girl scouts of western ohio

Hiker Challenge Guide

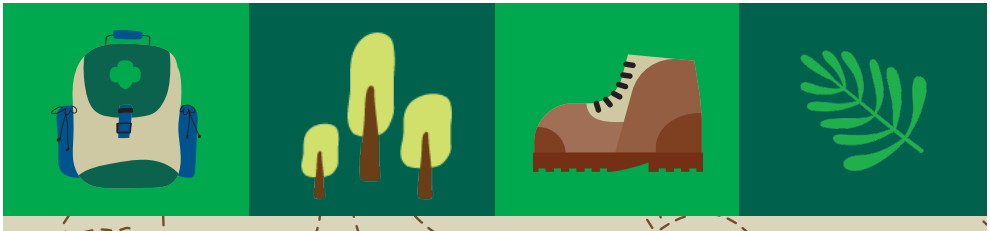
Hiker Challenge Program

Purpose of the program

Welcome to the Hiker Challenge! If you so choose to accept this challenge, you'll have the opportunity to explore and enjoy our many camp properties. Whether you come just for the day or stay overnight, working on the Hiker Challenge will give you plenty of things to do and see while at camp.

Hiking opens up a whole new way to discover what the outdoors has to offer. If you're new to hiking, starting on our camp trails will help you feel more confident when you're ready to venture out to bigger and longer trail adventures.

And! Every time you hike a trail at one of our camps, you can count it towards earning that camp's unique hiking medallion. Ready for a bigger challenge? Hike trails at all six of our camps and earn the ultimate – the GSWO Hiker Challenge Medallion. Here's how.



Earning medallions

Print out the tracker sheet for each participant, adults included. This sheet is designed to give you basic information about each trail; the length, what kind of elevation change along the way, and what the terrain is like. Each time you hike a trail, track it on the sheet by initialing it, filling in the date and any notes about the trail. Once you hike two or more trails at a camp, you've earned a medallion! What's a medallion? It's cool like a patch or badge, but it's a small metal plate that gets attached to a hiking stick. It reminds you where you've hiked!

Medallions *(*actual size)*

Camp Butterworth

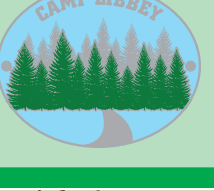
Camp Stonybrook

Camp Whip Poor Will

Camp Rolling Hills

Camp Woodhaven

Camp Libbey



How to purchase medallions

When you have completed two or more trails at a camp, you can purchase that camps medallion at any council shop. However, to purchase the GSWO Hiker Challenge medallion after completing trails at all six camps, you must bring completed forms to the shop.

Included in this packet

- **Tracker Form**
- **Camp Maps:** These are to help you decide which trails best fit your abilities and interests.
- **Skill and Knowledge Building Information:** This is to use before you start hiking, plus hiking games and activities to do once you're on your way down the trail. This lets you learn more before you go, work on hiking related badges if desired, or just head out onto the trail for a quick or leisurely hike to earn some hiking medallions.

GSWO Hiker Challenge Form

Camp	Trail	Distance	Elevation	Terrain	Initials	Date
Stonybrook	Blue Bird Trail - Blue Loop	0.4	1	1		
	Blue Bird Trail - Multiple cut throughs	0.2 +	1	1		
	Swinging Bridge Trail - Program field access to bridge and back	0.4	1	1		
	Swinging Bridge Trail - Honor Lodge access to bridge and back	0.4	2	1		
	Swinging Bridge Trail - Sycamore Glen access to bridge and back	0.4	2	2		
	Swinging Bridge Trail - start at any access point, do all 3 loops, finish at any access point	0.9	2	2		
Whip Poor Will	Nature Trail	0.4	2	2		
	Harpers Run Trail	1.1	3	3		
	South Camp Trail	1.8	3	3		
Butterworth	Turtle Ridge Trail	0.6	2	2		
	Old Chapel Trail	0.8	2	2		
	Catherines Crossing Trail	0.3	2	2		
Rolling Hills	Nature Trail	0.3	1	1		
	Woodlands Trail	0.3	1	1		
	River Trail	0.4	3	2		
	Prairie Trail - Multiple loops	0.2+	1	1		
Woodhaven	Red Loop	0.5	1	1		
	Blue Loop	0.4	1	1		
	White Loop	0.2	1	1		
Libbey	Promise Path	0.3	1	1		
	Daisy Trail	1.5	2	2		
	Zonta Trail	0.9	3	2		
	Jean "Bambi" Ward Trail	0.3	1	1		

- Hike two or more trails at one GSWO camp to earn that camps "Hiker" medallion
- Hike two or more trails at each of GSWO's 6 camps to earn the coveted "GSWO Hiker Challenge" medallion
- Track your hikes on this form. Medallions are available for purchase at council shops.

Distance: Exact mileage from start to finish

Elevation Change: 1 = mostly level, 2 = gradual elevation change, 3 = steeper elevation change

Terrain: 1 = mostly smooth, 2 = some uneven footing,
3 = rocky or eroded sections

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of western ohio

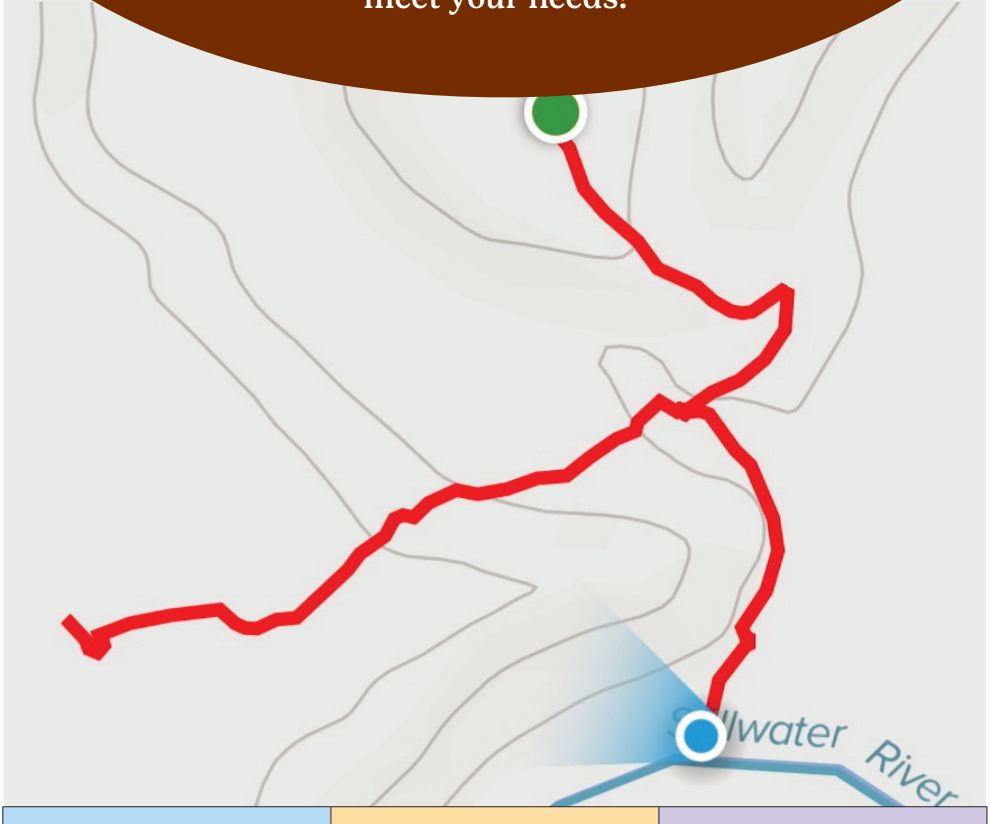
888.350.5090 | gswo.org
customercare@gswo.org

