

# Hiking the Appalachian Trail



Complete the two starred activities and four others of your choice. Before beginning this badge, review chapter 7 in the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook* and review the activity checkpoints for hiking in *Safety-Wise*.

- \*1.** List what you need to carry with you on a day hike along the Appalachian Trail and be able to tell why each item is important. Help plan and participate in two day hikes. Give each other “trail names.” Be sure to practice minimal-impact ethics during your hikes. Keep a journal of your hikes. Include routes, pictures, and other things that you want to remember.
- 2.** Learn about trail nutrition. How much water do you need for your hike? Check *Safety Wise* and know how to purify water for drinking. Plan and prepare a nutritious, well-balanced meal that requires no cooking and no refrigeration. Remember to include emergency rations.
- 3.** Know how to give first aid for the following: cuts, scrapes, sprains, beestings, hypothermia, frostbite, burns, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke. Assemble a small hiking first aid kit to carry with you.
- 4.** Identify and record in your journal the names of animals you see along the Appalachian Trail. Learn to recognize animal tracks and be able to identify at least three. Record these in your journal by drawing the tracks. Are there any dangerous animals in the area where you hike? Know how to identify them and how to avoid them.
- 5.** Identify five species of trees along the Appalachian Trail. Be able to identify them by leaf, twig, and/or fruit samples. Record these in your journal. Be able to identify any poisonous plants in your area, such as poison ivy.
- 6.** Design a hike to observe birds. Record the name of each bird, the date and location where it was seen, weather conditions, bird companions, and whether or not this may have been a rare sighting. Practice using binoculars to locate perched birds and birds in flight.
- 7.** Learn how to read a weather map and be prepared for changing weather with proper clothing and equipment. Record weather conditions in your journal.
- \*8.** Learn how to use a compass and be able to read a topographical map. Use these skills on your hike to navigate the terrain.
- 9.** The Appalachian Trail has a history that includes Native Americans and the Civil War. Find out some of the history of the Appalachian Trail.
- 10.** Find out the latest techniques used by firefighters in fighting wildfires. Invite a firefighter to speak to your troop or visit the local fire station. What training is necessary to become a volunteer firefighter?

Continued →

11. Take photographs of your hike and organize them in a scrapbook. Donate your scrapbook to a nursing home or rehabilitation center or it share with another troop.

**Resources:**

[www.appalachiantrail.org/about/history/index.html](http://www.appalachiantrail.org/about/history/index.html)  
[www.aldha.org/advice.htm](http://www.aldha.org/advice.htm)  
[www.patc.net/index.html](http://www.patc.net/index.html)  
[www.fred.net/kathy/at.html](http://www.fred.net/kathy/at.html)  
[www.ratc.org/index.shtml](http://www.ratc.org/index.shtml)

.....  
**Developed by: Jane Garnett and Laura Garnett**  
**Botetourt Service Unit**

.....