

**Nature Merit Badge Requirements**  
**Important information about how to prepare for any merit badge program at Huntley Meadows Park!**

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Please bring to class:

- **Pre-Work – listed in BOLD and red**
- Blue card
- Pen
- Snack/lunch and a drink
- Appropriate clothing to go outside to observe the weather

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Parents, please review the content of a merit badge prior to registering your scout: some badges may be challenging for younger scouts. Also, the class discussions are more interesting if scouts review *all* the requirements for the badge before the program. The chances of your scout completing all the work for the badge increases dramatically when he is properly motivated and the badge content is age-appropriate.

Merit badges are not designed to be completed in a day and require independent work on the part of the scout outside of the workshop. We call this PREWORK. We suggest this is done prior to the badge program date, but we realize this is not always practical or possible, in these cases we will sign partial cards and accept the assignments after the program.

Merit badge programs can be from 3 to 5 hours long, so be sure to pack a snack and water for your scout and that he is dressed appropriately for being outdoors for some or all of the program.

Though not required, Scout workbooks are very useful and we prefer that scouts use the workbook during the program. Workbooks can be found at:  
[http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit\\_Badge\\_Worksheets](http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit_Badge_Worksheets) .

About blue cards: WE DO NOT HAVE BLUE CARDS. Please bring an *authorized* blue card with you to the program. Your troop scout master should be consulted prior to attending any merit badge program and he or she will sign the front of the card.

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.
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.
3. Explain the term "food chain." Give an example of a four-step land food chain and a four-step water food chain.
4. Do all the requirements in FIVE of the following fields:

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As Pre-Work do ONE of the following sections of requirement 4:

- Birds\*
- Reptiles and Amphibians
- Insects and Spiders
- Mollusks and Crustaceans

\*in class at Huntley meadows we will do Birds (1) ONLY, if the scout wishes to do Birds as pre-work only do part (2).

- (a) Birds
  - (1) In the field, identify eight species of birds. (completed during class)
  - **(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.\* (pre-work)**
- (b) Mammals
  - (1) In the field, identify three species of wild mammals.
  - (2) Make plaster casts of the tracks of a wild mammal.
- **(c) Reptiles and Amphibians**
  - **(1) Show that you can recognize the venomous snakes in your area.**
  - **(2) In the field, identify three species of reptiles or amphibians.**
  - **(3) Recognize one species of toad or frog by voice; OR identify one reptile or amphibian by eggs, den, burrow, or other signs.**
- **(d) Insects and Spiders**
  - **(1) Collect and identify either in the field or through photographs 10 species of insects or spiders.**
  - **(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.**
- (e) Fish
  - (1) Identify two species of fish native to your area.
  - (2) Collect four kinds of animal food eaten by fish in the wild.
- **(f) Mollusks and Crustateans**
  - **(1) Identify five species of mollusks and crustaceans.**
  - **(2) Collect, mount, and label six shells.**
- (g) Plants
  - (1) In the field, identify 15 species of wild plants.
  - (2) Do ONE of the following options:
    - (a) Collect and label the seeds of six plants OR the leaves of 12 plants.
    - (b) Photograph the seeds of six plants OR the leaves of 12 plants and create a catalog of your photos.
- (h) Soils and Rocks
  - (1) Collect and identify three different types of soil that represent soils high in sand, clay and humus.
  - (2) Collect and identify five different types of rocks from your area.

5. Discuss the principle of Leave No Trace and how it relates to nature.

6. Do the following:

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- (a) Explain what succession is to your counselor.
- (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.

### **Huntley Meadows Park**

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