In Partnership With:

United Way

Camp Trail Guide

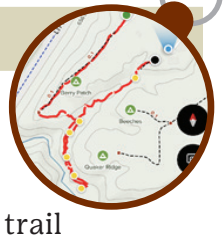
Each camp has several trails ready for you to explore. Use this trail guide to decide which trails meet your needs!



Camp Butterworth	Camp Whip Poor Will	Camp Stonybrook
Camp Rolling Hills	Camp Woodhaven	Camp Libbey

Camp Butterworth Trail Guide

Old Chapel Trail



Beginning: Behind Wagon Wheel or behind the pool

Ending: Behind Wagon Wheel or the pool

Distance: .8 miles

Description: Starting on the road behind the pool, the trail goes through Berry Patch and into the woods. Look for old foundations, and chimneys along the ridge. Dip down to a bridge that crosses a small creek. Turn right to head to the chapel. (A left turn takes you up to Wagon Wheel). Here the trail hugs the edge of the ravine. Once at the chapel, continue a little bit farther to explore the creek. Starting from Wagon Wheel, go down a series of steps and cross a bridge. This trail hugs the creek, finally crossing the creek and arriving at the same bridge mentioned above. Continue straight ahead to the chapel.

Features: Ring the chapel bell, dig clay, look for fossils in the creek.

Catherine's Crossing

Beginning: Past Sassafras Unit, take the road split to the right

Ending: Program side of camp by the Brownie Shelter

Distance: .3 miles

Description: This is a gravel road that takes you across camp from the main side to the program side with access to both ends of the Turtle Ridge Trail.

Features: Walking access to Seasons and Squirrel Hollow Lodges.

Turtle Ridge Trail

Beginning: On either end of Catherine's Crossing

Ending: On either end of Catherine's Crossing

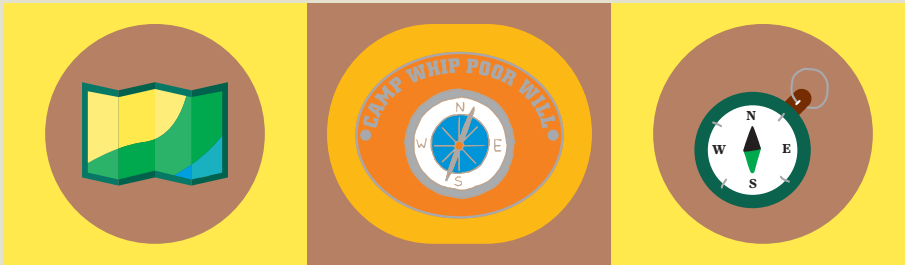
Distance: .6 miles

Description: From the main side of camp, start down Catherine's Crossing where you'll exit left into the woods. Walk the woods to a wooden staircase which takes you down into the ravine. Cut across the hillside, moving downward to the creek. Pick your way across the creek, climb the steps up to the top of the ridge and enjoy the easy ridge path out to the far end of Catherine's Crossing. In reverse, leave the program side of camp and immediately turn right onto the trail just as you enter the trees.

Features: Creek exploration, access to Windy Heights primitive area.

CAMP BUTTERWORTH
N
GS Camp Libbey | 156 miles
GS Camp Woodhaven | 117 miles
GS Camp Rolling Hills | 68 miles
Kings Island | 5 miles
Bike Trail Access | 0.5 miles
Butterworth Station | 0.5 miles
GS Camp Whip Poor Will | 13 miles
GS Camp Stonybrook | 21 miles
NE
FOSTER MAINEVILLE ROAD
N
Camp Butterworth
8551 Butterworth Road
Maineville, OH 45039
FREEDOM LODGE
WINDY HEIGHTS PRIMITIVE AREA
ARCHERY BARN
STORAGE
ACTIVITY BARN
BROWNIE SHELTER
SLING SHOTS & HATCHET THROWING
TURTLE RIDGE TRAIL
FREEDOM LODGE & CHALLENGE AREA 8061 Butterworth Rd
SEASONS LODGE 8143 Butterworth Rd
SQUIRREL HOLLOW LODGE 8183 Butterworth Rd
BUTTERWORTH ROAD
CATHERINE'S CROSSING TRAIL
TURTLE RIDGE ADIRONDACKS
MIAMI LEDGE
COUNCIL RING
NORTH SHOWER HOUSE
SASSAFRAS
PRAIRIE
MAINTENANCE AREA
NATURE PLAYGROUND
BEEHIVE LODGE
WELCOME CENTER
RANGER HOUSE
FLAG POLE
PROGRAM SHELTER
MAIN ENTRANCE 8551 Butterworth Rd
GAGA BALL
GROESBECK LODGE
POOL & SHOWER HOUSE
DINING HALL
MAIN ROADS
LIMITED ACCESS ROADS (1-2 CARS PARKED AT UNIT ONLY)
FOOT PATH/TRAIL
FOOT BRIDGE
PUBLIC FLUSH TOILETS
WAGON WHEEL
FRIENDSHIP LODGE
LITTLE MIAMI RIVER
LITTLE MIAMI SCENIC BIKE TRAIL (NOT GIRL SCOUT PROPERTY)
BERRY PATCH TRAINING UNIT
MAPLE HILL TEEPEE
OLD CHAPEL TRAIL
CREEK
BEECHES GLEN SHELTERS
SOUTH SHOWER HOUSE
CHAPEL
QUAKER RIDGE GLEN SHELTERS
PROGRAM STATIONS
BEEHIVE STATION
POLLINATOR STATION
CATHERINE'S CROSSING TRAILHEAD
BAT STATION
OLD CHAPEL TRAIL TRAILHEAD
SELFIE PHOTO STATION
Cincinnati | 26 miles
Underground Railroad Freedom Center
S
Ripley, OH – John Rankin House
(Underground Railroad) | 59 miles
SE

Camp Whip Poor Will Trail Guide



Nature Trail

Beginning: Across the road from the lake

Ending: Across the road from the lake

Distance: .4 miles

Description: Start at the trailhead sign and walk downhill to the creek. Half of this loop is a path; the other half is a gravel road. Once at the creek, check out the information sign for activities.

