

Nature

Merit Badge Workbook

Merit badges are earned by doing: reading the pamphlet, practicing the skills, and showing your counselor what you have learned.
This workbook gives you a place to organize your notes and track your progress along the way.
Merit badge counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbook.
You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.
Use the space under each requirement to note what you have done and what you want to talk about, not to write out full answers.
When a requirement says discuss, show, tell, explain, or demonstrate, that is what you must do.
No one may add to or subtract from the official requirements found on scouting.org (Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.8).
Scouting America last updated this badge's requirements page on September 19, 2025.
Requirements change from time to time. Double-check scouting.org before you start.

Scout's name: _____ Unit: _____ Date started: _____

Counselor's name: _____ Phone no.: _____ Email: _____

Links marked "Scouting America resources" are the ones Scouting America shares on its official badge page.
This workbook is unofficial and not endorsed by Scouting America.

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1. Name three ways in which plants are important to animals. Name a plant that is protected in your state or region, and explain why it is at risk.

Scouting America resources: Why Animals Need Plants (video) · 11 Plants That Use Animals to Do Their Dirty Work (website)

Three ways plants are important to animals

Way	How it helps animals

Protected plant in my state or region _____

Why it is at risk

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Name three ways in which animals are important to plants. Name an animal that is protected in your state or region, and explain why it is at risk.

Scouting America resources: How Do Animals Help Plants? (4 Symbiotic Interactions) (website)

Three ways animals are important to plants

Way	How it helps plants

Protected animal in my state or region

Why it is at risk

Requirement 2 completed on ____ counselor initials ____

3. Explain the term "food chain." Give an example of a four-step land food chain and a four-step water food chain.

Scouting America resources: Food Chains and Food Webs (video) · Food Chains in the Everglades (video)

What a food chain is, in my own words

My four-step food chains

Food chain	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Land				
Water				

Requirement 3 completed on ____ counselor initials ____

4. Do ALL the requirements in FIVE of the following fields:

☐ **(a)** Birds. Do ALL of the following:

(1) In the field, identify eight species of birds.

Scouting America resources: How to Identify Birds [TOP 10 BACKYARD BIRDS] (video) · Merlin Bird ID (app)

Eight bird species I identified in the field

Species	Where I saw it	Date

(2) Make and set out a birdhouse OR a feeding station OR a birdbath. List what birds used it during a period of one month.

Scouting America resources: DIY Birdhouse (video) · How to Pick (or Build) the Right Bird Bath for Your Garden (video)
Build a Bird House for Under $5 in Under 5 Minutes (video)

What I made (birdhouse, feeding station or birdbath) _____ Set out on _____

Birds that used it during one month

Week	Birds I saw using it
Week 1	
Week 2	
Week 3	
Week 4	

☐ **(b)** Mammals. Do ALL of the following:

(1) In the field, identify three species of wild mammals.

Scouting America resources: How to Find Mammal Signs (video) · Mammals (website)

Three wild mammals I identified in the field

Species	Where I saw it or its signs	Date

(2) Make plaster casts of the tracks of a wild mammal.

Scouting America resources: How to Make Plaster Casts of an Animal Track (video)
How to Make Your Own Animal Track Cast (video)

Mammal whose tracks I cast _____ Where _____ Date _____

☐ **(c)** Reptiles and Amphibians. Do ALL of the following:

(1) Show that you can recognize the venomous snakes in your area.

Scouting America resources: How to Tell if a Snake Is Venomous (website)
Zoologist Explains Snake Venom - Poisonous vs Venomous (video)

Venomous snakes in my area

Snake	How I recognize it

(2) In the field, identify three species of reptiles or amphibians.

Scouting America resources: Reptiles of the United States (website) · Amphibians of the United States (website)

Three reptiles or amphibians I identified in the field

Species	Where I saw it	Date

(3) Recognize one species of toad or frog by voice; OR identify one reptile or amphibian by eggs, den, burrow, or other signs.

Scouting America resources: Reptiles vs. Amphibians (video) · Frog Sounds: Why They Make Them (Examples) (video)

Species _____ Voice or sign I used _____

☐ **(d)** Insects and Spiders. Do ALL of the following:

(1) Collect and identify either in the field or through photographs 10 species of insects or spiders. Photos may be taken with your own equipment or gathered from other sources.

Scouting America resources: How to Start a Bug Collection (video)

Ten insects or spiders I identified

Species	Collected or photographed	Where and when

(2) Hatch an insect from the pupa or cocoon; OR hatch adults from nymphs; OR keep larvae until they form pupae or cocoons; OR keep a colony of ants or bees through one season.

Scouting America resources: Hatch and Raise Monarch Butterflies (video)

How to Raise an Ant Colony 101 | The Ultimate Guide to Keeping Pet Ants (video) · How to Raise a Caterpillar Into a Butterfly (video)

☐ Hatched an insect from the pupa or cocoon
☐ Hatched adults from nymphs
☐ Kept larvae until they formed pupae or cocoons
☐ Kept a colony of ants or bees through one season

Insect | Started | Finished

What I observed

Date	What I saw

☐ **(e)** Fish. Do ALL of the following:

(1) Identify two species of fish native to your area.

Scouting America resources: Game Fish Identification Reference Guides (website)

Two fish native to my area

Species	Where it lives near me

(2) Collect four kinds of animal food eaten by fish in the wild.

