

Naturalist Legacy Kit

This kit contains activities and related materials to help teach girls of all ages more about the history of Nature in the Girl Scout world. This is one of seven legacy topics that have been part of Girl Scouting since the movement started in 1912. The other legacy topics are Artist, Athlete, Citizen, Cook, First Aid and Girl Scout Way.

The activity ideas included in this kit are taken directly from handbooks of the past or are modern interpretations inspired by skills Girl Scouts have learned through the years. Girls can choose to do as many or as few as they like, though leaders and advisors should help them choose ones that are appropriate for the girls' level. Citations at the end of the activities provide a place to go to learn more about that activity or era.

Just as the legacy topics have been part of Girl Scouting for its first 100 years, they will continue to be part of its future. Girls who are interested in doing even more activities related to any of the legacy topics can earn the modern-day version of these badges. Age-appropriate requirements for legacy badges can be found in the Girls Guide to Girl Scouting.



This image was taken at a Girl Scout camp in the 1930s.

Introduction

Being outdoors has always been a big part of Girl Scouting. In the early years, it was largely acceptable for only boys to play and do other outdoor things and Girl Scouting gave girls the opportunity to be more adventurous. Girl Scouts have also shifted their focus from enjoying the outdoors to helping preserve the environment, and leaving it better than we found it. Take a look at these activities and see how Girl Scouts throughout the years have enjoyed nature.

Naturalist Legacy Kit Contents

This kit contains:

- Leader Guide
- Sheet of trail signs
- Knot tying instructions
- String cut into 2 feet pieces
- Pictures of poisonous plants
- "True-False Game" pamphlet from 1943
- Popsicle sticks
- Bandanas
- "Program in Girl Scout Camping" book from 1959
- Girl Scout Naturalist Photographs from the Past
- Naturalist Related Career Cards
- Archival Gloves

Please be sure to handle materials gently and return them to the kit when finished. Use the list above to make sure you have all of the kit items.

Naturalist Activity Ideas

The first five activities meet badge requirements in the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting.



- ❑ Do a mini-environment study. Take a piece of string about two feet long. Go outside to a grassy area, and lay the string out in a circle in the area that you choose. The area inside the circle is your mini-environment. Sit next to it and look closely at it. What is happening inside of it? Are there plants and/or animals? What does the soil look like? Make sure to pay special attention to any bugs that are in your environment. Draw pictures of them, and try to identify them. *This completes Step 5 of the Naturalist badge in the Brownie Girl's Guide.* (Similar to an activity found in Brownie Girl Scout Handbook, 1986, p. 83)
- ❑ To better understand the natural world around you go on a nature walk with your troop. Walk around where you meet or go explore a local park. Pay attention to the plants, animals and trees. Use a journal to take notes about the weather and other things you observe. Sketch pictures of the flowers that you see on your walk and try to identify the flowers you sketched. *This completes Step 1 of the Naturalist badge in the Junior Girl's Guide.*
- ❑ Research trees in your region. Learn about which trees grow, and which trees are most common in your area. *This completes Step 2 of the Naturalist badge in the Cadette Girl's Guide.*
- ❑ On a clear night, look up at the sky and locate four constellations such as the Big Dipper, Little Dipper, Orion or Cassiopeia. Try and find them at different times of the year. *This completes Step 1 of the Naturalist badge in the Senior Girl's Guide.* (Similar to activity found in Junior Girl Scout Handbook, 1963, p. 345)
- ❑ Recycling is a great way to help out our environment. So is conserving the resources that we have now. By turning the water off while you brush can save up to 12 gallons of water every time you brush your teeth! *The Ambassador Naturalist badge in the Girl's Guide points out that there are a lot of different issues involving water, not just*

conservation. Discuss with your troop different ways you can reuse, recycle and preserve.



- Take a look at the sheet of trail signs included in the kit. Girl Scouts have been using trail signs for years to help them identify pathways, and dangers in the woods. The trail signs provided are taken from the Junior Girl Scout Handbook from 1963. Learn what some of the trail signs mean, and how to make them. Practice setting them up with the wooden popsicle sticks and pebbles in the kit, and use them the next time your troop is camping or hiking.
- Make a list of things that you and your troop would need when you go camping. Think about all the different activities you will be doing and what you will need for each of them. Don't forget a First Aid Kit! Take a look through the "Program in Girl Scout Camping" book that is included in the kit to get a better idea of what girls used to take camping.
- Being able to tie knots has been something Girl Scouts have mastered for many years. Use the rope in the kit to learn to tie some of the basic knots included in the kit. Look at the step-by-step drawings to get started. Remember them so that you can use them the next time you go camping!
- Look at the pictures of poisonous plants included in the kit. Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac are the most common that you might encounter when you are out camping or hiking. Be able to identify them and then avoid them when you are outdoors. Are there any other plants that you might need to indentify while you are camping or hiking?
- Learn about pollution. What is pollution and what are the main causes of pollution? What are different ways that we can decrease the amount of pollution? Find out if there is a park or a stream in your area that needs cleaning up. Organize a clean-up day and ask your local newspaper to help you get the word out.

- ❑ Play the “True and False Nature Game” in the kit. This pamphlet is from 1943. While some of the facts may have changed since then, you can get an idea of the games that Girl Scouts in the 1940s played.

- ❑ Play the “Hug a Tree” game and become closer with nature! This game should be played in an area with easy access to a variety of trees.
 - Break into pairs one partner is the leader the other is blindfolded (make sure that the blindfolded person is always led by someone who can see).
 - Lead the person with the blindfold on through the trees and plants.
 - Choose a specific tree to be the “special tree”.
 - The blindfolded girl takes time to memorize this tree using only her hands.
 - She is then led back to the rest of the troop and the blindfold is taken off.
 - The girl then goes back into the trees with her partner and tries to find their “special tree”.
 - Once the correct special tree has been identified, the partners trade roles.

