

## **Great Outdoors Month June 2010**

June 2010 will be the seventh Great Outdoors Month celebration and will include Great Outdoors Week (June 7-13). The National Park Service promotes this month in its efforts to unlock the Great Outdoors to urban minorities, and children, fighting obesity through outdoor recreation on public lands and much more.

Outdoor recreation is a pervasive force in America, providing mental, physical, economic and social benefits. June is an especially active time for recreation in America, with millions of us commencing summertime activities and hundreds of annual events and meetings ranging from National Trails Day to National Boating and Fishing Week, National Family Recreation Week to National Clean Beaches Week. Recognition of the value of recreation and the importance of June as a time of recreation activity prompted Presidential designation of June as Great Outdoors Month for the first time in 2004.

### **DAISY ACTIVITIES**

#### **ACTIVITY #1- Outdoor Car Wash**

Encourage girls to participate in this warm weather water play activity by bringing their bicycles, riding toys, scooters, etc. for a car wash.

Materials: Riding cars, sponges, and shallow dishes of soapy water.

Directions: Set up an area where the children can pretend to be a car wash. Place many shallow bowls containing soap and water outside and give each child a sponge. Note: It must be a nice day, warm weather

#### **ACTIVITY #2 - Rock Collecting**

You will need: Sturdy bags for collecting, egg cartons, tempera paint, paint brushes, small containers of water, newspaper, clear nail polish (optional).

Directions: Explain that the girls will be looking for rocks to collect during an outdoor walk in the park etc. While outside talk about the shapes, sizes and colors of the rocks they find. Compare the sizes, textures, colors and shapes of the rocks and stones. Wash and dry the rocks. Then sort them into piles according to size, color, shape or texture. Create a rock collection by using egg cartons to store and display the rocks and stones according to size etc. Paint rocks with tempera, girls may wish to paint faces, etc. on their rocks and/or make them shine by permitting the paint to dry and then brushing on clear nail polish.

#### **ACTIVITY #3 - Nature Rubbing Books**

You will need: Lightweight paper (recycled copy paper works well), old crayons without the wrappers.

Directions: Place paper over outdoor objects and areas (ex. sidewalks, tree trunks, grass, exterior of buildings, fences etc.) and rub with crayons. Arrange the rubbings in order from smoothest to roughest. Label each rubbing and bind together to create books.

#### ACTIVITY #4 - Make a Parachute Toy

What You Need: String, A bandana or small piece of cloth, Button with four holes, Pipe cleaner, small stone, action figure or other small objects

Directions: Cut four equal pieces of string, about 18-24 inches in length. Thread each string through a separate hole in the button, then tie them together, leaving a few inches trailing at the bottom. Lay out your bandana or cloth and stretch the other ends of the strings, taping one string to each corner of the bandana. You've got a parachute.



#### ACTIVITY #5 - Trail Mix

Mix up the following ingredients in a large ziplock bag to make this classic camping snack: 4 cups of Chex cereal, 1/2 cup of dried fruit bits, 1/2 cup of raisins, 1/2 cup of peanuts, and 1/2 cup of M & Ms.

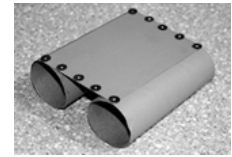
#### ACTIVITY #6 - Home-Made Binoculars

Materials needed 2 Cardboard Toilet Paper Rolls, Small Piece of Lightweight Cardboard (From a Cereal Box, Etc.), Paint, School Glue, Scissors

Instructions: Paint both cardboard toilet paper rolls. Set them aside to dry.

Cut a piece of lightweight cardboard 2" x 6". Paint it and set it aside to dry.

Once all of the paint is dry, place a line of glue down both long ends of the 2" x 6" piece of cardboard. Set the toilet paper rolls down on the glue, let the glue dry. You can add some embellishments to your binoculars such as beads, feathers, or sequins. You can add a strap. Simply tape or glue a piece of yarn or string onto your binoculars so you can wear them around your neck.



#### ACTIVITY #7 - Listen to the World

Sit the girls back-to-back, and have them close their eyes. Tell them to concentrate on listening to all the sounds around them. Listen to the world. Is the refrigerator humming, a plane flying overhead, the dog barking, or telephone ringing? Say what you hear. Are there any soft sounds? High sounds? Share what sounds they can hear.

#### ACTIVITY #8 - *Little Cloud* by Eric Carle –

Read this book to the girls on a cloudy day and see what shapes they can find in the sky.