Features: Creek exploration, start of the South Camp Trail.

South Camp Trail

Beginning: Across the road from the lake following the nature trail

Ending: On the road between Sassafras Tent Unit and Cookie House.

Distance: 1.8 miles

Description: Follow the nature trail across the creek and up the road where the trail cuts into the woods on the right. Follow the ridge, eventually working your way down to the creek. Make a sharp right turn to follow the creek about 50ft., cross to the other side where the trail continues up the hill. Trail ends on the road.

Features: Creek exploration and fossils, varied terrain, a few steep hills.

Harpers Run Trail

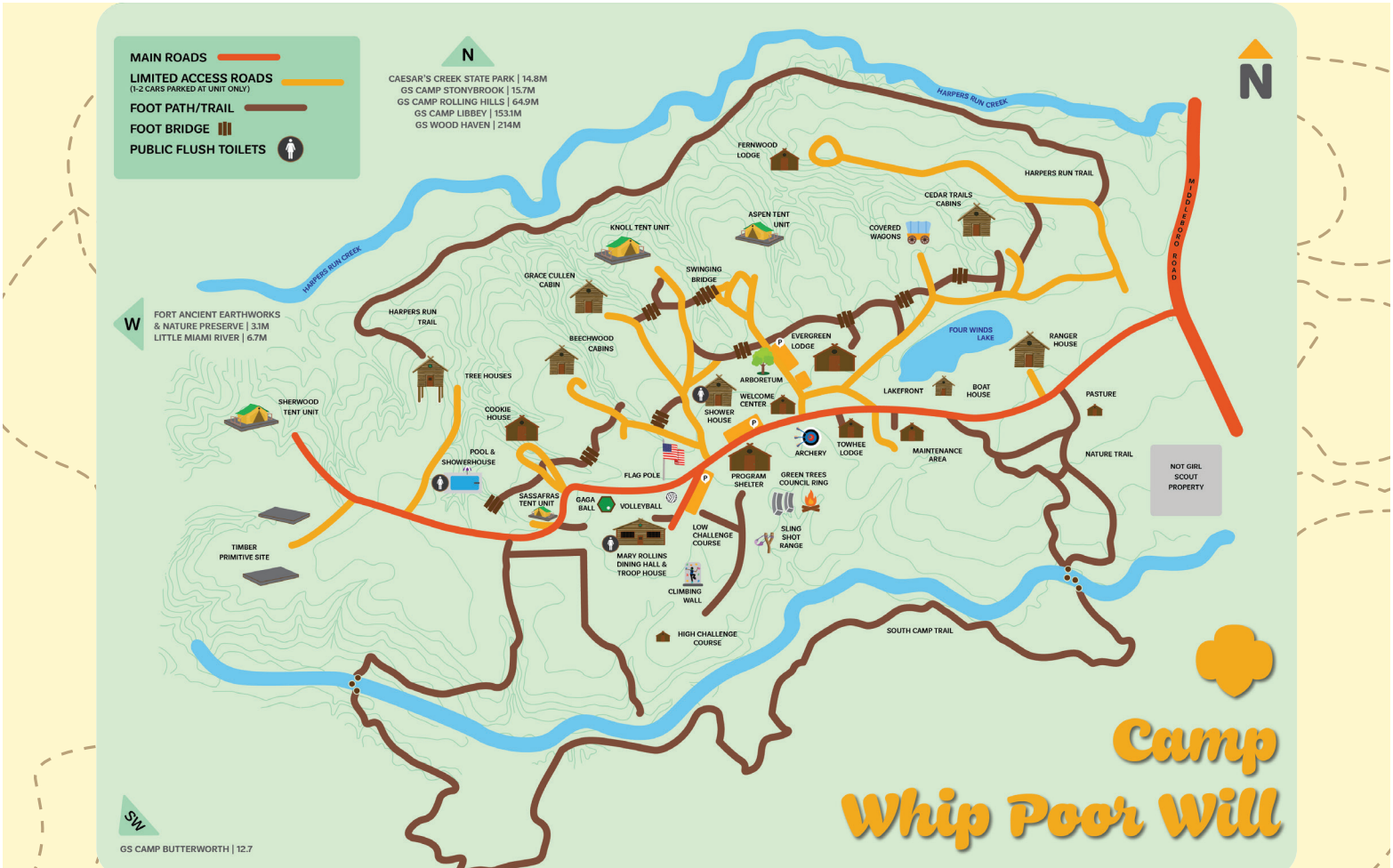
Beginning: Near Tree House Kitchen Shelter

Ending: On road between Cedar Trails and Fernwood

Distance: 1.1 miles

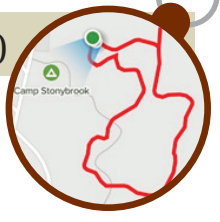
Description: Start at the edge of the woods by the kitchen shelter and descend down to the creek. Turning right, follow the winding trail along the creek. Sometimes walking through more washout than trail, keep going until the trail turns right to head back up to camp. Trail exits onto the road between Cedar Trails and Fernwood.

Features: Creek exploration and fossils. Access to remote parts of camp - great for backpacking or exploring.


MAIN ROADS
LIMITED ACCESS ROADS
(1-2 CARS PARKED AT UNIT ONLY)
FOOT PATH/TRAIL
FOOT BRIDGE
PUBLIC FLUSH TOILETS
N
CAESAR'S CREEK STATE PARK | 14.8M
GS CAMP STONYBROOK | 15.7M
GS CAMP ROLLING HILLS | 64.9M
GS CAMP LIBBEY | 153.1M
GS WOOD HAVEN | 214M
W
FORT ANCIENT EARTHWORKS
& NATURE PRESERVE | 3.1M
LITTLE MIAMI RIVER | 6.7M
SW
GS CAMP BUTTERWORTH | 12.7
HARPERS RUN CREEK
FERNWOOD LODGE
HARPERS RUN TRAIL
CEDAR TRAILS CABINS
KNOLL TENT UNIT
ASPEN TENT UNIT
COVERED WAGONS
MUDDY FORD ROAD
GRACE CULLEN CABIN
SWINGING BRIDGE
HARPERS RUN TRAIL
BEECHWOOD CABINS
EVERGREEN LODGE
FOUR WINDS LAKE
RANGER HOUSE
TREE HOUSES
ARBORETUM
SHERWOOD TENT UNIT
COOKIE HOUSE
SHOWER HOUSE
WELCOME CENTER
LAKEFRONT
BOAT HOUSE
PASTURE
POOL & SHOWERHOUSE
ARCHERY
TOWHEE LODGE
MAINTENANCE AREA
NATURE TRAIL
FLAG POLE
PROGRAM SHELTER
GREEN TREES COUNCIL RING
NOT GIRL SCOUT PROPERTY
SASSAFRAS TENT UNIT
GAGA BALL
VOLLEYBALL
TIMBER PRIMITIVE SITE
LOW CHALLENGE COURSE
SLING SHOT RANGE
MARY ROLLINS DINING HALL & TROOP HOUSE
CLIMBING WALL
HIGH CHALLENGE COURSE
SOUTH CAMP TRAIL
Camp
Whip Poor Will

Camp Stonybrook Trail Guide

Blue Bird Trail – Outer Trail Loop (blue)



Beginning: Corner of the program field closest to Pinetree Lodge

Ending: Same as the beginning or the far corner of the program field

Distance: .4 miles

Description: Starting at the trail sign, follow the blue markers to hike the outer loop. The trail first exits at the far end of the program field. To finish the loop, turn left just before that exit, using the trail to cut back across to where you started.

