

Every child has the right to see a rainbow and hear a Cardinal chirp. Every child has the right to see nature as it truly is and experience the adventure of the great outdoors.

A person can certainly survive without ever seeing a forest or catching a tadpole. However, quality of life is greatly diminished by missing the beauty and wonder of nature. So much of our population now lives in urban or suburban areas that opportunities for youth to interact with nature have greatly decreased. There is value inherent in experiencing the natural world as our ancestors did: as a source of beauty, wonder, awe, and even inspiration.



Getting youth out into nature has become a difficult task however. Television, movies, video games, and computers are all vying for their attention. Our Scout Programs offer both indoor and outdoor activities that interest all our Scouts. Nevertheless, we encourage them to see there is a world outside their windows that is brighter, more colorful, and more amazing than anything in a video game.

### Getting Out in It!

It takes a little more effort to see the FUN in walking barefoot in a stream, chasing butterflies, or simply sitting in the outdoors, appreciating natural beauty



Some of our Scouts have never had the opportunity to spend real time in the outdoors before joining our Scout Programs. Once encountered however, our Scouts develop a love of the natural world. Our Scout Programs instill a sense of wonder and awe about

the world in which we live.

Too often, people drive around in their cars watching nature from a distance. There is nothing to compare with actually being in nature. We encourage our Scouts to get out of the backseat and set out into nature to gaze at the stars and listen to the river rolling past.

### Our Scouts in the Great Outdoors

When our Scouts get into the outdoors, we concentrate on making them a participant in nature rather than a spectator. They hike, camp, climb, swim, and observe in the great outdoors. Our Scouts choose, organize, and lead their own programs so they decide which activities to participate in. Our Scouts could choose to camp on the beach or vote to visit a national park.

There is nothing quite like camping on the beach and looking up to see stars twinkling, hearing the crack of burning wood, and feeling its warmth. There is nothing like smelling a real campfire mixed with the salty scent of the sea while hearing waves crash on the shore. Of course, our Scouts could get information about the beach on the Internet, but there is no possible way of getting the true experience of nature any way but being out in it.

Our Programs always provide a balance between structured activities done with a team, and unstructured activities in which our Scouts can spend time doing what appeals to them individually. They can chase a butterfly or just sit and look at the stars. It is essential to fostering an appreciation of nature to allow our Scouts the time and peace to enjoy nature in their own way.

### Conservationism

Seeing a baby bird emerge from its shell or doe and fawn in their natural habitat is an amazing and moving experience. We encourage our Scouts to understand their place in nature, and also how their choices affect it.

To that end, our Scout Programs encourage high environmental standards. We use the standards and are a partner of the "Leave No Trace" Program. As the name implies, "Leave No Trace" encourages campers to impact the natural environment where they camp as little as possible. "Leave No Trace" standards include taking all garbage along when leaving and using campfires responsibly. We encourage our Scouts to play a meaningful part in their world by choosing to participate in the "Leave No Trace" program. We are also members of the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education and the American Camp Association.

After seeing nature in all her majesty, our Scouts understand the need to preserve it for future visits and future generations. The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA develop an appreciation for the beauty and majesty of nature in our Scouts.