



FACT SHEET

William T. Hornaday Award for Distinguished Service in Conservation

Background

This conservation awards program was initiated in 1914 by Dr. William T. Hornaday, then director of the New York Zoological Park, in an effort to inspire members of the Boy Scouts of America to work constructively for conservation. For 20 years the program was funded through Hornaday's Permanent Wildlife Protection Fund. Upon his death, the program was sponsored for 35 years by the New York Zoological Society and named in Hornaday's honor. The award is the oldest conservation award given in America.

The BSA's national conservation committee has reviewed the approval procedures for the Hornaday Award and has established guidelines.

Awards

The William T. Hornaday Award may be given in one of seven forms:

The **unit certificate** and **badge** are awarded by the local council's conservation committee. Application is made through the local council. Councils may obtain unit certificates and youth badges by sending approved award applications to the Boy Scout Conservation Service at the national office.

The **bronze medal** is awarded by the National Council upon recommendation of the local council. A qualified Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturer must apply through and be recommended by his or her local council. Final selection is made by a national William T. Hornaday Award selection committee, and presentation is made by the local council.

The **silver medal** is handled in the same way as the bronze medal in regard to recommendation and application. The award is the highest possible attainment in conservation for a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturer.

The **gold medal** may be considered when a qualified Scouter is recommended by his or her council, by an established conservation organization, or by any recognized conservationist. The nominee must have demonstrated leadership and a commitment to the education of youth on a national or international level, reflecting the natural resource conservation/environmental awareness mission of the Boy Scouts of America. Nominations must be approved by the BSA's national conservation committee. The gold medal is the highest possible attainment in conservation for a Scouter.

The **gold badge** is awarded by the local council's conservation committee. Scouters who have demonstrated leadership and a significant commitment to conservation and the education of Scouting youth on a council or district level over a sustained period (at least three years) may be nominated for this award. Councils may obtain gold badges by sending approved award applications to the Boy Scout Conservation Service at the national office.

The **gold certificate** is an award granted to an organization not necessarily affiliated with Scouting. The nominated organization must have demonstrated leadership and a commitment to the education of youth on a national or international level, reflecting the natural resource conservation/environmental awareness mission of the Boy Scouts of America.

Nominations for the medals and gold certificate are considered by the national award committee several times a year.

The badge, bronze medal, and silver medal are youth awards. The age limit for Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts is 17, and for Venturers, 20 years of age.

How to Submit Applications

Completed applications for the unit certificate and badge must be submitted to the council, which will decide whether they are worthy of consideration for the Hornaday Award. Qualified applicants will be interviewed by a council committee. The committee determines whether the applicant is qualified for the Hornaday badge (or certificate, for units). Each council has authority to award the certificate and the bronze and gold badges.

Each Hornaday silver medal applicant is expected to plan and give leadership to four substantial conservation projects in four different fields of conservation. Bronze medal applicants must plan and give leadership to three substantial conservation projects in three different fields of conservation. If the council committee determines that the application merits consideration for one of the Hornaday medals, the application and all supporting materials (which must be approved by the Scout executive) are forwarded to the BSA's national office. Applications are judged by the national award committee.

An applicant should be advised that his or her application form, with supporting evidence of work accomplished, is the only information the national award committee has for selecting winners. Applicants are expected to show evidence of planning, to give leadership to others performing projects that demonstrate creativity and initiative, and to educate others through conservation endeavors. Thus, applications should be filled out neatly, and the list of activities should be as complete and descriptive as possible. Adequate supporting materials must accompany the application. Materials such as letters, snapshots, videotapes, project descriptions, drawings, planning papers, news clippings, talks given, etc., should be well-organized, neatly mounted in a notebook or scrapbook, and labeled.

Additional applications (No. 21-107) may be obtained from the Web site of the Boy Scouts of America, www.scouting.org, or through the local Scout service center.