



markers along the way, or a relay. (See the *Orienteering* merit badge pamphlet for explanations of cross-country and relay orienteering.) If you want to test the map and compass skills of your Scouts, relay orienteering is better because each boy runs the course by himself.

You will need three topographic maps of the area. Make enough photocopies so that each Scout will have one. Decide on a central point where all runners will start. Then, on each master map, lay out a triangular course with two controls that the Scout must find in the field. (See the *Orienteering* merit badge pamphlet for a sample that shows all three loops, but have only one loop on each of your three master maps.)

If your Scouts are novices at orienteering, each loop might cover only 1,600 meters (about a mile). If they are experienced, it could be longer.

It is essential that the control markers be located accurately on the master maps. If none of your troop's leaders are experienced in orienteering, seek help from an Orienteering merit badge counselor or an orienteering club.

Start the activity with some simple map and compass games.

Conducting the Race. For each patrol, you need at least one compass and a pencil. Each Scout has a photocopied map, with none of the controls marked. On the starting signal, the first Scout in each patrol runs to a judge who has a copy of one of the master maps showing one loop. The Scout marks his map to show the controls for that loop, and then sets off with map and compass to find them.

At each control marker, have a bag of wrapped candy, with different colored wrappers at each one. When a Scout finds

a control, he takes a piece of candy to prove that he found it and then starts for the next control. When he gets back to the start, he gives the compass to the next patrol member. That Scout goes to a judge with a different master map, copies the controls, and sets off. In this way, each patrol will have runners on all three loops at least twice. (If patrols have unequal numbers, some members in smaller patrols will have to run twice.)

The winner is the patrol finishing first, provided that each member has found three pieces of candy.

Note: If your troop has more than three patrols, you may want to lay out more loops.

Nature Lore

A nature study highlight should permit Scouts to work on requirements for the following merit badges: Bird Study, Botany, Environmental Science, Fish and Wildlife Management, Geology, Insect Study, Mammal Study, Nature, Reptile Study, and Weather.

Conservation Project

Check with local conservation authorities to get ideas for an appropriate Good Turn. Here are some possibilities:

- Planting tree seedlings or shrubs to provide food and cover for wildlife.
- Building a check dam, deflector, or cover devices to provide shelter for fish and reduce stream bank erosion.
- Building and setting out nesting boxes for birds and small mammals like squirrels and raccoons.