

Reptile and Amphibian Study

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. 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.

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

Six reptiles and four amphibians found in the United States

	Species	Identifying characteristics	Habits and habitat
Reptile 1			
Reptile 2			
Reptile 3			
Reptile 4			
Reptile 5			
Reptile 6			
Amphibian 1			
Amphibian 2			
Amphibian 3			
Amphibian 4			

My sketches of four species, showing markings and color patterns (draw here or attach photos)

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Discuss with your 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.

Scouting America resources: Find Amphibian and Reptile Species in Your Area (website)

About how many species live in the United States, and where they are found

Most common species in my local area or state

Species	Reptile or amphibian	Species	Reptile or amphibian

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Describe the main differences between

(a) Amphibians and reptiles

Scouting America resources: Reptiles vs Amphibians: (video) · What's the Difference Between Reptiles and Amphibians? (video)

Main differences

(b) Alligators and crocodiles

Scouting America resources: Alligator or Crocodile - What's the Difference? (video)

Main differences

(c) Toads and frogs

Scouting America resources: Differences Between Frogs & Toads (video) · What Is the Difference Between Frogs and Toads? (video) Frogs and Toads: What's the Difference? (video)

Main differences

(d) Snakes and lizards

Scouting America resources: How Are Snakes Different From Lizards? (video)

Main differences

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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.

Scouting America resources: Ecological Roles of Reptiles and Amphibians (website with videos) Dying for Protection: Amphibians and Reptiles (video) · Search for Endangered Species in Your Area | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (website) Feeding Our Amphibians (video)

How reptiles and amphibians are an important part of the natural environment

Four protected species

Species	Protected by (federal or my state)	Why it is protected	Food habits

Local species that are not protected

	Species	Food habits
Reptile 1		
Reptile 2		
Reptile 3		
Amphibian 1		
Amphibian 2		
Amphibian 3		

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Compare how reptiles reproduce to how amphibians reproduce.

Scouting America resources: Reptile vs Amphibian (video) · Lifecycle of an Amphibian (Frog) (video) · How Lizards Reproduce (video) What Are Oviparous and Viviparous Snakes? (video)

How they reproduce

Reptiles	Amphibians

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

6. From observation, describe how snakes move forward. Describe the functions of the muscles, ribs, and belly plates.

Scouting America resources: How Snakes Move! (They Don't Just Slither!) (video) · How Do Snakes Move? (video)

Snake I observed _____ Where _____ Date _____

How the snake moved forward

Body part	Its function in moving
Muscles	
Ribs	
Belly plates	

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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.

Scouting America resources: The Most VENOMOUS Snakes in the US (video)

Venomous species found in the United States

	Species	Description	Habits	Geographic range
Snake 1				
Snake 2				
Snake 3				
Snake 4				
Snake 5				
Snake 6				
Lizard				

What to do in case of a bite by a venomous species

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

8. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Take custody of one or more reptiles or amphibians in a manner approved by your counselor. Maintain one or more reptiles or amphibians for at least a month. Record food accepted, eating methods, changes in coloration, shedding of skins, and general habits; or keep the eggs of a reptile from the time of laying until hatching; or keep the eggs of an amphibian from the time of laying until their transformation into tadpoles (frogs) or larvae (salamanders). Whichever you choose, keep records of and report to your counselor how you cared for your animal, eggs, or larvae, including lighting, habitat, temperature and humidity maintenance, and any veterinary care requirements. Unless you are the long-term owner, at the conclusion of this study, turn the animal(s) over to another responsible party approved by your counselor.

Scouting America resources: Pet Journaling: Track Your Pet's Needs and Your Time Efficiently (website)

What I cared for (animal, reptile eggs, or amphibian eggs) _____ Species _____

Start date _____ End date _____ Approved by my counselor _____

My care record

Date	Food accepted and eating methods	Changes in coloration and shedding of skins	General habits (or egg and larva changes)

My care record (continued)

Date	Food accepted and eating methods	Changes in coloration and shedding of skins	General habits (or egg and larva changes)

How I cared for my animal, eggs, or larvae

	What I did
Lighting	
Habitat	
Temperature	
Humidity	
Veterinary care requirements	

Turned over to (if I am not the long-term owner) _____ Date _____

☐ **(b)** Choose a reptile or amphibian that you can observe or foster at a local zoo, aquarium, nature center, local rescue, 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. Discuss with your counselor how the animal you observed was cared for to include its housing and habitat, how the lighting, temperature, and humidity were maintained, and any veterinary care requirements. 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.

Species _____ Where I observed it _____

My weekly visits (sketches attached)

Week	Date	Changes in coloration and shedding of skins	General habits and behavior	Sketched
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

My weekly visits (sketches attached) (continued)

Week	Date	Changes in coloration and shedding of skins	General habits and behavior	Sketched
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				

How the animal was cared for

	What I learned
Housing and habitat	
Lighting	
Temperature	
Humidity	
Veterinary care requirements	

What I found out about this species

	What I found out
What it eats	
Native habitat and home range	
Preferred climate	
Average life expectancy	
Natural predators	
Human-caused threats to its population	
Laws that protect the species and its habitat	

Date I shared what I learned with my counselor

Requirement 8 completed on counselor initials

9. Do TWO of the following:

☐ **(a)** Identify at night three kinds of toads or frogs by their voices. Imitate the song of each for your counselor. Stalk each with a flashlight and discover how each sings and from where.

Scouting America resources: Frog Sounds: Why They Make Them (Examples) (video)

Date _____ Where I listened _____

	Toad or frog	What its voice sounds like	How and from where it sings
1			
2			
3			

☐ **(b)** Identify by sight eight species of reptiles or amphibians.

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

Eight species I identified by sight

	Species	Reptile or amphibian	Where I saw it
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

☐ **(c)** Using visual aids, give a brief talk to a small group on three different reptiles and amphibians.

Group _____ Date _____ Visual aids I used _____

My talk

	Reptile or amphibian	Main points
1		
2		
3		

Requirement 9 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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.

Scouting America resources: Debunking Common Reptile and Amphibian Myths & Misconceptions (video)

Five superstitions or false beliefs

	Superstition or false belief	Correct explanation
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Seven unusual behaviors or true facts

	Unusual behavior or true fact
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

Requirement 10 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: Reptile and Amphibian Study merit badge page (requirements and resources)
Reptile and Amphibian Study merit badge pamphlet (free PDF) · All merit badges

Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
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