Features: Bird Blind/Observation Station

Blue Bird Trail – Multiple Cut-throughs

Beginning: Corner of the program field closest to Pinetree Lodge

Ending: Corner of the program field closest to Pinetree Lodge or the far corner of the program field

Distance: .2 miles

Description: Starting at the Blue Bird trail sign, explore the many short cut-through trails. There's no rhyme or reason, just fun to explore. All trails lead back to the main blue trail and out into the program field.

Swinging Bridge Trail System

❶ **Honor Lodge to Swinging Bridge:** Trail starts just down the road from Honor Lodge on the right. Hike up the hill and at the top, follow the trail left to the swinging bridge.

Distance: .2 miles

❷ **Sycamore Glen to Swinging Bridge:** This trail starts off the main camp road between Maple Hollow and Sycamore Glen. Hike up the trail as it winds through a stand of young sycamore trees, into the woods, then finally out to the swinging bridge loop. Turn right to go to the bridge.

Distance: .2 miles

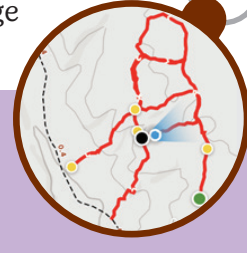
❸ **Program Field to Swinging Bridge:** Start by the Program Shelter and follow the blue markers to the first intersection that turns left. Turning left will lead you to the swinging bridge.

Distance: .2 miles

❹ **Swinging Bridge loops:** There are three loops on the swinging bridge trail system.

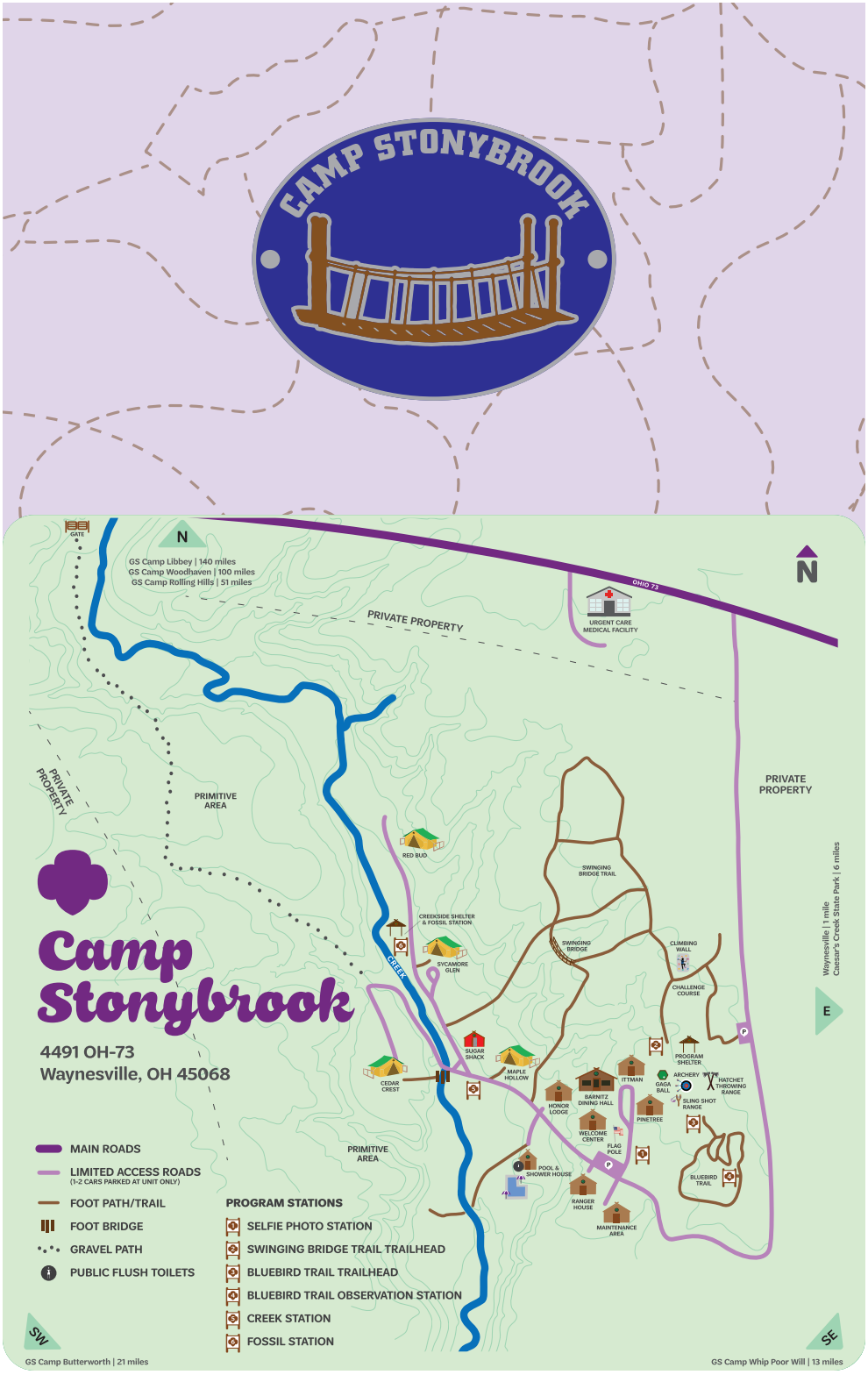
Distance: Each loop is .03 miles around and each loop is a part of the next loop. This provides many hiking options to shorten or lengthen your hike. Starting at one of the access points, the shortest hike is to the swinging bridge and back. Once at the bridge, you can add one, two or three loops to your hike.

Features: Swinging bridge, access to Low Challenge Course and access to the other side of camp.

