



Scouts learn quite a lot about nature in the course of camping and hiking. They find out the properties of various trees, how to predict a coming storm, how to identify common birds, and where to find animal tracks.

This month we will try to enhance their knowledge of nature with some systematic learning-by-doing, and also show them how to conserve our nation's natural resources.

The Nature program feature makes most people think of the wilderness. But the natural world is everywhere, even in the heart of a big city. In almost any city park, the troop can find trees, plants, birds, and probably small mammals. So no matter where your troop is located, you can find nature just outside the meeting place door.

The big event will be a nature adventure. It might be a weekend campout or a 1-day outing. Ideally, the site will have a varied ecology—woods, meadows, a pond—because the greatest variety of trees, plants, and wildlife will be found in such a place.

Activities for the nature adventure might include building a nature trail, collecting specimens for a troop nature museum, performing a conservation project, or learning how to identify birds, trees, or other natural phenomena.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts:

- An appreciation of the wonders of nature and possibly a growing feeling of closeness to God.
- An understanding of how pollution affects the natural world and how Scouts can help to stop it.
- A strengthened resolve to do their "duty to country" through good conservation practices.
- Growing self-confidence.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, all Scouts should have met the majority of their basic nature requirements through First Class. Depending on the campout activities, they may also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—Cooking, camping, hiking, nature
- Citizenship—Flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—Patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—Cooking, camping, hiking, nature
- Citizenship—Flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—Leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

- Outdoor—Cooking, camping, nature, hiking
- Patrol/troop participation—Leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges. Older Scouts can concentrate on the Nature and Camping merit badges this month; they should be able to complete all but the last two requirements. Depending on activities during the campout, they may also complete requirements in Cooking, Hiking, Pioneering, Mammals, Geology, Fish and Wildlife Management, Insect Life, Botany, and Wilderness Survival.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents in the program feature this month by: