

Working with Girl Scouts

By Lori Stralow Harris of Salt Creek Butterfly Farm

www.saltcreekbutterflyfarm.com ~ www.wildadornment.com



Until this year I have marketed my art in nature programs to scouting groups with the idea that my only value to them was to help them earn a badge. Earning petals, badges and patches is at the core of the scouting program, symbolizing the girls' accomplishments as they master skills and character building activities.

That changed when I casually overheard an art teacher say that she had just done a painting project with a brownie group for a mother daughter tea. I asked for the brownie leader's contact information and made a cold call. Although their activities were booked for the remainder of the year, I called her again in late

summer to see if I could get on their schedule for the upcoming year, just as they were developing their schedule.

To my delight, once the brownie leader told the other leaders in the school what they were bringing me in to do, every group decided they wanted me to come as well. By offering them a very slight discount, I booked a visit with every Girl Scout group in the school (100 girls). They had a terrific experience and I've asked them for referrals.

I can't emphasize enough that it's important to keep your eyes and ears open for possibilities, and adapt what you're doing just enough to suit someone's specific needs.

I will describe the art program that I led in detail, but first want to outline some of the scouting information the leaders work with when they ARE working on badges. By giving you this scouting information first, you'll see how my program does and doesn't fit in with their usual requirements.

The following pages are reprints of my website advertising toward Girl Scouts. I will keep this information the same, but now that I realize I can do activities with scouts that do not need to follow specific requirements, I'll add some new material to suggest this art project and will include photos and testimonials from the Girl Scout leaders



Girl Scouts

Let **Salt Creek Butterfly Farm** be part of your exciting journey through scouting!
www.saltcreekbutterflyfarm.com (708) 601-1080 *Countryside, IL*



Bridging Ceremonies

Bridging Ceremonies - Release a butterfly as each of your girls bridge to the next level for an unforgettable, visual symbol of their growth and accomplishment. Butterflies are available late May through mid September. Ceremony can be held at our butterfly farm or arranged for your facility. Facility rental \$60 for 1.5 hrs, butterflies priced individually.

Special Meetings- Hold your next service unit activity in our beautiful, airy butterfly tent. Available May through September. In addition to the space, we can provide refreshments and/or activities if requested.



Badges and Patches

Daisy Petals

Daisy Rose Petal: Make the World a Better Place:

Butterfly release. Plan a butterfly release to memorialize whatever issue is near and dear to your girls. A release of native, locally raised butterflies is a meaningful, visible symbol of compassion, caring and hope. Ceremony can be small and exclusive to your troop, or larger to include an entire community. Facility rental \$60 for 1.5 hrs, butterflies individually priced. Petal can be done late May thru mid September.

Butterfly House. Butterflies have been described as nature's "flying flowers". Find out what you can do to encourage more of these delicate wonders to visit your home, school or community garden. Together we'll decorate a butterfly house for your own garden. Petal can be done in any season. \$18 per girl

Brownie Badges

Bugs:

Take an up close look at some of nature's most beautiful bugs - butterflies! Their wing patterns and coloration can be appreciated in any season in our hands-on activity with stunning butterfly specimens. We'll do a colorful butterfly art project to take home. Year-round availability. \$15 per girl

Junior Badges

Animal Habitats: Although Monarch butterflies are found scattered all throughout the United States during the warmer months of the year, they migrate by the millions each fall to a small, very specific, very delicate habitat in the Mountains of Mexico. Let's find out what makes this place so special, and why it may be in danger. A beautiful take home craft will help illustrate this habitat. Year-round availability. \$15 per girl

Gardener: Learn about the "Monarch Waystation" - a wonderful type of garden that allows the entire Monarch lifecycle to unfold before you. It contains plants for every stage of the butterfly's life. Find out what these host and nectar plants are so you can plan a new Monarch Waystation, or transform an existing garden into one. You can even get your garden officially certified by Monarch Watch to show others that you are contributing to Monarch conservation. Year-round availability. \$10 per girl

Classes are 1.5 hrs in length, Facility rental \$60 for 1.5 hrs, Call for butterfly pricing.

Salt Creek Butterfly farm raises native Illinois butterfly species.