- ❑ Take a look at the historical photographs found in the kit. See if any of the naturalist-related activities girls did back then are similar to the ones you and your troop do today!

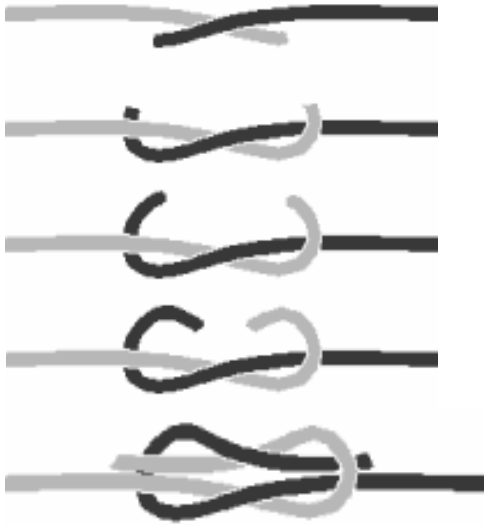
- ❑ Career exploration has long been part of Girl Scouting. Girls around the country have been encouraged to find out what jobs are available in fields and industries they are interested in, and to connect with people working in those areas to learn more about the profession. Check out the career cards in this kit. Read about different women who held these naturalist-related positions in 1978. Do any of them interest you? Do some research to figure out a modern-day job that is similar to one of the career cards and interview a person who works or has worked in that position. What is the same and what is different about the job? Make a copy of the blank career card and fill it out during or after your interview. Add this person to your personal network!

Wrap-up

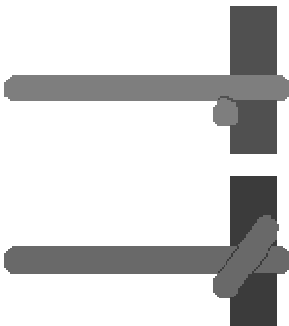
These are just a few ideas inspired by Girl Scout publications of the first 100 years. Feel free to explore and dabble in other activities that you come across or think of, and teach others about what you've learned. If you enjoyed learning about camping in this kit plan a camping with your troop to a local campground! Have fun!

Knots

Square Knot- Take two ropes and cross them (red over blue) to form a half knot. Cross them a second time (red over blue again) and pull the ends tight to form the Square Knot.



Clove Hitch- Pass the end of the rope around the pole. Continue over the standing end and around the pole a second time. Thread the end under itself and pull tight to form the clove hitch.



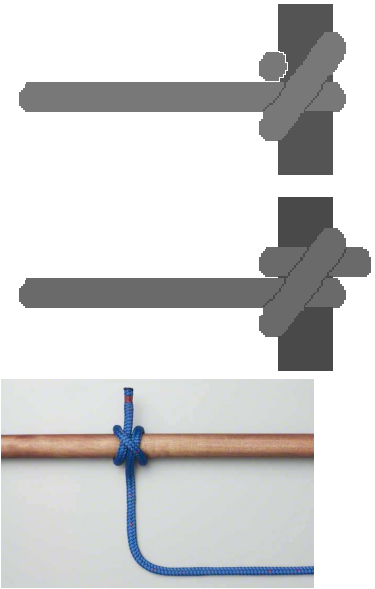
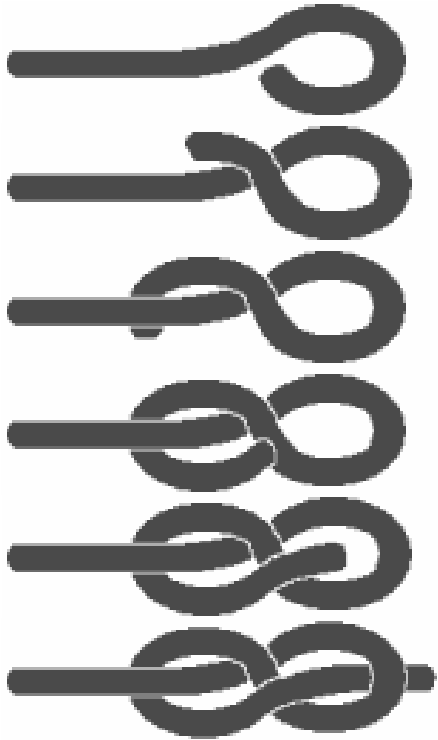


Figure Eight Knot- Pass the tail over itself to form a loop. Continue under and around the standing end. Complete the knot by passing the tail down through the loop.





Sheet Bend- Form a loop in the thicker rope (blue) and hold it in one hand. Pass the thinner rope (red) through the loop and behind the (blue) tail and standing ends in that order. Finally, tuck the smaller rope under itself to finish the knot.



Some trail signs you can create are set up with sticks and rocks like this (Junior Girl Scout Handbook, 1963):

			
"Camp this way"	"Go 10 steps this way"	"Danger"	"End of the trail"
			
"Keep going"	"Turn around"	"Go the other way"	"Go the other way"
			
"Split up"	"Go this way"	"Wait"	"Wait"

Poisonous Plants

Poison Ivy



Poison Ivy is divided into three leaflets that are almond shaped. Leaf color ranges from light green to dark green, and turns red in the fall.

Poison Sumac



Poison Sumac has a compound leaf structure usually with seven to thirteen smooth-edged leaflets.

Poison Oak



Poison Oak is divided into three leaflets. The color varies based on the season. Can be seen growing in a shrub or climbing vine.