

## Important information for parents about how to prepare your scout for any merit badge program at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park!



Be sure that you are familiar with the requirements for the merit badge your scout has selected. Some badges can be very demanding and may take considerable time and planning to complete. Some badges are not appropriate for younger scouts.

Most Merit Badges are not designed to be completed in a single session with an instructor, so it is not always possible to walk away with a completed and signed blue card at the end a program. Every badge requires some independent work by your scout. We call this “pre-work” because, if these requirements are performed *prior* to our program, we can complete and sign the merit badge card. Otherwise we will sign partial cards at the completion of our program and will have qualified counselors review assignments on an individual basis at a later date. Note you will have to contact and schedule an appointment with an appropriate staff member to do this. Not all staff members are qualified for all badges.

Merit badges are also supposed to be done with the buddy system. ***We strongly recommend that parents attend the program with your scout especially if he does not have a buddy.*** There is never a fee for adults and you are sure to learn something. The program will not proceed if there are not 2 or more adults present, especially for programs that include hikes. We will attempt to enlist adult volunteers from our center but this is not always possible so ***prepare for the possibility that you may have to stay for the program and not just drop off your scout.*** This will allow the instructor to concentrate more fully on the difficult task of imparting all the required information and assisting the boys individually if necessary, while other adults keep the atmosphere calm and productive.

Be sure your scout is dressed appropriately for being outdoors for some or all of the program time. Packing water and snacks is wise for long programs and programs scheduled in hot weather months.

Lastly, obtaining copies of the scout resource booklet for the merit badge can help prepare your scout working with his counselor and for completing any independent study. Books for the badges can be ordered at your local scouting store or at [www.scoutstuff.org](http://www.scoutstuff.org).

Thank you! And best wishes for success to your scout.

# FISHING MERIT BADGE



**BE PREPARED:** The Fishing Merit Badge program is three hours long, and covers a lot of material, including time fishing. But since we cannot promise that everyone will catch a fish, and because we encourage catch and release fishing in EC Lawrence Park, requirement #9 will be completed after the program (see “Post-Work” below).

We will provide all fishing equipment and bait. Wear closed shoes that will protect your feet and provide good footing on rocks. Wear old clothes that you don’t mind getting muddy. Depending on the weather, a hat, sun glasses, water and bug spray may also come in handy.

## **PRE-WORK:**

If you prepare adequately, we will have time to complete almost all of the requirements and do some fishing. The better your pre-work, the more time we can spend fishing. Please read the badge requirements carefully (see below). Purchasing the Boy Scout Fishing Merit Badge book can help prepare you, but any reading or research you can do on these topics before we meet will help to speed the classroom portions of the badge. Download and print a copy of the workbook pages so you can readily record any pre-work you complete:

- <http://meritbadge.org/wiki/images/2/2e/Fishing.pdf> (note we may use examples different from those presented in the workbook, eg, for requirement #2)
- To help complete requirement #1, review how to treat cuts and scratches, puncture wounds, insect bites, hypothermia, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and sunburn. See [http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/First\\_Aid\\_Skills](http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/First_Aid_Skills) for more information. Use this website to learn how to remove a fishing hook from your arm.
- To make the completion of requirement #4 more efficient, review information about the following knots: clinch, Palomar, turle, blood loop (barrel knot), and double surgeon’s loop. Kudos to you if you bring in a set of completed knots to show your counselor. See if you can learn how and when each knot is used. Some great websites for knots are:
  - <http://boyslife.org/outdoors/outdoorarticles/2482/how-to-tie-basic-fly-fishing-knots/>
  - <http://www.animatedknots.com/knotlist.php?Categ=fishing&LogoImage=LogoGrog.jpg&Website=www.animatedknots.com>
  - <http://www.angelfire.com/ia3/fishing/knots.htm>
- To help complete #6, review the Leave No Trace techniques. Write a brief paragraph explaining the importance of practicing Leave No Trace techniques. (See <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/Resources/Leave%20No%20Trace.aspx> ).
- For requirement #7: The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries regulates fishing in Virginia. Are you old enough to need a license to fish? If so, you want to have that **before** the program! See <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/regulations/> for online information about fishing regulations.

## POST-WORK:



The *easiest* method of completing requirement #9 is to catch *and release* a fish, either during the program or after. And then, go to a market and purchase a fish you will prepare and eat at home. If you make your catch after our program, be sure to snap a photo. Then bring us your photo and describe how you cooked your fish and you'll have completed all the requirements for your badge.

The badge requirements do allow the option to eat a fish that you catch. Deciding whether it is safe or healthy to eat a fish you catch is a decision you should make with your family and should be informed by your knowledge of fish species and of water quality. Information about fishing, water quality, and fish species affected by various forms of pollution is below.