### **BROWNIE ACTIVITIES**

#### ACTIVITY #1 - Treasure Hunt

Materials: Small plastic gold coins, inexpensive beaded necklaces, small rings, play money, and a treasure box. A hand-made map for the girls to follow. Inexpensive treasures.

Directions: First hide the treasure box in a good hiding place outdoors. Begin the search at a particular place (tree near the door, gate near the parking lot, etc.) Look up and find another clue. The second clue might have a rhyme or just say now walk twenty five steps until you come to the playhouse, etc. Finally when the girls come to the place where the treasure is buried or hidden, they will open it and take turns sharing the treasure inside.

#### ACTIVITY #2 - Homemade Sidewalk Chalk

What You Need: Toilet paper or paper towel tubes, Scissors, Duct tape, Wax paper, 3/4 cup warm water, Small bucket or disposable container, 1 1/2 cups plaster of Paris, 2-3 tablespoons powdered tempura paint

What You Do: If you're using paper towel tubes, cut each tube in half. Cover one end of each paper tube with duct tape. Cut as many pieces of wax paper as you have tubes. Each piece should be as long as the tube and about 4 inches wide. Roll up each piece of wax paper and slip it into the tube. Pour the water into the bucket. Sprinkle the plaster of Paris over the water and stir the

mixture thoroughly with a spoon. Mix in the tempura paint. Place each tube tape side down, on a level surface. Pour the wet plaster mixture into the tubes. Lightly tap the sides of each tube to release air bubbles, then set the plaster-filled tube aside to harden for a few days. Once it's dry, peel off the tubes and wax paper. Your chalk is ready for action!

#### ACTIVITY #3 – A Scavenger Hunt for Shapes!

What You Need: Paper, Pencil, Something to write on (like a clipboard or book)

Directions: Prior to the hunt, decide who will be the “recorder”. Help the recorder make a list across the top of a piece of paper, starting with the shapes you want to find (for example triangle, rectangle, circle, rectangle, diamond). Ready to scavenge? Ask the girls to be on the lookout for shapes that match the recorder's chart. For example, a driveway may look like a rectangle. A leaf may be triangular. A sign in front of a neighbor's house may be a circle. As the girls find familiar shapes, the recorder should write (or draw) the object in the appropriate column. What shape did you find most frequently? Ask why she thinks that shape appeared the most.

#### ACTIVITY #4 - *A Mirror to Nature: Poems About Reflection* by Jane Yolen

Read this collection of poems paired with breathtaking photographs of scenes from nature. Then get the girls inspired to write nature poems of their own.

#### ACTIVITY #5 - Recycled Container Instruments

Celebrate recycling and the joy of music by striking up a band of recycled container instruments!

Materials needed: Clean plastic bottles, coffee cans, and butter tubs (all with lids), uncooked pinto beans, Uncooked rice, Masking tape, CD player, Favorite CD

Directions: Clean out all of your empty plastic bottles and coffee cans with lids. Put a handful of uncooked beans and rice inside each one and tape the lids shut. Give your new percussion instruments a shake and listen.

#### ACTIVITY #6 - Fabric Sit-Upon

Materials Needed: Fabric Scraps (See explanation below), Large Needle, Yarn or String, Plastic Bags or old newspapers

Fabric: Use any heavy-duty fabric for this project, but the best fabric to use for this item is an old tablecloth - the kind that has plastic on one side and material on the other.

Directions: Cut 2 squares out of your fabric. They should be the same size and approximately 2 feet square. Cut a piece of yarn or string about 3 feet long and thread it onto the needle. Pull the yarn or string through the needle eye and then tie the ends together. Start at any of the 4 corners and sew the edges together using a simple running stitch. Leave about an inch around the edge of your material. Sew 3 of the 4 sides together, threading more yarn or string onto your needle if necessary. Once you have 3 sides sewn, stuff your sit-upon full of plastic bags so it looks like a pillow (or newspaper). Sew the last side closed in the same manner you sewed the rest of your sit-upon. Your sit-upon is now ready to use.

#### ACTIVITY #7 - Meet a Tree Game

Play this easy outdoor game for kids in a wooded area or a park with lots of trees.

What You'll Need: Area with a lot of trees, Partner, Blindfold

Directions: Divide the players up into two-person teams. One person in each team puts on a blindfold. The partner turns the blindfolded person around two or three times, and then leads the person in a zig-zag path to a tree. The partner must be very careful to lead the blindfolded person around dangers. The blindfolded person explores the tree, taking as much time as he or she needs to feel the texture of the bark, find bumps or hollows, and find patches of moss or other features. When the blindfolded person is done, the partner leads him or her in a zig-zag path away from the tree, turning the blindfolded person around two or three times in the middle. The blindfolded

person takes the blindfold off and tries to find the same tree. The partners switch places and explore another tree.

