

# Mammal Study Merit Badge

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

Important information about how to prepare for a merit badge program at Huntley Meadows Park.

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. Explain the meaning of "animal," "invertebrate," "vertebrate," and "mammal." Name three characteristics that distinguish mammals from all other animals.

2. Explain how the animal kingdom is classified. Explain where mammals fit in the classification of animals. Classify three mammals from phylum through species.

**3. Do ONE of the following: If scouts choose to do the following requirement in Huntley Meadows Park they must follow all park rules, including staying on maintained trails. Scouts do not have permission to go off trail to fulfil this requirement. When visiting any property, natural area, or park follow all rules of that property, natural area, or park, and obtain permission from staff of the property, natural area, or park for any collecting, observing, or research activity.**

- (a) Spend three hours in two different kinds of natural habitats or at different elevations for a total of 6 hours. List the different mammal species and how many of each you identified by sight or sign. Tell why all mammals do not live in the same kind of habitat.
- (b) Spend three hours on five different days in at least a 25-acre area (about the size of 3 1/2 football fields) for a total of 15 hours. List the mammal species you identified by sight or sign.
- (c) From study and reading, write a simple life history of one nongame mammal that lives in your area. Tell how this mammal lived before its habitat was affected in any way by humans. Tell how it reproduces, what it eats, and its natural habitat. Describe its dependency upon plants and other animals (including humans), and how they depend upon it. Describe how humans have benefited from the mammal you have chosen and whether the mammal has benefited from association with humankind.

4. Do ONE of the following:

- (a) Under the guidance of a nature center or natural history museum, make two study skins of rats or mice. Tell the uses of study skins and mounted specimens respectively.
- (b) Take good pictures of two kinds of mammals in the wild. Record the date(s), time of day, weather conditions, approximate distance from the animal, habitat conditions, and any other factors you feel may have influenced the animal's activity and behavior.
- (c) Write a life history of a native game mammal that lives in your area, covering the points outlined in requirement 3c. List sources for this information.
- (d) Make and bait a tracking pit. Report what mammals and other animals came to the bait.
- (e) Visit a natural history museum. Report on how specimens are prepared and cataloged. Explain the purposes of museums.
- (f) Write a report of 500 words on a book about a mammal species.
- (g) Trace two possible food chains of carnivorous mammals from the soil through four stages to the mammal.

5. Working with your counselor, select and carry out one project that will influence the numbers of one or more mammals.

**Huntley Meadows Park**

Fairfax County Park Authority

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