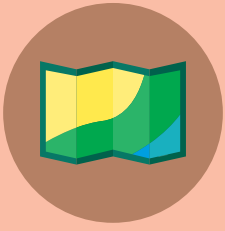


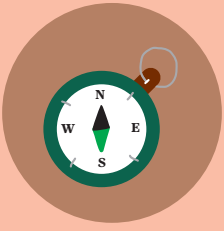
Starting Point Options: Program Field, Honor Lodge and Sycamore Glen. All three trails are marked with blue arrow markers and lead to the swinging bridge.

For the Longest Hike: start at one of the three starting points, hike to the swinging bridge, then hike around the outside of all three loops and back to the same starting point: .9 miles. The outer loop is marked with white arrow markers and leads back to either the swinging bridge area, or the trail leading back to the program field.

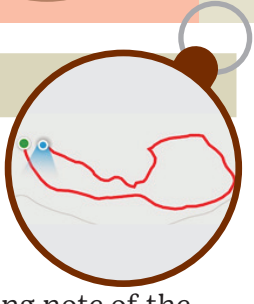

CAMP STONYBROOK
GATE
N
GS Camp Libbey | 140 miles
GS Camp Woodhaven | 100 miles
GS Camp Rolling Hills | 51 miles
OHIO 73
PRIVATE PROPERTY
URGENT CARE MEDICAL FACILITY
PRIVATE PROPERTY
PRIMITIVE AREA
PRIVATE PROPERTY
PRIVATE PROPERTY
Camp Stonybrook
4491 OH-73
Waynesville, OH 45068
RED BUD
CREEKSIDE SHELTER & FOSSIL STATION
SYCAMORE GLEN
CREEK
SWINGING BRIDGE TRAIL
SWINGING BRIDGE
CLIMBING WALL
CHALLENGE COURSE
PROGRAM SHELTER
SUGAR SHACK
MAPLE HOLLOW
CEDAR CREST
ITTMAN
ARCHERY
GAGA BALL
HATCHET THROWING RANGE
SLING SHOT RANGE
HONOR LODGE
BARNITZ DINING HALL
PINETREE
WELCOME CENTER
FLAG POLE
POOL & SHOWER HOUSE
RANGER HOUSE
MAINTENANCE AREA
BLUEBIRD TRAIL
PRIMITIVE AREA
Waynesville | 1 mile
Caesar's Creek State Park | 6 miles
E
MAIN ROADS
LIMITED ACCESS ROADS
(1-2 CARS PARKED AT UNIT ONLY)
FOOT PATH/TRAIL
FOOT BRIDGE
GRAVEL PATH
PUBLIC FLUSH TOILETS
PROGRAM STATIONS
SELFIE PHOTO STATION
SWINGING BRIDGE TRAIL TRAILHEAD
BLUEBIRD TRAIL TRAILHEAD
BLUEBIRD TRAIL OBSERVATION STATION
CREEK STATION
FOSSIL STATION
SW
SE
GS Camp Butterworth | 21 miles
GS Camp Whip Poor Will | 13 miles

Camp Rolling Hills Trail Guide





Woodlands Trail



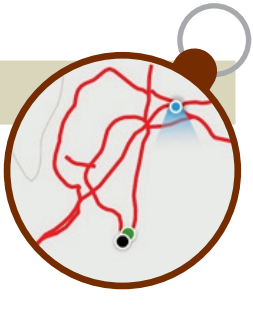
Beginning: On the road leading to Tall Oaks.

Ending: On the road leading to Tall Oaks close to the start.

Distance: .3 miles

Description: From the road, turn onto the trail, taking note of the ravine on one side and woods on the other. The trail will loop back and end on the road close to where you entered.

Prairie Trail



Beginning: Main entrance - just beyond the flagpole at the tree line. Other entrances include a path near the road to the wagon unit, from the road near Tall Oaks, and from the Tall Oak unit itself.

Ending: Either out into the field by the flagpole, near the wagon road, the road to Tall Oaks, or Tall Oaks unit.

Distance: .2 miles or more (depending on how many short trail sections you explore)

Description: This trail starts near the flagpole and weaves through a young forest. There are multiple ways to turn, but all the trails end shortly at one of the mentioned exits.

Nature Trail

Beginning: Between the archery and hatchet throwing range, or beside the slingshot range.

Ending: Between the archery range and the hatchet throwing range, or beside the slingshot range; plus an exit at whispering winds unit.

Distance: .3 miles

Description: This is a loop trail where you can enter and exit where you choose. The trail loops through the woods and pines with a few optional side trails to explore.

Features: Quiet pine woods.

River Trail

Beginning: Start at the kitchen shelter in the Adirondack unit.

Ending: Stillwater River

Distance: .2 miles one way (.4 miles round-trip)

Description: Starting at the kitchen shelter, follow the road down the hill to the small creek. Follow the trail left around the hill towards the river.

Features: Stillwater River

girl scouts of western ohio

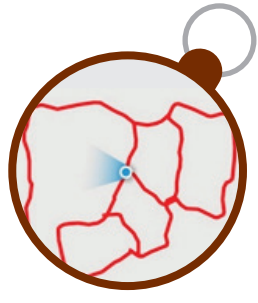
Camp Rolling Hills

1 N. Rangeline Rd., Pleasant Hill, Ohio 45359

Camp Woodhaven Trail Guide

Total Trail System

Starting/Ending Point Options: Program Barn, Shagbark/Sweetbriar, and playground



White Loop (shortest)

Beginning: Playground

Ending: Shagbark/Sweetbriar

Distance: .2 miles

Description: Starting at either end, this short loop is a quick hike through the woods.

Feature: Access to observation tower, old standing chimney, boardwalk, and central fire circle.

Blue Loop (medium length)

Beginning: Shagbark/Sweetbriar

Ending: Program Barn

Distance: .4 miles

Description: Starting at either end, this medium length loop winds through the woods.

Feature: Access to central fire circle, boardwalk, low challenge course area, shelter house.

Red Loop (longest)

Beginning: Playground

Ending: Program Barn

Distance: .5 miles

Description: Starting at either end, this is the longest trail that winds along the perimeter of the woods.

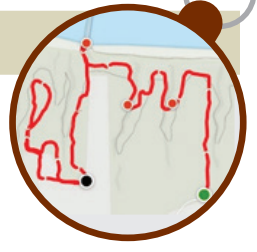
Feature: Access to the shelter house, observation tower, old standing chimney, and low challenge course.

Camp Woodhaven

1870 W. Robb Ave., Lima, Ohio 46805

Camp Libbey Trail Guide

Daisy Trail



Beginning: Across the road from the Clusters.

Ending: Near the climbing wall or points in-between.

Distance: 1.5 miles total trail

Description: Enter the trail near the Clusters. The name Daisy refers to Juliette Low's nickname, not indicating this as a beginner trail. This trail winds back and forth between the Maumee River, the woods, across ravines and passes the Independence Dam overlook. From there, the trail continues up the road and cuts back into the woods again for additional loops, eventually ending near the climbing wall.