General information about fresh water fishing in Virginia: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/>

General information about saltwater fishing in Virginia: <http://www.mrc.virginia.gov/>

Is the fish good to eat? For a map of local waters and fish advisories:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DEE/PublicHealthToxicology/Advisories/index.htm>

General information about water quality and fishing:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DEE/Waterborne/documents/RecWater.pdf>

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Epidemiology/DEE/publichealthtoxicology/documents/pdf/FAQFishConsumptionAdvisory.pdf>

Some popular local places to go fishing.

Riverbend Park: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend/fishing.htm>

Burke Lake: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/waterbodies/display.asp?id=26&section=fishing>

Occoquan Reservoir: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/waterbodies/display.asp?id=97>

Information about and places to go for trout fishing: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/trout/>

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/trout/delayed-harvest-waters/>

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/troutfishing10.htm>

[http://www.nps.gov/shen/parkmgmt/upload/fishing\\_regulations.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/shen/parkmgmt/upload/fishing_regulations.pdf)

# FISHING MERIT BADGE



## Requirements

1. Do the following:
  - Discuss the prevention of and treatment for the following health concerns that could occur while fishing, including cuts and scratches, puncture wounds, insect bites, hypothermia, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and sunburn.
  - Explain how to remove a hook that has lodged in your arm.
  - Name and explain five safety practices you should always follow while fishing.
2. Discuss the differences between two types of fishing outfits. Point out and identify the parts of several types of rods and reels. Explain how and when each would be used. Review with your counselor how to care for this equipment.
3. Demonstrate the proper use of two different types of fishing equipment.
4. Demonstrate how to tie the following knots: clinch, Palomar, turtle, blood loop (barrel knot), and double surgeon's loop. Explain how and when each knot is used.
5. Name and identify five basic artificial lures and five natural baits and explain how to fish with them. Explain why baitfish are not to be released.
6. Do the following:
  - Explain the importance of practicing Leave No Trace techniques. Discuss the positive effects of Leave No Trace on fishing resources.
  - Discuss the meaning and importance of catch and release. Describe how to properly release a fish safely to the water.
7. Obtain and review the regulations affecting game fishing where you live. Explain why they were adopted and what is accomplished by following them.
8. Explain what good outdoor sportsmanlike behavior is and how it relates to anglers. Tell how the Outdoor Code of the Boy Scouts of America relates to a fishing sports enthusiast, including the aspects of littering, trespassing, courteous behavior, and obeying fishing regulations.
9. Catch at least one fish. If regulations and health concerns permit, clean and cook a fish you have caught. Otherwise, acquire a fish and cook it.

# FISHING MERIT BADGE





## More Resources

### Books

- Baron, Frank P. *What Fish Don't Want You to Know: An Insider's Guide to Freshwater Fishing*. Ragged Mountain Press, 2004.
- Bashline, Sylvia. *The New Cleaning & Cooking Fish: The Complete Guide to Preparing Delicious Freshwater Fish*. Creative Publishing International, 1999.
- Circle, Homer. *Bass Wisdom*. The Lyons Press, 2000.
- Earnhardt, Tom. *Boats for Fishermen*. The Lyons Press, 2001.
- Kaminsky, Peter. *Fishing for Dummies*. IDG Books Worldwide, 1997.
- Maas, Dave. *Kids Gone Fishin'*. Creative Publishing International, 2001.
- National Audubon Society. *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Fishes*. Knopf, 2002.
- Pfeiffer, C. Boyd. *The Complete Book of Tackle Making*. The Lyons Press, 1999.
- Rosko, Milt. *The Complete Book of Saltwater Fishing*. Krause Publications, 2001.
- Schultz, Ken. *Ken Schultz's Fishing Encyclopedia: Worldwide Angling Guide*. IDG Books Worldwide, 2000.
- Sousa, Robert J. *Learn to Fly Fish in 24 Hours*. Ragged Mountain Press, 2006.
- Vick, Noel. *Fishing on Ice*. Human Kinetics Publishers, 1999.
- Wilson, Geoff. *Geoff Wilson's Complete Book of Fishing Knots and Rigs*. Australian Fishing Network, 2006.

### Periodicals

**Field and Stream and Outdoor Life magazines** Web site: <http://fieldandstream.com>  or <http://outdoorlife.com> 

### Organizations and Web Sites

#### American Sportfishing Association and Future Fisherman Foundation

Web sites: <http://www.asafishing.org>  and <http://www.futurefisherman.org> 


#### The Catch and Release Foundation

Web site: <http://www.catchandreleasefound.org> 

#### Izaak Walton League of America

Web site: <http://www.iwla.org> 

#### Trout Unlimited

Web site: <http://www.tu.org> 

#### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Web site: <http://www.fws.gov> 