We're located on the property of Double J Riding Club

10545 74th Street Countryside, IL



Scouting Levels/Ages

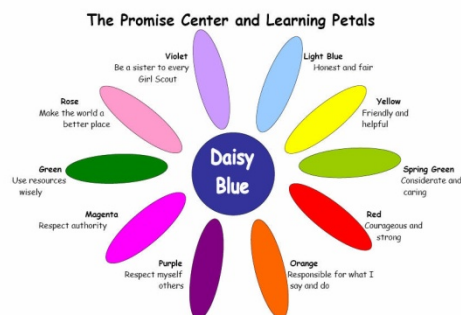
Girl Scouts are separated into levels of achievement. All the levels within a school form a troop. Each group of girls within the troop typically has two adult leaders who plan activities that allow the girls to receive badges upon completing the programs. The Scouts must complete specific activities and earn specific **badges** to advance to the next level. The badges are designed to build character and develop responsibility. Individual troops can decide what activities they will do to achieve those badges. Within the last two years a new category has been added which offers a lot of flexibility. It's called "Build a Badge" and allows the girls to decide what they'd like to learn about that doesn't already have a formal badge. This opens the possibility of Butterfly Raising as a badge. Finally, there are **patches** which celebrate fun things like visiting the zoo, or birthdays.

Girl Scout Daisies ages 5-7

Girl Scout Brownies ages 7-9

Girl Scout Juniors ages 9-11

Girl Scout Cadets ages 11-14



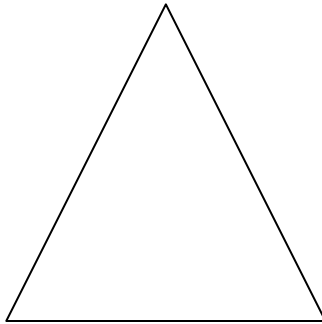
Daisy level: Rose petal, Make the World a Better Place



All levels: Make the World a Better Place



Offered by specific council: learn about butterflies



Create a Badge. Girl Scouts can now decide what they want to learn about and create their own patch. Why not Raising Butterflies?

The following pages list the requirements developed by the Chesapeake Bay Girl Scouts to earn a Butterfly Patch. It is a regional patch, meaning only scouts in that area can earn it. There is no reason you cannot draw from this list of requirements if your local scouts want to work on the Create a Badge. You can see there are many possibilities.

Butterflies

All Grade Level Patch



A resource booklet is available at www.gscb.org to assist with completing this patch.

To earn this patch:

Daisy - complete three or more items.

Brownie - complete six or more items.

Junior - complete nine or more items.

Cadette, Senior and Ambassador - work with two or more younger troops to earn this patch.

1. Learn the parts of a butterfly. Draw an outline of a butterfly and label its parts.
2. Learn about the life cycle (metamorphosis) of a butterfly. What are the stages of the butterfly and how long does the process take?
3. Learn the names of five different butterflies and try to find a picture of each. What are the differences between them as well as the difference between a butterfly and a moth.
4. Monarch butterflies migrate from the United States each winter. Research the migration of the monarch butterfly and make a map of its flight plan.
5. Butterflies are defenseless. Their colorful wings help them to blend into their surroundings. Find out what makes up the color patterns of butterflies' wings. Using the butterfly outlines page in the Butterfly Resource Book, color a butterfly that is hiding.
6. Find out what the largest and smallest butterflies in the world are called. What is the size of their wing-span? Find out where these butterflies live.
7. What is a Lepidopterist? Learn about what role they play for butterflies. What do you have to do to be a Lepidopterist? How long does it take? Talk to a Naturalist and learn what they do for butterflies. How do you learn to be a Naturalist?
8. Observing butterflies can be fun and interesting. Learn how to attract butterflies to your home, school or meeting place. If you are able, design, plant and maintain a butterfly garden.
9. Do two activities from the activities section of the Butterfly Resource Book.
10. Write a story or poem, factual or fiction, about butterflies.
11. Play a game or learn a song that represents the butterfly.
12. Create a craft that represents the butterfly.
13. Visit a butterfly garden in you area.
14. Have a picnic, create food or enjoy food that represents the butterfly.
15. Complete a community service project that symbolizes butterflies or assists the butterflies. Examples include: creating cards with butterflies on them and donate them to hospitals or elderly homes; make butterfly cookies and donate them; create a butterfly garden; adopt a butterfly.