## **JUNIOR ACTIVITIES**

### **ACTIVITY #1 – Jug Catch**

Materials: Utility knife, One gallon-size plastic (milk) jug per player, Duct tape (optional), One tennis ball or beanbag per player

Directions: Use a utility knife to cut a one-gallon plastic jug in half horizontally.

Recycle the bottom half of the jug, but save the top half (the half with the handle). You will use the top half, with the handle, for your toy. If you like, cover the cut edge of the jug with duct tape. Two or more girls can use the jugs to toss a tennis ball or beanbag back and forth without touching it with their hands. It also can be used alone. Toss a ball or beanbag in the air and catch it in his jug, seeing how many successful catches can be made in a row.

### **ACTIVITY #2 - Test Your Sense of Smell**

Test your sense of smell. This easy outdoor game will let your troop/group perceive the world as many animals do -- by scent.

What You'll Need: Spray bottle, Strong-smelling flavoring extract (vanilla, mint, lemon), Water

Directions: Fill a spray bottle with water, and add one or two teaspoons of a strong-scented extract. (Peppermint, lemon, and vanilla work well.) Make a trail spray on a tree to see if the scent is strong enough to detect. Have the players close their eyes while one person runs ahead through a wooded area with the spray bottle. The person laying the trail should spray trees and other objects along the way. If playing in grassy fields, be careful not to leave an obvious track through the grass. When the trail maker is done, the rest of the players try to follow the trail.

### **ACTIVITY #3 - Bean Bag Challenges**

Making your own bean bags –

What you need: old socks, dried beans, uncooked rice, dried peas, etc., scissors, needle, thread  
Directions: Using an old sock, leave about 2 inches about the heel and cut off the top. Fill the toe with rice, beans, etc. Tuck in the top edge and sew it closed with a needle and thread. You now have an easy to make and fun to use bean bag! You can also use the top part of the sock for another bean bag, but first you must sew a bottom seam then fill the sock with beans, etc. and then sew the top seam closed..

#### **GAMES TO PLAY WITH BEAN BAGS:**

*Clap N' Catch* – Throw the beanbag in the air, clap hands, and then catch the bag. Try to clap two, three, four times, or more while the beanbag is in the air.

*Bean Balance* – See how many different body parts can be used to balance the beanbag. Try balancing the beanbag on these body parts: forehead, top of the head, back the of neck, shoulder, bent elbow, wrist, top the of thigh, knee, top of the foot, heel of the foot (with his leg bent).

Which one is easiest? Which is more of a challenge?

*Catch Me If You Can* – With a partner, use just one beanbag and decide who will start first with the bag. Stand about three feet apart and toss the bag underhand back and forth to each other. If you both catch the bag you each take one step further back slightly increasing your distance.

Repeat this process until one person drops the bag. At that point, you can start over or decide to step closer to each other for a retry.

Math Bag - Use chalk to make a grid of numbers (9 small squares touching sides) on the pavement. Randomly write numbers in the square (1-9 or odd/even numbers). Each contestant stands a minimum of six feet away, further distances for more of a challenge. Each person tosses 3 bags onto the grid trying to score the highest cumulative score. Play as many rounds as you like.

#### ACTIVITY #4 - Wind Chime Magic

You will need: Go on a treasure hunt and look for items that will create a lovely sound when they collide, such as seashells, bells, beads, and stones.

Directions: If the items are thin enough, poke a hole through them with a nail or hole punch. Then pull a piece of string or nylon thread through each hole, and tie a knot. For heavier objects, such as stones, wrap the string around the object a few times, and rub non-toxic liquid glue over the string to hold it in place. Next, find a colorful plastic lid to serve as the top of the wind chime. Poke holes through the top, and pull the pieces of string or nylon thread through the holes; tie a knot at each end. Finally, punch two holes in the center of the top, and loop a piece of string through the holes. Tie another knot, and hang your wind chime from a nail or the branch of a tree.

#### ACTIVITY #5 - Pick Pocket Tag

Materials: Strips of cloth, 1 per player – large playing area

Directions: Put a strip of cloth in each player's back pocket. Have the players try to grab each other's strips without having their own strip taken. The player with the most cloth strips wins the game.

#### ACTIVITY #6 – Natural Dyes

Before there were chemical dyes, people had to make natural dyes from plant materials. Try your hand at dyeing a shirt or bandanna with these natural dyes.

