



## Fishing Merit Badge at Riverbend Park

Welcome to the Fishing Merit Badge program at Riverbend Park. The program is held at the Riverbend Visitor Center located at 8700 Potomac Hills Street in Great Falls unless otherwise indicated by park staff.

### **Important general Merit Badge information for parents:**

Be sure that you are familiar with the requirements for the merit badge your scout has selected. Some badges may take considerable time and planning to complete and may not be appropriate for younger scouts. Blue cards must be signed by your Troop Leader prior to attending the merit badge class. Park staff will not sign off on any blue cards missing this signature.

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 of a program. Every badge requires some independent work by your scout.

Please be prepared 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 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. Additionally, adults may help keep the atmosphere calm and productive. It is also in keeping with the scouting guidelines for youth protection.

### **Below is the recommended homework to be completed before the program:**

Merit badge worksheets may be downloaded from [meritbadge.org](http://meritbadge.org) and brought to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

1. Do the following:

- a. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in fishing activities, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.

- b. 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.
  - c. Explain how to remove a hook that has lodged in your arm.
  - d. Name and explain five safety practices you should always follow while fishing.
6. Do the following:
- a. Explain the importance of practicing Leave No Trace techniques. Discuss the positive effects of [Leave No Trace](#) on fishing resources.
  - b. 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 you accomplish 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 and identify it. If regulations and health concerns permit, **clean and cook a fish you have caught**. Otherwise, acquire a fish and cook it.
- \*\*\*\*Please provide photographic or video evidence of cleaning and cooking. We are unable to complete this element of the badge due to insufficient cooking facilities\*\*\*\*

**Requirements to be demonstrated, practiced and assessed during the class:**

- 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: improved clinch, Palomar, turle, 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 bait fish are not to be released.
- 9. Catch at least one fish and identify it.

**\*\*\*\*\* We will be fishing during the class, all equipment provided by Riverbend \*\*\*\*\***

**What to bring to the program:**

- Merit Badge Worksheet Packet
- Bring a pencil and pen.
- Bring your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can bring completed homework in at a later date for sign-off.
- Come prepared to discuss and present your homework. As we move from one topic to the next during class, scouts will be asked to present homework elements completed. It will be more important to prove that you have understood a requirement orally rather than just presenting written information.
- Bring your blue card. (Riverbend does not have blue cards.)
- Drinking Water, Snack or Money to purchase items at the Visitor's Center
- Sunscreen, Hat, and Sunglasses
- Synthetic clothing, quick drying clothing,
- Rain Jacket
- Dry clothing to change into after the class
- Teva, Chaco, or Keen style sandals, or old tennis shoes, NO FLIP FLOPS

**Work completed after the program:**

During the program, the merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion or meet the required skills in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs or video of your scout doing the element of the requirement will be sufficient evidence, unless otherwise stated.

If your scout needs blue card sign-off or further skill/requirement assessment after the class date, please call 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor or email the counselor directly.

We're looking forward to working with your scout.

Riverbend Park  
703-759-9018  
8700 Potomac Hills Street  
Great Falls, VA 22066  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/>