



BIRD STUDY

AUGUST HAC - MERIT BADGE FOR SCOUTS BSA

MERIT BADGE TRACKING



The tracking tool below is simply for your own tracking of completion of requirements.

Scouts are encouraged to find a local merit badge counselor to meet, discuss, and sign off on completion of the merit badge, however the HomeScouting Adventure Club will offer limited counseling sessions for Scouts needing a counselor.

Requirement	Completed?
1. Explain the need for bird study and why birds are useful indicators of the quality of the environment. Describe how birds are part of the ecosystem.	
2. Show that you are familiar with the terms used to describe birds by sketching or tracing a perched bird and then labeling 15 different parts of the bird. Sketch or trace an extended wing and label six types of wing feathers.	
3. Demonstrate that you know how to properly use and care for binoculars, a spotting scope, or a monocular. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explain what the specification numbers mean. <input type="checkbox"/> Show how to adjust the eyepiece and how to focus for proper viewing. <input type="checkbox"/> Show how to properly care for and clean the lenses. <input type="checkbox"/> Describe when and where each type of viewing device would be most effective. 	
4. Demonstrate that you know how to use a bird field guide. Show that you are able to understand a range map by locating in the book and pointing out the wintering range, the breeding range, and/or the year-round range of one species of each of the following birds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seabird <input type="checkbox"/> Plover <input type="checkbox"/> Falcon or hawk <input type="checkbox"/> Warbler or vireo <input type="checkbox"/> Heron or egret <input type="checkbox"/> Sparrow <input type="checkbox"/> Nonnative bird (introduced to North America from a foreign country since 1800) 	
5. Observe and be able to identify at least 20 species of wild birds. Prepare a field notebook, making a separate entry for each species, and record the following information from your field observations and other references. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Note the date and time. <input type="checkbox"/> Note the location and habitat. <input type="checkbox"/> Describe the bird's main feeding habitat & list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat. <input type="checkbox"/> Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area. 	
6. Describe how certain orders of birds are uniquely adapted to a specific habitat. In your description, include characteristics such as the size and shape of the following: Beak, Body, Leg and foot, Feathers/plumage	
7. Explain the function of a bird's song. Be able to identify five of the 20 species in your field notebook by song or call alone. For each of these five species, enter a description of the song or call, and note the behavior of the bird making the sound. Note why you think the bird was making the call or song that you heard.	

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Requirement	Completed?
8. Do ONE of the following:	
A. Go on a field trip with a local club or with others who are knowledgeable about birds in your area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Keep a list or fill out a checklist of all the birds your group observed during the field trip.<input type="checkbox"/> Tell your counselor which birds your group saw and why some species were common and some were present in small numbers.<input type="checkbox"/> Tell your counselor what makes the area you visited good for finding birds.	
B. By using a public library, the internet, or contacting the National Audubon Society, find the name and location of the Christmas Bird Count nearest your home and obtain the results of a recent count. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Explain what kinds of information are collected during the annual event.<input type="checkbox"/> Tell your counselor which species are most common & explain why these birds are abundant.<input type="checkbox"/> Tell your counselor which species are uncommon, and explain why these were present in small numbers. If the number of birds of these species is decreasing, explain why, and what, if anything, could be done to reverse their decline.	
9. Do ONE of the following. For the option you choose, describe what birds you hope to attract, and why. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Build a bird feeder and put it in an appropriate place in your yard or another location.<input type="checkbox"/> Build a birdbath and put it in an appropriate place.<input type="checkbox"/> Build a backyard sanctuary for birds by planting trees and shrubs for food and cover.	
10. Do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Explain the differences between extinct, endangered, and threatened.<input type="checkbox"/> Identify a bird species that is on the endangered or threatened list. Explain what caused their decline. Discuss with what can be done to reverse this trend and what can be done to help remove the species from the endangered or threatened list.	
11. Identify three career opportunities connected to the study of birds. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Describe if this profession might interest you.	



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MERIT BADGE WORKSHEET



Through exploring The Trail inside the ClubHouse for the HomeScouting Adventure Club, complete this worksheet to demonstrate your knowledge of Bird Study. This worksheet will not be turned in and for your own use to demonstrate knowledge.