For shorter hikes, begin at the Clusters and return by way of the Environmental Center (approx. .5 miles). Or, after leaving the dam, continue up the road to the climbing wall, bypassing the additional loops. (approx. 1 mile)

Features: Maumee River, Independence Dam, access to a sugar maple grove, access to Low Challenge Course, primitive campsite near the dam.

Zonta Trail

Beginning: On the road behind Jakata Yurt Unit

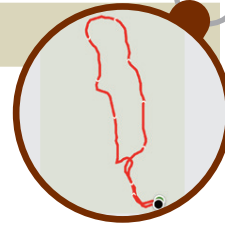
Ending: Same spot on the road behind Jakata Yurt Unit

Distance: .9 miles

Description: Starting this trail is like downhill skiing but with a handrail. At the bottom of the short hill, cross the horse bridge and start back up the next hill. Look left for a great view of the Maumee River. The Zonta Trail loop begins at the top. Take the right split to stroll through the forest overlooking the creek below as the trail passes through old growth forest before popping out onto a mowed section that hugs the edge of the forest on one side and a later succession field full of young tree growth on the other side. The trail eventually loops back to the top of the hill where you backtrack down across the horse bridge and up the slope to the beginning.

Features: View of Maumee River, old growth and new growth forests.

Promise Path



Beginning: Environmental Center (EC) parking area or from the road in front of the EC going to the barn.

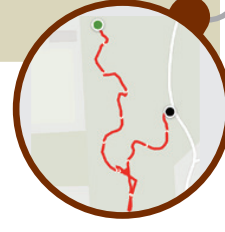
Ending: Environmental Center (EC) parking area or from the road in front of the EC going to the barn.

Distance: .3 miles

Description: Circumnavigate the Low Challenge Course on this accessible trail. The asphalt trail winds through the trees providing access to each low element, or perfect for a peaceful walk in the woods.

Features: Low Elements on the Challenge Course (instructor needed for use), wheelchair accessible.

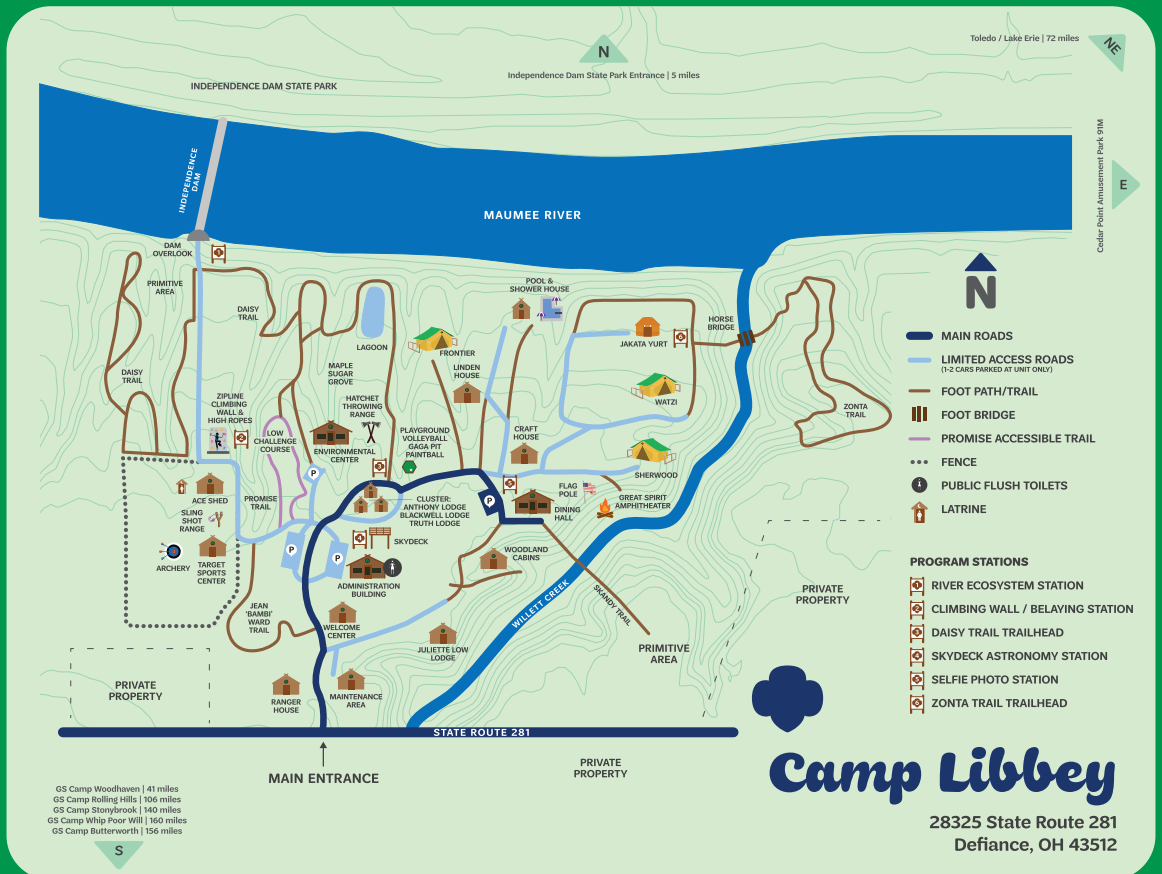
Jean “Bambi” Ward Trail



Beginning: On the road just before the Target Sports Barn.

Ending: On the road across from the entrance drive to the Administration building.

Distance: .3 miles | **Description:** This easy trail winds through the woods on a nice level grassy path.



Camp Libbey

28325 State Route 281
Defiance, OH 43512

Hiking Skills and Resources

It sounds easy to just pick a trail and go for a hike, but there's a ton of information and skills to learn that will make hiking more fun and will help you become a more knowledgeable and safer hiker. As you begin the Hiker Challenge, take some time to learn more about hiking related topics. Start with the information below or research more on your own to become an expert hiker!

