce.
6. From observation, describe how snakes move forward. Describe the functions of the muscles, ribs, and belly plates.
7. Describe in detail six venomous snakes and the one venomous lizard found in the United States. Describe their habits and geographic range. Tell what you should do in case of a bite by a venomous species.

8. Choose a reptile or amphibian that you can observe at a local zoo, aquarium, nature center, or other such exhibit (such as your classroom or school). Study the specimen weekly for a period of three months. At each visit, sketch the specimen in its captive habitat and note any changes in its coloration, shedding of skins, and general habits and behavior. Find out, either from information you locate on your own or by talking to the caretaker, what this species eats and what are its native habitat and home range, preferred climate, average life expectancy, and natural predators. Also identify any human caused threats to its population and any laws that protect the species and its habitat. After the observation period, share what you have learned with your counselor.
9.
 - a. Identify by sight eight species of reptiles or amphibians.
 - cb Using visual aids, give a brief talk to a small group on three different reptiles and amphibians.
10. Tell five superstitions or false beliefs about reptiles and amphibians and give a correct explanation for each. Give seven examples of unusual behavior or other true facts about reptiles and amphibians.

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