Explain the need for bird study and why birds are useful indicators of the quality of the environment.

Describe how birds are part of the ecosystem.

Show that you are familiar with the terms used to describe birds by sketching or tracing a perched bird and then labeling 15 different parts of the bird, below.

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Sketch or trace an extended wing and label types of wing feathers.

BINOCULAR KNOWLEDGE

- Demonstrate that you know how to properly use and care for binoculars, a spotting scope, or a monocular.
- Show how to adjust the eyepiece and how to focus for proper viewing.
- Show how to properly care for and clean the lenses.

Explain what the specification numbers mean on binoculars, a spotting scope, or a monocular.

Describe when and where each type of viewing device would be most effective.

- Demonstrate that you know how to use a bird field guide.

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Show that you are able to understand a range map by locating in the book and pointing out the wintering range, the breeding range, and/or the year-round range of one species of each of the following types of birds:

Type	Species Chosen	Wintering Range	Breeding Range	Year-Round Range
Petrel				
Plover				
Falcon or Hawk				
Warbler or Vireo				
Heron or Egret				
Sparrow				
Non-Native Bird				

Observe and be able to identify at least 20 species of wild birds. Prepare a field notebook, making a separate entry for each species, and record the following information from your field observations and other references.

- Note the date and time.
- Note the location and habitat.
- Describe the bird's main feeding habitat & list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.
- Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Use the template on the last page of this worksheet for your entries. You may also use a notebook or sheets of blank paper.

TIP: add photos of your birds to your field notebook!

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Describe how certain orders of birds are uniquely adapted to a specific habitat. In your description, include characteristics such as the size and shape of the following: Beak, Body, Leg and foot, Feathers/plumage.

Explain the function of a bird's song.

Be able to identify five of the 20 species in your field notebook by song or call alone. For each of these five species enter a description of the song or call, and note the behavior of the bird making the sound. Note why you think the bird was making the call or song that you heard.

Species #1: _____

Description: _____

Behavior: _____

Why? _____

Species #2: _____

Description: _____

Behavior: _____

Why? _____

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Species #3: _____

Description: _____

Behavior: _____

Why? _____

Species #4: _____

Description: _____

Behavior: _____

Why? _____

Species #5: _____

Description: _____

Behavior: _____

Why? _____

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Do ONE of the following:

- Go on a field trip with a local club or with others who are knowledgeable about birds in your area.
- By using a public library, the internet, or contacting the National Audubon Society, find the name and location of the Christmas Bird Count nearest your home and obtain the results of a recent count.

Bird Field Trip Notes

Keep a list or fill out a checklist of all the birds your group observed during the field trip.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Why were some species common and some were present in small numbers at this specific field trip location?

What makes the area you visited good for finding birds?

Christmas Bird Count

Explain what kinds of information are collected during the annual event.

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Christmas Bird Count (continued)

Which species are the most common in your area and explain why these birds are abundant.

Which species are uncommon? Explain why these were present in small numbers. If the number of birds of these species is decreasing, explain why, and what, if anything, could be done to reverse their decline.

Species	Decreasing? If so, why?	What could be done?

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Do ONE of the following. For the option you choose, describe what birds you hope to attract, and why.

- Build a bird feeder and put it in an appropriate place in your yard or another location.
- Build a birdbath and put it in an appropriate place.
- Build a backyard sanctuary for birds by planting trees and shrubs for food and cover.

Explain the differences between extinct, endangered, and threatened.

Threatened: _____

Extinct: _____

Endangered: _____

Identify a bird species that is on the endangered or threatened list.

Explain what caused their decline.

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What can be done to reverse this trend and what can be done to help remove the species from the endangered or threatened list.

Identify three career opportunities connected to the study of birds.

1.

2.

3.

Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession.

Education

Training

Experience

BIRD STUDY FIELD BOOK

Species: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Habitat: _____

Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

Migrant Resident

Summer Resident

Winter Resident

Year-Round Resident

Species: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Habitat: _____

Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

Migrant Resident

Summer Resident

Winter Resident

Year-Round Resident