

Marine Mammal Badge

Brownies



GIRL SCOUTS of GREATER LOS ANGELES

www.girlscoutsla.org

GSGLA Marine Mammal Badge - Brownies

"The world's finest wilderness lies beneath the waves ..." — Wyland, Marine Life Artist

Purpose: This badge will guide you through the discovery of California coastal marine mammals, and the places in Los Angeles where you can learn more about them, what they are and how they impact our culture. By exploring marine mammals, how they live, what they eat and where they go, you will be introduced to a world like no other, a one beneath the waves and full of life.

Directions: Choose one option either a, b or c from each step in the badge. This badge is intended to get you or your troop out into the educational areas of Los Angeles County and to discover marine mammals by exploration. When you are completing this badge try to be as adventurous as possible and try to reach as many of the locations while completing the steps to the badge. For instance, if you accomplish one step at the Aquarium of the Pacific try to accomplish the other steps at other locations so your education will be broadened by your experiences.

Steps:

1. What is a mammal? What is a marine mammal? Discuss the qualities that make an animal a MAMMAL. How is it different and the same as other animals. What makes a mammal a MARINE MAMMAL? There are 5 groups of marine mammals that include whales, dolphins, seals and sea lions, sea otters and polar bears!
 - a. Visit the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, CA. Make sure to visit the sea otters, seals and sea lions. What's your favorite marine mammal? Where does it live? What does it eat? What can it do that is special? Then draw an imaginary marine mammal that you create!
 - b. Visit the Los Angeles Zoo and have a mammal scavenger hunt! See how many mammals you can check off of a list that you create! Remember what makes a mammal different than any other animal? Draw a picture of your favorite mammal that you saw at the zoo.
 - c. Visit the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles and go to the Age of Mammals exhibit to learn about the evolution of mammals. After your visit play marine mammal tag! This game is played much like TV Tag except before you are tagged you have to say a kind of mammal that you learned about at the museum. After your game, discuss which marine mammals are your favorite and why.

2. Sea Senses- What are your 5 senses? Discuss as a group how marine mammals might use their 5 senses. How is this different or the same as other animals. Explore how these animals see, smell, hear (communicate), taste and feel.
 - a. How do marine mammals stay warm? Visit the ecosystems exhibit at the California Science Center in Los Angeles. Go to the polar ecosystem and do some of the hands-on activities to simulate how these animals stay warm in some of the harshest conditions. Then later when you get home do an experiment in your kitchen. You will need a rubber kitchen glove, a few gallon sized zip bags and a bucket of ice water. Fill one gallon zip bag with a fuzzy material to represent fur, fill 2 smaller zip bags of Crisco and slide into the larger gallon bag to represent blubber, and leave one bag empty. Feel free to experiment with a fourth bag with other various warm items. First place hands in the rubber glove and the empty zip bag and submerge in the ice water for a few seconds. Dry the glove and then test slipping the gloved hand into the various zip bags between the materials and then submerging in the ice water to see which insulates the best. Be sure that the materials don't get wet! Discuss your findings with the group/troop or with a parent/ guardian.
 - b. At the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, CA there is an exhibit called Whales: Voices of the deep. Learn about the various songs that different whales use to communicate. Do other marine mammals make sounds? What could these sounds be used for other than communication? Play a game where all girls will be given a film canister filled with a different item (ie; rice, beans, coins, beads, sand, etc.) Have one girl be the marine mammal and have her blindfolded. The other girls will sit in a circle around her and shake their noise items. The marine mammal will have to shake a 2nd canister that matches the sounds in one or a few other canisters and then try to locate the unique sound that matches. This game simulates how difficult it might be to communicate or find food in an ocean surrounded by sound.
 - c. Learn about Whale Songs at either the Cabrillo Aquarium in San Pedro or the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach and how they can be used to communicate with other whales over really far distances. Learn more about the sounds that different whales make. Dolphins also make all kinds of sounds like clicks, whistles and chirps. Sea Lions are well known for their barks and sea otters growl and chatter. After listening to some examples of these sounds make up a story about what these animals might be talking about and telling each other! For extra fun- create your own secret language based on marine mammal sounds, kind of like pig Latin, but let's call it whale Latin!