Scouting America resources: What Do Fish Eat? (video)

Four kinds of animal food eaten by fish

Food I collected	Where I found it	Date

☐ **(f)** Mollusks and Crustaceans. Do ALL of the following:

(1) Identify five species of mollusks and crustaceans.

Scouting America resources: All About Mollusks (video) · Crustaceans Facts (video)

Five mollusks and crustaceans I identified

Species	Mollusk or crustacean	Where I saw it

(2) Collect, mount, and label six shells.

Scouting America resources: Organizing My Massive Seashell Collection. Identifying Similar Shells & Comparing Shells to Critters (video) · Organizing a Shell Collection (website)

My six shells

Shell	Where I found it	Mounted and labeled

☐ **(g)** Plants. Do ALL of the following:

(1) In the field, identify 15 species of wild plants.

Scouting America resources: How to Identify Wild Plants - A Guide To Botanical Terms (video)

Fifteen wild plants I identified in the field

Species	Where I saw it	Date

(2) Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Collect and label the seeds of six plants OR the leaves of 12 plants.

Scouting America resources: Science at Play: Preserving Fall Leaves (video) · Harvesting & Saving Seeds! (video)

☐ Seeds of six plants

☐ Leaves of 12 plants

My collected and labeled seeds or leaves

Plant	Where I collected it	Plant	Where I collected it

☐ **(b)** Photograph the seeds of six plants OR the leaves of 12 plants and create a catalog of your photos.

Scouting America resources: Plant Photography for Beginners (video) · How I Shot My First Plant Time-Lapse (video)

☐ Seeds of six plants

☐ Leaves of 12 plants

My photo catalog

Plant	Where I took the photo	Plant	Where I took the photo

☐ **(h)** Soils and Rocks. Do ALL of the following:

(1) Collect and identify three different types of soil that represent soils high in sand, clay and humus.

Scouting America resources: Layers of Soil | Soil Profile Formation (video)

Three types of soil

Soil	Where I collected it	How I identified it
High in sand		
High in clay		
High in humus		

(2) Collect and identify five different types of rocks from your area.

Scouting America resources: Rockhounding 101: What to Look for on Your Next Adventure! (video)
Rock & Mineral Identification | It Can Be Easier Than You Think (video)

Five types of rocks from my area

Rock type	Where I collected it	How I identified it

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Discuss the importance of the Leave No Trace Seven Principles and the Outdoor Code and how they relate to nature. Explain how you have followed the Leave No Trace Seven Principles and the Outdoor Code while in natural areas during field observation, specimen collection, and identification.

Scouting America resources: The Outdoor Code Explained (video) · What is Leave No Trace? (video) · Leave No Trace Basics (video)

Why Leave No Trace and the Outdoor Code matter in nature

How I followed them in natural areas

Activity	What I did
Field observation	
Specimen collection	
Identification	

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

6. Do the following:

(a) Explain what succession is to your counselor.

Scouting America resources: Ecological Succession (video) · Ecological Succession: Change Is Good (video)

Succession in my own words

(b) Visit a natural area (forest, grassland, meadow, water feature) and explain what stage of succession (both plant and animal) the area is in. Talk about what community/succession stages may have been there before and what community/succession stages may replace what you see now. Discuss what disturbances or changes have taken place in the past to create this landscape and what changes may occur in the future to change the landscape further.

Scouting America resources: Ecological Succession-Primary and Secondary (video)

Natural area I visited _____ Date _____

Succession at this area

Topic	What I saw and think
Stage now: plants	
Stage now: animals	
What may have been there before	
What may replace it	
Past disturbances or changes	
Changes that may come	

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

7. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Identify three career opportunities that would use skills and knowledge in Nature. Pick one and research the training, education, certification requirements, experience, and expenses associated with entering the field. Research the prospects for employment, starting salary, advancement opportunities and career goals associated with this career. Discuss what you learned with your counselor and whether you might be interested in this career.

Scouting America resources: 10+ Wildlife biology careers (video) · 12 Environmental Career Paths for Non-Scientists (video) 10+ Outdoor & Nature Job Ideas With NO Degree! (video)

Three careers that use nature skills and knowledge

Career	What the work involves

The career I picked _____

What I learned about it

Topic	What I found
Training, education and certification	
Experience	
Expenses	
Job prospects and starting salary	
Advancement and career goals	

Would I be interested in this career, and why

☐ **(b)** Identify how you might use the skills and knowledge in Nature to pursue a personal hobby. Research the additional training required, expenses, and affiliation with organizations that would help you maximize the enjoyment and benefit you might gain from it. Discuss what you learned with your counselor and share what short-term and long-term goals you might have if you pursued this.

Scouting America resources: Other Hobbies in Your Journal: The Nature Journal Show (video)
15 Hobbies for Animal and Nature Lovers (website)

My nature hobby

What I researched

Topic	What I found
Additional training	
Expenses	
Organizations that could help	

My short-term and long-term goals

Requirement 7 completed on counselor initials

Counselor sign-off

Your counselor signs your blue card or approves the badge in Scoutbook, and your unit records it. This line is for your own records.

Counselor's signature Date completed

Official Scouting America resources

Scouting America resources: Nature merit badge page (requirements and resources) · Nature merit badge pamphlet (free PDF)
All merit badges

Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
Spot an error or a requirement change? Tell me at scoutsmarts.com/contact.
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