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

Please bring your blue card (it should be signed by your scout master). We do not have blue cards!

Be sure that you are familiar with the requirements for the merit badge your scout has selected. Some badges can be are 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 initial the specific requirements covered at the completion of our program and will have qualified counselors review the unmet requirements on an individual basis when your scout has completed them. 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.

Please ***prepare for the possibility that you may have to stay for the program and not just drop off your scout*.** We encourage that one or more adults remain. There is no a fee for adults and you are sure to learn something. 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. It is also in keeping with the scouting guidelines for youth protection.

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

Fishing: This is **one 3-hour** class. **Poles, tackle, and bait provided**.

Pre-Work (or Post-Work):

Part of Requirement #9. Acquire a fish and cook it. We will, with fishermen's skill & some luck, catch & release a fish, but the program does not include cooking. Cook a fish at home and bring us a photo.

Spend more time fishing! Review requirements 1, 4, 6, & 7 come prepared!

Keep reading for more details ….

FISHING MERIT BADGE

BE PREPARED: The Fishing Merit Badge program is three hours long, and covers a lot of material, including time fishing. **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. 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).

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.

See http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/First_Aid_Skills for information. On first aid and how to remove a fishing hook from your arm.

4. To make the completion of requirement #4 more efficient, review how to make the following knots: **improved** 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! Extra kudos if you know who the turle (not turtle) knot was named after. 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
- http://www.netknots.com/fishing_knots/turle-knot]

6. Do the following:
    - Explain the importance of practicing Leave No Trace techniques. Discuss the positive effects of Leave No Trace on fishing resources.

7. Obtain and review the regulations affecting game fishing where you live. Explain why they were adopted and what is accomplished by following them.

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.

9. **Catch at least one fish and identify it.** If regulations and health concerns permit, clean and cook a fish you have caught. **Otherwise, acquire a fish and cook it**. [With luck, everyone will catch and release a fish. We can't promise that fish caught here will meet everyone's standards of "edible," so the cooking portion will be completed outside the program.]

FISHING MERIT BADGE

Requirements covered in our program:

1. Do the following:
    - 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.

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 and identify it. [With skill and luck.]

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-park/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

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

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