



Welcome to the Montana Natural History Center!

We are excited to offer you the opportunity to earn a Montana Naturalist patch.

The following activities can be done individually or with your troop. When you complete the required activities, please see the person at the front desk. You will be able to purchase a special MNHC patch for \$3.50. Please note that some service projects and career interviews will require advance notice. Contact the MNHC at least 48 hours in advance of your visit so plans can be made for these service projects and/or to arrange meeting with MNHC employees to discuss your specific interests.

What to bring: Scouts interested in completing the patch should bring a journal or extra paper and a pencil. Journals can be purchased at the MNHC gift shop for \$7.50. Other helpful items to have on hand are colored pencils and cameras if kids want to photo-document their discoveries. Pack a bottle of water if you plan to work in the garden. Gloves can be borrowed from MNHC with advanced notice.

Activity Choices: To earn your patch, complete at least **3 activities of your choice from the Learn Something New section**, create at least **1 nature journal entry** and do **1 service project**.

(Parents/Leader: Please look over the list carefully. Choose activities that are appropriate to the age and abilities of the scouts.)

Learn Something New:

Spend some time exploring the exhibits. Complete at least 3 activities below using your journal to record your thoughts.

1. Explore the Naturalist Field Station
 - a. Spend some time exploring the Naturalis Field Station. What is a naturalist? What do they do? What naturalist skills do you want to practice more?
2. Explore Geology
 - a. Watch one of the Glacial Lake Missoula videos. What evidence can you see of Glacial Lake Missoula from MNHC? What evidence can be seen of Glacial Lake Missoula in other locations?
 - b. Take a look at the rock, mineral, and fossil displays. Locate an example of a sedimentary, a metamorphic, and an igneous rock. How can you tell the difference?
3. Explore Montana Ecosystems
 - a. What are the four major ecosystems of Montana? Describe something unique about each.
 - b. List some plants and animals that are found in each ecosystem. Are there any animals that can be found in all four ecosystems?



*Our mission is to promote and cultivate the appreciation, understanding,
and stewardship of nature through education.
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4. Explore Fire Ecology
 - a. Describe how fire affects forests at different elevations. Explain how some animals take advantage of burned areas. Explain how some plants have adapted to fire.
5. Explore the Nature Adventure Garden
 - a. Explore the Nature Adventure Garden. What did you find? Create a list in your journal of what you are finding in the garden. Take a photo or draw a picture of your favorite plant, animal, or insect.
6. Explore the Magic Planet
 - a. Take a moment to explore the Magic Planet by using the touch screen to show you different information about Earth and the other planets. Write down some new things that you have learned about the sun and other planets in our solar system.
 - b. Explore the different global maps of Earth. Choose at least 5 different global images to explore, and choose the one you think is most interesting. Why did you choose that particular globe? What does it tell us about the Earth?
7. Explore the Resource Library
 - a. Visit the Resource Library next to the Geology exhibit. Find a book that can tell you more about something you saw outside, an animal or specimen you found in the exhibit hall, or a topic you explored. Use your reference book to make more notes in your journal about your specimen/object/topic of interest.
 - b. Write down a question you have about something you've seen today. Can you find a book in the library to help you learn more? Can you find photos or images?
8. Explore the Naturalist Lab (not open during the summer)
 - a. Check out the activity on display. Use your journal to record your notes and naturalist observations.
 - b. Ask a staff member to help you select a skull or other specimen to study. Draw a scientific sketch of the object and write down some questions you have about it.
9. Explore Careers: Montana Natural History Center employees are willing to talk to you about careers in natural history. Please contact MNHC at least 48 hours in advance to schedule a meeting.
 - a. Find out about Naturalist jobs like educators, researchers, artists, writers, and more.
 - b. Find out about specific positions at the MNHC.
 - c. Learn about job requirements, training and education requirements, and job opportunities.





Nature Journaling:

To earn a patch, you must create a nature journal entry. This can be within MNHC by studying a specimen or outside MNHC by observing nature along the Milwaukee Trail or in the Nature Adventure/Harrington Native Plant gardens.

1. Bring a nature journal or some blank paper, or purchase one from the gift shop.
2. Set up your journal page by starting with today's date.
3. If you are outside, make some notes about the weather. Is it windy? Cold? Warm and sunny? Do you know what types of clouds you see?
4. Make a note about where you are (inside MNHC? Outside in the garden?).
5. Create a detailed sketch of a natural object or specimen that you are interested in. Use your senses to explore the item and make scientific notes about size, color, texture, shape, etc.
6. Write down at least one question you have about the specimen you studied.
7. If you want, add another drawing to tell more about where you found your specimen. You can draw a map of where you found the item, a picture of the view from where your item was found, or a picture of your specimen in its natural habitat.

Service Project:

To earn a patch, you must complete a service project. If you are interested in projects 7-11 below, please call MNHC at least 48 hours in advance to make arrangements for the service project. Please allow 30 minutes to an hour to complete the service project. Depending on the project, you may want/need to bring equipment such as work gloves. All other equipment will be provided by MNHC. Examples of service projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Sweeping the front entryway, steps, and ramp.
2. Picking up trash around the parking lot, bike path, and gardens.
3. Weeding the Nature Adventure Garden, Harrington Native Plant Garden, or the Fort Missoula Native Plant Garden.
4. Raking leaves, or spring or fall cleaning of the gardens.
5. Dusting shelves around specimens.
6. Washing windows.
7. Organizing the Naturalist Field Station exhibit or the Naturalist Lab.
8. Cleaning the Discovery Room or Classroom.
9. Create simple bird feeders for garden spaces.
10. For older scouts, contact the Montana Natural History Center about opportunities to volunteer for education programs or more involved stewardship projects.
11. Do you have an idea for a Silver, Bronze, Gold, or Eagle Scout award? Contact us!

