



Bird Study

Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.

The work space provided for each requirement should be used by the Scout to make notes for discussing the item with his counselor, not for providing the full and complete answers. Each Scout must do each requirement.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in **Boy Scout Requirements** (Pub. 33216 – SKU 616334).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2013 • This workbook was updated in December 2013.

Scout's Name: _____ Unit: _____

Counselor's Name: _____ Counselor's Phone No.: _____

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: Workbooks@USScouts.Org
Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org

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

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.

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

3. Demonstrate that you know how to properly use and care for binoculars.

a. Explain what the specification numbers on the binoculars mean.

b. Show how to adjust the eyepiece and how to focus for proper viewing.

c. Show how to properly care for and clean the lenses.

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

Show your counselor 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
a. Petrel				
b. Plover				
c. Falcon or hawk				
d. Warbler or vireo				
e. Heron or egret				
f. Sparrow				
g. non-native 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.

Species 1: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 2: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 3: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 4: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 5: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 6: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 7: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 8: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 9: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 10: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 11: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 12: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 13: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 14: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 15: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 16: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 17: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 18: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 19: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

Species 20: _____

- a. Note the date and time. _____
- b. Note the location and habitat. _____
- c. Describe the bird's main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat.

- d. Note whether the bird is a migrant or a summer, winter, or year-round resident of your area.

6. 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?

Species 3:

Description:

Behavior:

Why?

Species 4:

Description:

Behavior:

Why?

Species 5:

Description:

Behavior:

Why?

7. 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.

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

2. Tell your counselor which birds your group saw and why some species were common and some were present in small numbers.

3. 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.

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

2. Tell your counselor which species are most common, and explain why these birds are abundant.

3. 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.

Species:		Decreasing?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If decreasing, why?			
What could be done?			

Species:	<input type="text"/>	Decreasing? <input type="checkbox"/>
If decreasing, why?	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
What could be done?	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	

Species:	<input type="text"/>	Decreasing? <input type="checkbox"/>
If decreasing, why?	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
What could be done?	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	
	<input type="text"/>	

8. Do ONE of the following.

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

For the option you choose, describe what birds you hope to attract, and why.

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Requirement resources can be found here:
http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Bird_Study#Requirement_resources

Important excerpts from the [Guide To Advancement - 2013](#), No. 33088 (SKU-618673)

[1.0.0.0] — Introduction

The current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* is the official source for administering advancement in all Boy Scouts of America programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. It replaces any previous BSA advancement manuals, including *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*, *Advancement and Recognition Policies and Procedures*, and previous editions of the *Guide to Advancement*.

[Page 2, and 5.0.1.4] — Policy on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program

No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with special needs. For details see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs".

[Page 2] — The "Guide to Safe Scouting" Applies

Policies and procedures outlined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects.

[7.0.3.1] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion

A youth member must not meet one-on-one with an adult. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative—or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge—along with him attending the session.

When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult verification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.

Note that from time to time, it may be appropriate for a requirement that has been met for one badge to also count for another. See "Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity," 4.2.3.6.

[7.0.3.2] — Group Instruction

It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways or similar events. Interactive group discussions can support learning. The method can also be attractive to "guest experts" assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material.

There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and *personally*—completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like "show," "demonstrate," or "discuss," then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions.

It is sometimes reported that Scouts who have received merit badges through group instructional settings have not fulfilled all the requirements. To offer a quality merit badge program, council and district advancement committees should ensure the following are in place for all group instructional events.

- Merit badge counselors are known to be registered and approved.
- Any guest experts or guest speakers, or others assisting who are not registered and approved as merit badge counselors, do not accept the responsibilities of, or behave as, merit badge counselors, either at a group instructional event or at any other time. Their service is temporary, not ongoing.
- Counselors agree not to assume prerequisites have been completed without some level of evidence that the work has been done. Pictures and letters from other merit badge counselors or unit leaders are the best form of prerequisite documentation when the actual work done cannot be brought to the camp or site of the merit badge event.
- There is a mechanism for unit leaders or others to report concerns to a council advancement committee on summer camp merit badge programs, group instructional events, and any other merit badge counseling issues—especially in instances where it is believed BSA procedures are not followed. See "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0.
- There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of all requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and *personally*—completed them.

[7.0.3.3] — Partial Completions

A Scout need not pass all the requirements of one merit badge with the same counselor. It may be that due to timing or location issues, etc., he must meet with a different counselor to finish the badge. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished—a "partial." In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, the counselor does not retain his or her portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his unit leader to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partials have no expiration except the Scout's 18th birthday. Units, districts, or councils shall not establish other expiration dates for partial merit badges.

[7.0.4.8] — Unofficial Worksheets and Learning Aids

Worksheets and other materials that may be of assistance in earning merit badges are available from a variety of places including unofficial sources on the Internet and even troop libraries. Use of these aids is permissible as long as the materials can be correlated with the current requirements that Scouts must fulfill. Completing "worksheets" may suffice where a requirement calls for something in writing, but this would not work for a requirement where the Scout must discuss, tell, show, or demonstrate, etc. Note that Scouts shall not be required to use these learning aids in order to complete a merit badge.