10 Essentials to Take Hiking:

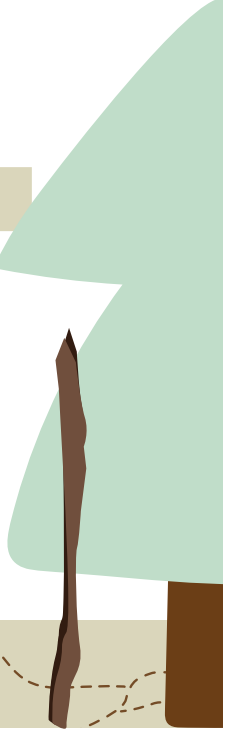
- ❍ Map and compass
- ❍ Food and water
- ❍ Flashlight
- ❍ First aid kit
- ❍ Whistle
- ❍ Knife
- ❍ Lighter, matches
- ❍ Cord or rope
- ❍ Rain jacket or poncho
- ❍ Sunscreen/bug spray

Clothing and Shoe Tips – What to wear when hiking

- **No denim jeans or cotton tees:** Cotton holds onto water, so it keeps you feeling sweaty in hot temps and chills you if things turn cold and wet.
- **Polyester, nylon or merino wool:** These materials move sweat off skin and dry fast, so they're ideal for next-to-skin layers such as t-shirts, sports bras or long underwear, and for socks. That moisture management ability means those materials work well for all the rest of your clothing as well.
- **Comfortable yet sturdy pants:** Trails have twists and turns, so you need to move freely. Branches and boulders, though, can shred thin, stretchy tights or yoga pants.
- **A warm jacket:** Polyester fleece works great for this, though a puffy jacket (with a polyester fill or water-resistant down inside), is smart for colder conditions.
- **A rain jacket:** "Waterproof/breathable" is the key phrase, meaning it will block rain and wind, but will also let you sweat without feeling like you're wearing a plastic bag. In seriously soggy weather, pack rain pants, too.
- **A brimmed hat:** Keeps your head dry and protected from the sun. The brim helps keep rain and sun out of your eyes. (Bring some sunglasses, too.)
- **Sturdy shoes:** You don't have to have leather boots, but your hiking footwear should provide support, protection from rocks and roots, and traction on wet and dry surfaces.

Walking sticks vs trekking poles

A trekking pole (also known as a hiking pole) is basically a ski pole with a handle that you use when hiking. Trekking poles are almost always used in pairs. There is also a hiking staff (also known as a hiking or walking stick) that is a single pole. Both are versatile and help provide more support over a variety of terrain.



Create your own walking stick

- Search your local forest for a downed branch that's stout, straight, and preferably, blemish-free (no obvious cracks or big knotholes). The stick should reach your armpit and measure 1 to 2 inches in diameter.

- Remove twigs with a pocketknife and strip the bark if you want. Round off sharp points or level knobs with a plane or file. Hold the stick as though you're hiking (your elbow should form a right angle) to figure out where your grip will be– 2 to 3 inches below the top. Customize the grip by cutting shallow grooves for your fingers like those on a steering wheel. Just above the grip area, drill a 1/4-inch hole for a wrist loop. Smooth the surface of the stick first with coarse, then fine, sandpaper.

- Decorate the stick with carvings, wood burnings, paintings, emblems or bear bells. If the wood is still green, place it in a warm, dry location to cure for at least 2 weeks, and rotate it often to prevent bowing.

- Apply two coats of wood stain, allowing each coat to dry overnight, to give the stick a darker, richer hue. Then apply three coats of clear urethane varnish to seal the wood and prevent rot. Allow each coat of varnish to dry overnight. Sand the stick lightly with very fine sandpaper or steel wool after each coat.

- Thread a 2-foot piece of rawhide lace or heavy cord through the hole. Adjust the length of the loop to fit your wrist, tie the ends in a big knot to secure the loop, then trim the ends as necessary. Wood is a fickle creature, so remember that hiking sticks are born as much as they are made.

- Now you're ready to do the Hiker Challenge and earn those medallions! Attach each medallion to your newly made walking stick!

Trail Shapes

Trails can be very simple or very complex. Generally, there are four trail shapes – out-and-back, loop, lollipop, and point-to-point.

- **Out-and-Back:** This trail heads to a specific point but then has to be backtracked to the starting point. This is sometimes called an in-and-out or destination trail, the latter because the main sight to see on the trail, such as a waterfall or a vista, also is the point where you turn back.

- **Loop:** Such a trail is circular, meaning that its starting point is also its ending point. A variation of this is the stacked loop, in which several loops share sides, allowing you to extend the distance of any loop by simply adding the next one in the set.

- **Lollipop:** When a loop sits at the end of an out-and-back trail, it looks like a sucker. The out-and-back portion of the trail is called a stem as you don't turn around upon reaching the trail junction (like you would on an out-and-back trail) but continue on the loop.

- **Point-to-Point:** This is like an out-and-back trail, except it's so long just one-way that you couldn't day hike it back to its starting point. Instead, you'll need someone to pick you up at the end point.

A variety of other trails might appear with any of the above types/shapes.

- **Access Trail:** The most common type, the access trail is a short path that links the main trail to another trail, a road, a campground, or a town.

- **Feeder Trail:** This trail is a variation of the access trail; the feeder trail funnels people from a central, heavily visited area, such as a campground or a visitor center, onto a main trail.

- **Connector Trail:** This links two major trails, offering access to either shorten or lengthen a hike. Also referred to as a connecting trail.

- **Spur:** Many routes often include one or more spur trails. A spur runs off the main trial, usually to an interesting feature or a campsite, and then dead ends.

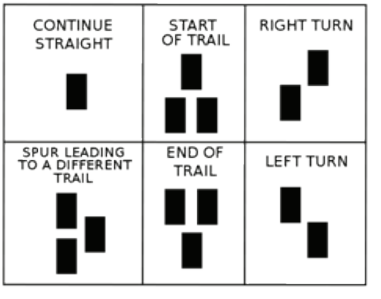
- **Side Trail:** A side trail is like the spur, which also leads to an interesting feature but typically reconnects with the main trail.

Trail Etiquette and Safety Rules

- Downhill hikers always yield to uphill hikers.
- Solo hikers should step aside and let a larger group pass
- Keep to the right of the trail and pass people on the left
- Mountain bikers are supposed to yield to hikers
- Be friendly to other hikers
- Do not disturb wildlife
- If you must bring your cell phone, use it sparingly, discreetly, be aware of your surroundings, and don't blast music.
- Bathroom best practice is going 200 feet away from any trail, campsite or water source.
- Always let someone know where you're hiking and your itinerary

Trail Markers

The purpose of a trail marker (or blaze) is to help hikers follow a given path. It is used to indicate things such as the beginning and end of a trail, a change of direction or an intersection. A single rectangle of paint or single marker means you are on the trail. Go straight. Two rectangles with the higher one to one side or the other means a turn is coming. If the higher one is on the right it means, go right.



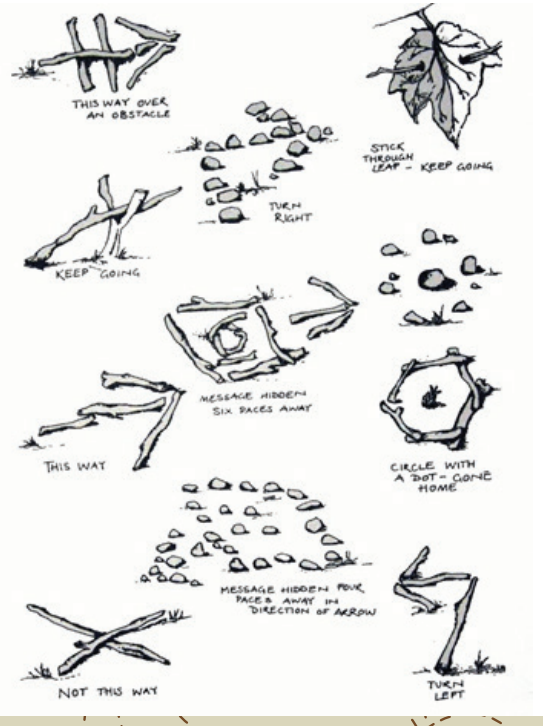
Camp Trail Markers

The trails at GSWO camps use pre-made aluminum directional arrows or markers to show directions. Look for either white, red or blue markers.

