

Endangered Species Day Information for Boy Scouts of America

The 14th annual national Endangered Species Day on May 17, 2019 offers Boy Scouts an opportunity to make an important contribution while also accomplishing one or more of merit badge requirements and/or BSA Conservation Awards.

Background

First approved by the U.S. Senate in 2006, the purpose of Endangered Species Day is to expand awareness of the importance of endangered species/habitat conservation and to share success stories of species recovery. Every year, thousands of people participate in tours, classroom instruction, fairs and other events at zoos, parks, aquariums, wildlife refuges, national parks, botanic centers, community centers, schools and various other locations throughout the country.

Boy Scouts can plan and participate in Endangered Species Day-related events and activities that will increase their commitment to the environment and help meet some of their advancement requirements for the Environmental Science and Fish and Wildlife Management merit badges. While Endangered Species Day is celebrated on the third Friday in May, events and activities are scheduled throughout the month of May.

BSA Conservation Awards. Here are some awards that can be addressed by participating in an Endangered Species Day-themed community service project.

1. Good Turn Award
2. Cub Scout Outdoor Activity Award
3. National Outdoor Badge, Conservation Tab
4. Hometown USA Award
5. World Conservation Award; Cub and Boy Scout and Venturer badges
6. Resource Stewardship Award. Partnership with National Park Service

7. William T. Hornaday Awards. Scouting's premier conservation awards

Potential Activities. Following are a few of the activities that Scouts could plan and/or participate in for Endangered Species Day to address or meet one or more of their merit badge or conservation award requirements:

*Work on a clean-up campaign or other restoration project to benefit a beach area, forest, mountain or other critical habitat.

*Visit a zoo or aquarium. If they are planning an Endangered Species Day event. If not, visit the various threatened/endangered animal exhibits to learn about individual species and what is being done to protect them.

*Develop a backyard wildlife habitat.

*Plant a milkweed or pollinator garden.

*Visit a natural history museum and learn more about threatened and endangered plant/animal species.

*Hold an Endangered Species Day fair or exhibit at a suitable location with exhibits, handout materials and activities for younger children.

*Invite a biologist or other local expert to a troop meeting to discuss the local environment and action steps individuals can take to help preserve endangered species and their habitats.

*Help organize an endangered species exhibit at a local library.

Merit Badges. Here are a couple of Merit Badges with requirements that can be addressed by participating in an Endangered Species Day activity.

1. Environmental Science.

a. **Requirement 3E::** *Endangered Species.* Do ONE:

1. Do research on one endangered species found in your state. Find out what its natural habitat is, why it is endangered, what is being done to preserve it, and how many individual organisms are left in the wild. Prepare a 100-word report about the organism, including a drawing. Present your report to your patrol or troop.

2. Do research on one species that was endangered or threatened but which has now recovered. Find out how the organism recovered, and what its new status is. Write a 100-word report on the species and discuss it with your counselor.
3. With your parent's and counselor's approval, work with a natural resource professional to identify two projects that have been approved to improve the habitat for a threatened or endangered species in your area. Visit the site of one of these projects and report on what you saw.

2. Fish & Wildlife Management merit badge

a. Do ONE of the following:

1. Construct, erect, and check regularly at least two artificial nest boxes (wood duck, bluebird, squirrel, etc.) and keep written records for one nesting season.
2. Construct, erect, and check regularly bird feeders and keep written records of the kinds of birds visiting the feeders in the winter.
3. Design and implement a backyard wildlife habitat improvement project and report the results.
4. Design and construct a wildlife blind near a game trail, water hole, salt lick, bird feeder, or birdbath and take good photographs or make sketches from the blind of any combination of 10 wild birds, mammals, reptiles, or amphibians.

b. Do ONE of the following:

1. Observe and record 25 species of wildlife. Your list may include mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. Write down when and where each animal was seen.
2. List the wildlife species in your state that are classified as endangered, threatened, exotic, game species, furbearers, or migratory game birds.
3. Start a scrapbook of North American wildlife. Insert markers to divide the book into separate parts for mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. Collect articles on such subjects as life histories, habitat, behavior, and feeding habits on all of the five categories and place them in your notebook accordingly. Articles and pictures may be taken from newspapers or science, nature, and outdoor magazines, or from other sources including the Internet (with your parent's permission). Enter at least five articles on mammals, five on birds, five on reptiles, five on amphibians, and five on fish. Put each animal on a separate sheet in alphabetical order. Include pictures whenever possible.

Resources

To help prepare for your Endangered Species Day activity, you can visit the Endangered Species day website (www.endangeredspeciesday.org), which features a variety of information and materials, including “How to Plan” suggestions, along with bookmarks, stickers, activity sheets and other items that can be downloaded and printed.

In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife website (www.fws.org) offers special background information that will be helpful in preparing and completing your activities.

Here’s the link to BSA Conservation Awards. <https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/conservation-and-environment/conservation-awards-and-recognitions/>

Be Recognized

Of course, the Endangered Species Coalition wants to recognize your contribution. Please share details of your Endangered Species Day activity by registering it on the Endangered Species Day Website event directory.

If you have any questions, e-mail David Robinson, Endangered species Day Director: [drobinson@endangered.org](mailto:d Robinson@endangered.org)

Endangered Species Day Supporters

A project of the Endangered Species Coalition, Endangered Species Day is also supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), along with numerous education, conservation and other organizations, including the American Library Association, Boy Scouts of America, North American Association for Environmental Education, National Association of Biology Teachers, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, National Audubon Society, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, Jane Goodall Institute, National Garden Clubs, Sierra Club, the National Science Teachers Association, San Diego Zoo, Earth Day Network, National Wildlife Federation, and Defenders of Wildlife.

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