BIRD STUDY MERIT BADGE REQUIREMENTS

Additional checkoff sheets and helps are available from ScouterMom.com.

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. Sketch or trace an extended wing and label six types of wing feathers										
3. Demonstrate that you know how to properly use and care for binoculars.										
3a. Explain what the specifcation numbers on the binoculars mean.										
3b. Show how to adjust the eyepiece and how to focus for proper viewing.										
3c. Show how to properly care for and clean the lenses.										
4. Demonstrate that you know how to use a bird feld 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:										
4a. Seabird										
4b. Plover										
4c. Falcon or hawk										
4d. Warbler or vireo										
4e. Heron or egret										
4f. Sparrow										
4g. Nonnative 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 feld notebook, making a separate entry for each species, and record the following information from your feld observations and other references.										
5a. Note the date and time										
5b. Note the location and habitat										
5c. Describe the bird’s main feeding habitat and list two types of food that the bird is likely to eat										
5d. 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 fve of the 20 species in your feld notebook by song or call alone. For each of these fve 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.										
7. Do ONE of the following:										
7a. Go on a feld trip with a local club or with others who are knowledgeable about birds in your area.										
(1) Keep a list or fll out a checklist of all the birds your group observed during the feld 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 fnding birds.										
7b. By using a public library, the internet, or contacting the National Audubon Society, fnd 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										
8. Do ONE of the following. For the option you choose, describe what birds you hope to attract, and why.										
8a. Build a bird feeder and put it in an appropriate place in your yard or another location										
8b. Build a birdbath and put it in an appropriate place										
8c. Build a backyard sanctuary for birds by planting trees and shrubs for food and cover.										
Completed										
Presented										