

Abstract

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is a wonderful organization for boys to get experiences in life or fields of study that they may not otherwise have throughout their schooling or home life. One means that the BSA uses to teach scouts is through merit badges. These can cover a wide variety of subjects, but my main focus is on the badges within my field of study, wildlife biology. I reviewed the requirements for each badge and discussed potential changes that could improve their quality. This was accomplished through a series of steps within the reviewing process. I looked at completion time, necessary education level, and relevance of information for each merit badge. The requirements may have parts changed or requirements may be added to the badge to improve their content. The field of wildlife biology covers nine of the 132 obtainable merit badges. My thesis covers five of these nine: Plant Science, Mammal Study, Bird Study, Reptile and Amphibian Study, and Fish and Wildlife Management. The number of changes for each badge varies from almost every requirement needing a change to none at all. Many of the changes are small, this can make a big difference in the way a scout learns from the badge. The goal for this thesis is to send it to the BSA and that they consider these proposed changes and implement them into their merit badges.

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