I've copied the official Girl Scout website's page with the requirements to Create a Badge. By clicking the link you can see the 5 things they'll need to include, and hopefully you'll see how relevant you are as a community resource!

Create A Badge



Build your Skills with a Custom Design and Create a Badge

Did you know girls can create and design their own Girl Scout badges? Girl Scouts from Brownies through Ambassadors can decide what they want to learn and develop on their own or with their Girl Scout friends a badge that helps them build a skill. Make Your Own badges can be earned once a year.

Girls visit the [Make Your Own Web site](#) which gives girls step-by-step directions in designing (and purchasing) their very own badges. Girls use an interactive design tool to select colors, background patterns, shapes, and symbols from a library of hundreds of pieces of original art. Instructions for how to earn the Make Your Own badge through the Five Steps is included in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* for Brownies through Ambassadors.

Here are some features of the Make Your Own Web site:

- The symbols are organized into 11 top-level categories of interests such as nature, arts, sports, and more.
- Each girl will have a personal collection page where year after year the badges she designs will be saved. She can visit her page any time she wants.
- Via the [Web site](#), a girl can invite family and friends to view her badge designs online.
- As a way to encourage girls to reflect on their accomplishments of learning and earning their badges, the site asks the girl to name her badge and tell the story of how she earned it. As a bonus with her badge purchase, her Learn and Earn story will be put on a certificate of accomplishment that can be downloaded and printed.
- The badge a girl creates and purchases is an iron-on badge professionally printed with an embroidered edge. It's the same shape as her grade-level badge and looks and feels just like the Financial Literacy and Cookie Business badges in the National Program Portfolio. Cost of the badge is \$3.50, plus shipping and handling.

Note: Registered users on the Make Your Own Badge site must be 13 years or older. If you wish to allow your daughter under the age of 13 to design and purchase a customized badge, you can register and help her create and purchase a badge.

45 Minute Art in Nature Program

used in a school wide program for Daisies, Brownies, Girl Scouts and Cadets

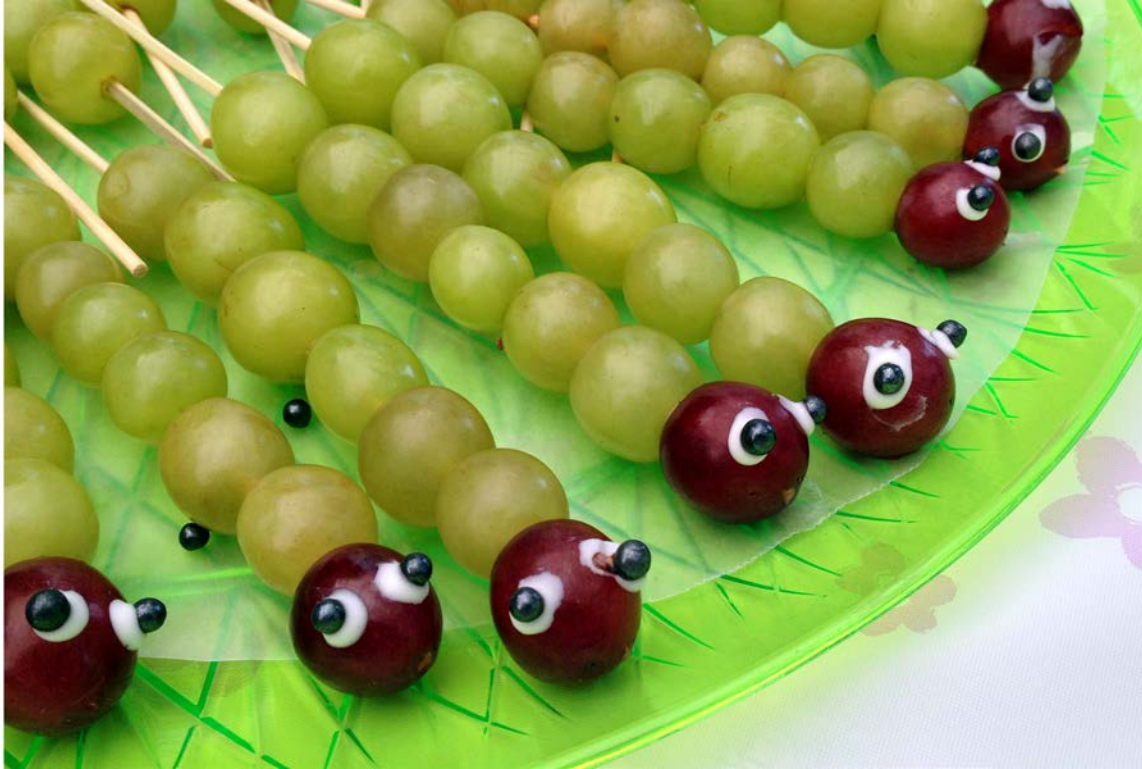
- any number of children
- any age
- any setting
- any time of year
- lots of fun
- educational
- you are qualified to lead it
- great profit margin
- marketing tool for other aspects of your business