3. Watch a Marine Mammal in Action! Visit a place where you can see live marine mammals. (Parents/guardian's and troop leaders- please review Volunteer Essentials for any permission forms that may be necessary).
 - a. Visit the Aquarium of the Pacific to watch the sea otters or seals/sea lions. Talk to someone that works there or participate in a tour or show and find out more about how their life is like in the wild.
 - b. Go on a whale watching expedition through Harbor Breeze at the Aquarium of the Pacific or through the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium. See if you can view some marine mammals in their natural habitat (what is a habitat?). Ask about the migration patterns of the California Gray Whale and other local whale species. Why do they migrate from one area to another? Are there any other animals that migrate-why? Do people migrate-why?
 - c. Take a trip to a Los Angeles County beach and see if you can spot any marine mammals. Find out from a naturalist, life guard, park ranger, marine biologist, animal control or someone that works with marine animals about how to stay safe when you see a marine mammal. How close should you get? What are some things to be aware of? Can they hurt you? Learn about the Marine Mammal Protection Act and how it protects animals and people from getting hurt.

4. How have marine mammals influenced our cultures? From songs and stories, cave paintings and artwork, to Moby Dick and Free Willy, marine mammals have been a part of human culture for thousands of years. Find out a little more about the splash they have made in our cultures.
 - a. Visit a California State Beach in Los Angeles County such as Leo Carrillo State Park and learn about a Native American culture and think about how marine mammals might have had an impact on this culture. Find a Native American story about a marine mammal and create an art project or craft that represents marine mammals in Native American Culture.
 - b. Visit the Aquarium of the Pacific and learn about how marine mammals are celebrated in a different country/culture. Try to catch one of the festivals that feature a different culture. Parents and troop leaders visit this link to find a date for your trip: <http://www.aquariumofpacific.org/exhibits> Do some more research at home with books and the internet to find out about how these magnificent animals are celebrated and then have a marine mammal party of your own where you and your friends celebrate a marine mammal!
 - c. Living in Tinsel Town (Hollywood) the movies are right in our own backyard. If you visit Leo Carrillo State Beach, find out about the many movies made at this

Los Angeles local beach. Learn about California Gray Whales at the visitor center and then think about how whales or other marine mammals have influenced books and movies in our culture. What are some examples? Do you think that this can influence the way people think about marine mammals? Then have a marine mammal movie night! Make some popcorn and watch a movie about a marine mammal with a parent/guardian's permission (Parents/guardian's and troop leaders- please preview any videos or movies to ensure they are age appropriate and review Volunteer Essentials for any permission forms that may be necessary).

*For extra fun make your own movie about a California Gray Whale and watch it with your family and friends at your movie night!

5. Protect and Save! What kinds of marine mammals are endangered? What does it mean to be endangered or extinct?
 - a. Visit the Fort McArthur Marine Mammal Care Center in San Pedro. Find out about some of the threats that harm marine mammals and how you or your troop can help! Create a service project to benefit the marine mammal care center of your choice.
 - b. At the Aquarium of the Pacific and the Cabrillo Aquarium there are watershed exhibits that show how waste travels from the inner city to the ocean. Visit one of these locations and discuss some of the threats for marine mammals by the waste that flows to the ocean. What kind of groups help to protect marine mammals? What do they do to help? Create a service project to help reduce the amount of waste that flows to the ocean.
 - c. At a Los Angeles County Beach, plan a beach clean-up and discuss how trash, chemicals, waste, fertilizers, and other human impacts affect marine mammals.

Once you have completed the requirements for this badge you can purchase them in any of our seven Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles shops.

Check out our locations, hours and contact information at <http://www.girlscoutsla.org/pages/shop/index.html#hours>