



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 34765).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2006 • This workbook was updated in April 2012.

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 improving this workbook to: Workbooks@USScouts.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.

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 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.

Uncommon Species: _____ Decreasing?

If decreasing, why? _____

What could be done? _____

Uncommon Species: _____ Decreasing?

If decreasing, why? _____

What could be done? _____

Uncommon Species: _____ Decreasing?

If decreasing, why? _____

What could be done? _____

8. Do ONE of the following. For the option you choose, describe what birds you hope to attract, and why.

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.

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

Important excerpts from the [‘Guide To Advancement’](#), No. 33088:

Effective January 1, 2012, the ‘Guide to Advancement’ (which replaced the publication ‘Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures’) is now the official Boy Scouts of America source on advancement policies and procedures.

- **[Inside front cover, and 5.0.1.4] — 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 disabilities. For details see section 10, “Advancement for Members With Special Needs”.)
- **[Inside front cover, and 7.0.1.1] — 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. [Note: Always reference the online version, which is updated quarterly.]
- **[7.0.3.1] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion**
Youth members must not meet one-on-one with adults. 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 certification. 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.
- **[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. Because of the importance of individual attention in the merit badge plan, group instruction should be limited to those scenarios where the benefits are compelling.
- **[7.0.3.3] — Partial Completions**
Scouts need not pass all requirements with one counselor. 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, he or she does not retain the counselor’s 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 Scoutmaster 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 18th birthday.