The art project I will describe was chosen by every troop in one entire school (100 girls) as an end of year activity. They were not using the project to earn a badge. I hadn't considered until this year that these groups also do activities that don't necessarily work toward badges. It was so simple and cost effective because I used the same project, same materials, and same format each time.

I've used and described this project before, but had always made it more complicated by also explaining and showing examples of the butterfly life cycle. Because the Girl Scouts had other business to attend to in the meeting (snacks and attendance), they had less time available. I skipped the whole life cycle section I normally do and instead showed specimens of the butterflies I've raised at our farm. I also took some laminated pages from the book 100 Butterflies to show examples of wing pattern variety.

Extra fun- I did take a small container of prolifically egg laying painted ladies as well as one potted ribgrass plantain and one potted milkweed. I told the girls these were specially trained butterflies and would only lay eggs on a container with a star (ribgrass host plant). After having the girls inspect the eggless plants, I put both plants into the popup and put the popup into a sunny window. At the end of the 45 minutes I removed the plants. I let the girls guess how I did my "magic trick" and we got many, many eggs on the plantain. It was fun that quite a few already knew about host plants! True, the painted ladies aren't so behaved that they didn't also lay eggs on the screen and some on the milkweed- they apparently needed more practice to learn my magic trick!

Extra, extra fun- Suggest the snack mom bring the following nutritious snack...



Art Project Materials:

- 8x10 stretched canvas (Michaels craft store. With coupon \$1 ea.)
- Water-soluble Cray-Pas (Dick Blick)
- <http://www.dickblick.com/products/portfolio-series-watersoluble-oil-pastels/>
- Water cups
- Brushes
- Paper towels
- Baby wipes
- Smock
- Pencil
- Permanent black marker

Lay out materials on one table. Assign one person to dole out a canvas to each person, another to do the water cups, another for brushes etc.

Have the kids follow your lead, you draw a small circle at the top of the canvas with a pencil, they follow on their canvas. Keep going to include all butterfly body parts: head, thorax, abdomen, two sets of wings, antennae, proboscis, compound eye, 6 legs if they want to.

The kids then draw designs into the wings and can be as imaginative as they like, including eye spots, stripes, borders, polka dots etc.

After their pencil drawing on the canvas is finished, they trace their lines with the permanent black marker.

Once that is finished they add color by coloring the water soluble craypas directly on the canvas. Using a brush, wet with water, turns the crayon like marks into paint. They can layer colors, blending and mixing as they go. I like them to fill the background with color as well.

That's it.

If you compare the artwork from a group of children not necessarily interested in being artists, or intentionally signing up for an art class (like an entire scout group) you might feel they didn't get as good of results- that their projects weren't as good. The fact is that not everyone is equally talented at all the same things. I definitely feel this project was engaging to every girl that participated, and the girls were very happy with and proud of their work. That's all I ask. They are mentally present, observing, trying and enjoying something new.

This project included at least four of the suggested activities of the butterfly patch described in the Chesapeake Bay butterfly patch requirements shown earlier. It would take very little imagination to include more or different information and address some of the other suggested activities.

What additional ideas do you have?

