

# Thank you for considering the Wetlands Institute in helping you to complete your Merit Badge!

## Attention Scout Leaders!

Bring your troop on a trip to the Wetlands Institute! Your troop will meet with one of our Wetlands educators to participate in a hands-on, interactive, and fun program while developing important skills. Boy Scouts can obtain one of the nature or outdoor-related Boy Scout Merit Badges we offer. A visit to the Wetlands Institute is also an opportunity for Scouts to learn more about New Jersey's coastal ecology.

**Please be prepared for the weather! All activities involve some time outside, unless weather is severe.**

## What to Bring and How to Prepare

1. Wearing old clothes is best and don't forget jackets, hats, etc. Sun block is highly recommended, and bug spray is optional.
2. Foot protection is essential, especially in the water where we will be walking on jagged shells and rocks. Most water shoes are not adequate protection and flip-flops do not stay on feet in the water or mud. Sports sandals (waterproof sandals with straps) work effectively. Old submersible sneakers work as well. Occasionally, shoes are lost in the marsh mud! Please do not send your child in expensive shoes.
3. Programs are usually 3 hours long. A half hour lunch break will be provided if necessary, in which case, scouts should bring a bagged lunch.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Ticks are an ongoing problem anywhere in New Jersey and can be found almost anywhere out-of-doors. We will make every effort to minimize exposure, however there can be no guarantee that a child will not pick up a tick. Checking for ticks should be an ongoing daily routine when children have been outside. Authorities believe that ticks need 24 hours to imbed before they can convey Lyme disease. Checking carefully each night can avoid this problem. Please let us know if you would like more information about ticks and tick-borne illness.

For more information and to schedule a program, please email Sue Slotterback, Environmental Educator at [sslotterback@wetlandsinstitute.org](mailto:sslotterback@wetlandsinstitute.org)

Non-badge educational programs are also available for Scouts.  
Check out our website at <http://wetlandsinstitute.org/education/field-trips/> for details.



# Boy Scout Merit Badge Program

at the



1075 Stone Harbor Boulevard, Stone Harbor, NJ 08247  
(609) 368-1211 [www.wetlandsinstitute.org](http://www.wetlandsinstitute.org)

The Wetlands Institute Instructor is a registered Boy Scout Merit Badge Counselor and will be able to sign the Scouts' Blue Merit Badge cards for the following Merit Badges.\*



### **Bird Study**

Birds are the most watchable wildlife, offering everything from a pleasant glance, an enjoyable hobby, or a rewarding career. We practice using binoculars and field guides, head outside to observe the birds of the salt marsh, and build a bird feeder to take home.



### **Environmental Science**

~ Eagle Required Merit Badge

We will use the salt marsh to delve into the topics of ecology, pollution, and endangered species, while comparing species composition in two salt marsh areas.



### **Fish & Wildlife Management**

Discover fish and wildlife management in NJ through the wildlife of the wetlands. We cover current threats to NJ species, management basics, and ways scouts can help wildlife, including making a bird feeder to take home. A wildlife walk and seine netting activity let scouts see some of the species in our protected salt marsh.



### **Geocaching**

GPS units are great tools for helping us get from one place to the next without using a traditional paper map. But they can also be used to locate "caches" hidden anywhere in the world through this exciting treasure hunt game.



### **Insect Study**

Insects and their arthropod cousins are around us all of the time. Yes, some are pests, but most are very beneficial, and all are totally interesting.



### **Nature**

Explore the relationships between plants and animals, construct a food web, and build a bird house to take home. We practice observing nature by looking for signs of the birds, reptiles, fish, and other animals of the marsh.



### **Oceanography**

Explore the branches of Oceanography, practice measuring the properties of water, and take a closer look at live plankton! Part of the lesson takes place at the beach or the Institute's floating dock.



### **Plant Science**

Plant scientists use their curiosity and knowledge to develop questions about the world of plants. Then they try to answer those questions with further observations and experiments in the laboratory and in the field.



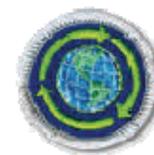
### **Reptiles & Amphibians**

Developing knowledge about reptiles and amphibians leads to an appreciation for all native wildlife; understanding the life cycle of a reptile or amphibian and knowing about venomous species can help Scouts to be prepared to help in case of an emergency.



### **Soil & Water Conservation**

Conservation isn't just the responsibility of soil and plant scientists. It is the duty of every person to learn more about the natural resources on which our lives depend so that we can help make sure that these resources are used intelligently and cared for properly.



### **Sustainability**

~ Eagle Required Merit Badge

Identifying and evaluating our impact on natural resources is the first step in understanding what we can do to make a difference.

\*Many badges require the Scout to make long-term observations or to pursue knowledge or skills not directly related to the topic. Due to time constraints scouts will need to independently perform *some* of the activities which are required to complete badges. Scouts may submit proof of completion of independent requirements for signed approval.