What You'll Need: Cotton material (tee shirt, bandana) to dye, Laundry detergent, A variety of colorful plant material (see suggestions below), Knife, Glass bowl, Water, Old saucepans, Sieve, Alum (available in the spice rack at grocery stores)

Directions: Wash cotton material in plain detergent with no fabric softener. Cut up plant materials. Chop up or crush hard materials such as roots. Soak them overnight in a glass or enamel bowl with just enough water to cover them. Pour the contents of the bowl into a stainless steel pan. Bring to a boil on the stove and simmer gently for about one hour. Check it frequently and add water when needed. Strain the dye through a sieve to remove plant material. Allow the liquid to cool. Measure the liquid. For every quart of dye, add one half ounce of alum (about one tablespoon). Alum is a mordant. That means it helps set the dye. Wet your fabric and wring it out, then put it in the steel pan with your dye. Put the pan on the stove and simmer slowly until the fabric is just a little darker than you want it. (The fabric will look lighter when it dries.)

Remember that natural colors will be soft, not bright. Move the pan to the sink and pour everything through a strainer. Run a little cold water over your fabric to cool and rinse it, wring it out, and hang it up to dry outdoors where the drips won't hurt anything.

Here are some of the colors you can make from common plants:

Plant	Color
Onion skins	Yellow
Goldenrod flowers	Yellow
Carrots	Yellow
Red onions	Pink
Raspberries	Pink
Beets	Rose
Coffee	Brown
Nut hulls (not shells)	Brown
Grass	Green
Spinach	Green

## **CADETTE, SENIOR & AMBASSADOR ACTIVITIES**

### Activity #1 - Marble Arcade

**Materials:** Scissors, Shoebox, Marker, Heavy object, such as large book or shoe, Marbles  
**Directions:** Cut five or six holes of different sizes and shapes (semicircle, triangle, rectangle, and so on) in one long side of a shoebox. Each hole should be wide enough for a marble to pass through. Write a number between one and ten above each hole. Give easier (bigger) holes lower numbers and harder (smaller) holes higher numbers. Set the box upside down on a flat surface and put a heavy object on the box to hold it in place. Take turns shooting marbles one at a time through the holes from a designated spot. If a marble misses the holes, it stays where it lands. If a marble goes through a hole, its owner retrieves it and collects the designated number of marbles from the playing area. For example, if a marble goes through a hole marked with the number five, its owner collects five marbles from the playing area. If there aren't enough marbles in the playing area, have each player put one or two marbles into a kitty, from which the shooter is paid.

### ACTIVITY #2 - Branch Earring Holder

**Materials:** Spray paint; metallic color or color to match a room , Spindly branch, Newspaper, (if windy outside, you'll need rocks)

**Directions:** Spread the newspaper out on the grass or ground. Place the branch in the middle of the newspaper. Holding the can of spray approximately three inches away from the branch, spray evenly. Allow 5 minutes to dry. Pick up the branch and check for non-painted and uneven spots. Spray those areas again. Allow five minutes to dry. Place the finished branch on a table or dresser and hang your earrings from the little spindly branches.



### ACTIVITY #3 - Stick Vase

**Materials:** Sticks (about 1/4 inch in diameter), clippers, an empty plastic peanut butter jar (or other empty jar), thick rubber bands, raffia or ribbon, glue and pinecones (optional).

**Directions:** Break or snip your sticks to about an inch longer than the jar. Put two rubber bands around the jar, one inch from the top and bottom. Now begin tucking the sticks under both rubber bands, placing them as close as possible to each other. Add a line of glue to each stick. Once you've surrounded the jar with sticks, slide the rubber bands together at the jar's middle, then cover them with a decorative bow. Glue on a few pinecones, or other natural decorations, then fill the vase with flowers. This vase also makes a fine pencil holder.



**CAMP CRAFTER'S TIP:**

### ACTIVITY #4 – Outdoor Fun

**Take a Long Walk** - Explore where you've never been before. Concentrate on what you see and hear.

**Wade in a Stream** - Roll up your pant legs and jump in. Be on the lookout for living things that make creek beds their home. Skip some stones; cool your feet, or just splash around.

**Go Fishing** - A stick, some string, and some bait are all you need to get started. Find out where the locals fish, and try your hand at this fun, relaxing sport.

**Examine Bugs** - You can buy all sorts of bug kits, but any see-through container will do. Provide dirt, leaves, and rocks for your bug's habitat. Use a magnifying glass to get up close and personal.