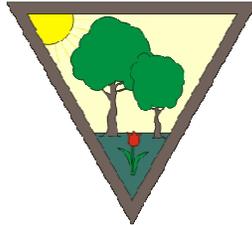


# Fun in the Forest

## Girl Scout Brownie Try-it

Girl Scouts of Wisconsin – Badgerland Council



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Forests are fascinating places that exist not just in Wisconsin, but all around the world. Forests are home to many plants and animals. They are also an important resource for humans. These activities will help you learn about the many interesting things that live and grow in the forest. Do at least four of the following activities. An \* indicates a mandatory activity.

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### 1. Tree Encounter

Most people think of trees when they think about forests. Trees are one of the most important, and because of their large size, most noticeable plants in the forest. Learn what the different parts of a tree are and what they do. You might also want to get to know some individual trees. What makes each tree unique? What differences are there between different species of trees?

### 2. What's in the Forest?

More than just trees make their home in the forest, and there's no better way to investigate what else lives in the forest than checking it out first hand. Visit a forest. Hike through the forest and make a list of all the things you experience. Use your senses to discover the texture of different types of tree bark, the smell of different patches of forest floor and so on.

### 3. Forest Ecosystems

An ecosystem is made up of living and non-living things. After completing Activity 2, determine which of the things you saw in the forest were living, dead, or never alive at all. Think about the relationships between them. To complete this requirement, you could play a game draw or paint a mural of the forest you visited.

### 4. Leaf Investigation

Leaves are a very important part of the tree, as they collect energy of the sun's rays and turn it into food for the tree. Examine leaves from at least 4 different kinds of trees. Have an adult help you identify what type of trees the leaves come from. Look at how the colors and shapes of the leaves are different. Discuss the meanings of the terms, **broadleaved**,

**needle-leaved, deciduous, and evergreen.** Once you are finished investigating, you might want to make a collage of your leaves in the following way:

- a) Arrange the leaves on a sheet of wax paper.
- c) Add crayon shavings or glitter to the arrangement.
- b) Place a second sheet of wax paper on the top of the collage, and then have an adult cover the collage with a sheet of newspaper and use a hot iron to melt the two sheets of wax paper together (note: you must leave clear space along the edges of the wax paper and between the leaves in order for the pieces of wax paper to melt together).

## **5. Plant a Tree**

Trees can be an important resource in a community. Most people find trees and the birds and animals that make their homes in them interesting to look at. Trees can also clean the air, removing pollution from cars and factories. Choose an area of your community where you can plant and care for at least 3 trees. Choose a tree that is native to your area, and learn what things it needs to stay healthy, such as the amount of sun and water it needs, and what type of soil it likes to grow in. Some trees species live to be hundreds of years old, so you can visit your trees throughout your lifetime to see how they are doing.

## **6. Products of the Forests**

Humans have found many ways to make the trees that grow in forests into products that we use every day. What types of products from the forest do you use? You might be surprised how many things actually come from forests. Do one of the following to learn more about forest products.

- a) Do a scavenger hunt to see how many forest products are used in your house.
- b) Learn about a single forest product by investigating how it is made or processed, what type of forest plant or animal it comes from, and who uses it.

## **7. Forest Animals**

Many animals make their home in the forest, from tiny insects to big black bears. Learn about some of the animals that live in Wisconsin's forests. Find out about the things these animals need to live such as food and shelter. Learn about what animals do during different times of the year to survive, and how they make use of plants living in the forest.

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