Trail Signs

Creating trail signs and marking a trail for friends to follow is a great way to use observation skills needed during a hike. Imagine that you are out hiking with a group of people. Maybe your group gets split up and one group is ahead of the other group on the trail. Your group makes some decisions, and you need to let the other group know. Maybe there is a split in the trail, and you need to tell them which trail you took. Maybe there is a dangerous spot, and you want to warn them. You probably could just call someone on a cell phone, but there is a way to communicate without phones. Phone batteries may die, phones could get lost or destroyed, or there's no reception. Trail signs always work!

For an activity, create symbols that you place on a trail to lead 'hikers' from the start of the trail to the end. Use the symbols shown or create your own directional signs and symbols that depict steep inclines, danger, switchbacks, rest stops, and wildlife awareness. You may choose to draw symbols on paper or create symbols using twigs, leaves, and rocks found on the ground.



Compass and Maps

Learn to use a compass, trail map and topo map by taking Troop Camp Training to learn these skills. Compasses can be checked out of the resource rooms in each service center; which include instruction guides or you may google the resources for using a map and compass.

Leave No Trace

An important part of following trail etiquette includes the guiding principles of Leave No Trace. In the outdoors, it's just as important to consider your etiquette towards people as it is to the wildlife and the environment around you. This frame of mind helps all of us take better care of our wild places and recreate with respect and responsibility by being accountable for our actions. Here are two great ways to Leave No Trace while hiking; staying on the trail & packing out your trash & waste.

Pack Out Any Trash You Find

- Always carry in and carry out your trash, recyclables, and food waste, and make sure you are following Leave No Trace principles when it comes to human waste. But carrying out trash shouldn't just be limited to your own. If you find other trash on the trail that others left behind, pack that out too. Leave it better than you found it!

Stay On The Trail

- While hiking, be mindful and stay on the trail to avoid damaging the surrounding environment and leave the area just as you found it — including rock cairns. Don't add or take away from those strategically placed piles of rocks, instead, simply leave them be. Rock cairns have a navigational purpose and by building your own you could cause someone else to get lost.
- Always stay on the switchbacks when going up or down steep hills. Taking short cuts between switchbacks causes erosion and trail damage.

Trail Maintenance and Projects

Help our trails stay in good condition by doing the following while you are hiking:

- Remove any downed sticks or branches from the trail by tossing them off to the side.
- Take a couple loppers or pruners with you to trim the small branches and weeds that hang over the trail. These are found in the camps Welcome Center.
- Adopt a trail and visit it seasonally to keep it trimmed and cleared.
- Participate in the camp service days (listed in the event calendar).

Badges related to Hiking

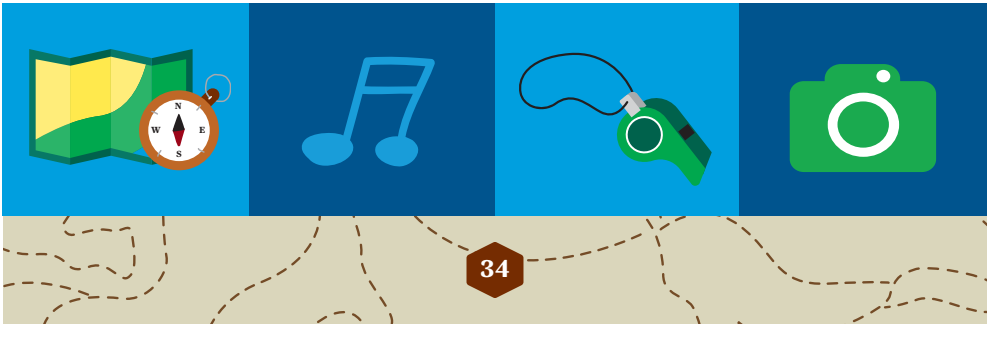
Trail games help to pass the time on less than exciting or difficult sections of a hike. Even in fantastic scenery, there's bound to be a couple of monotonous areas, particularly if you're hiking on a long-distance trail. This is when a hiking game comes in handy. It's difficult to lose interest in a trail when you're actively searching for a specific type of flower or tree, and the miles fly by when you're chatting with your hiking buddies.

- Daisy Buddy Camper
- Daisy Trail Adventure
- Brownie Cabin Camper
- Brownie Hiker
- Brownie Outdoor Adventurer
- Brownie Trail Adventure
- Junior Camper
- Junior Eco Camper
- Junior Trail Adventure
- Cadette Eco Trekker
- Cadette Trail Adventure
- Cadette Trailblazing
- Senior Adventure Camping
- Senior Trail Adventure
- Ambassador Trail Adventure

Trail Games and Activities

The best hiking games aren't just fun, but educational too. You can use hiking games to teach and learn about plants, wildlife, and environmental responsibility, or to practice essential skills such as map reading and compass. Trail games are useful ice-breakers and help groups develop a team spirit on day one, to motivate hikers on the toughest or dullest sections of the trail, or to distract anxious hikers when there's bad weather on the horizon. Trail games can help you keep a group walking at the same pace too.

Ideally, trail games don't require many if any props and don't need any preparation either so you can play anytime and anywhere. Try out some of the following on your next outdoor adventure.



Invite Five People to a Dinner Party

There are five spaces at the dinner party. Each person in the group will nominate five people to invite. These can be historical figures, celebrities, authors, activists, etc. If you're playing with younger hikers, you can also include cartoons or fictional characters. They can even be people who are not famous, but for each invitee, you should explain who they are and why they deserve a place at the dinner party. Once everyone has explained their invitations, you'll need to start persuading. As a group, you'll choose five people from the nominations to invite to your dinner party.

And Then

Nominate one person from your hiking group. They'll start telling a story that leads to a cliff-hanger, it can be any topic, real or fantasy. When the narrator is ready, they'll say 'and then...' Someone else in the group will continue the story. If you've got a couple of creative minds in the group, this game can be endless.

Word Association Game

- One person begins the game by saying a random word. (i.e..Backpacking)
- The next person says a word that links to the first word. (i.e..hiking)
- The third person continues with a word associated with the second word. (i.e. exercise)
- The fourth, fifth, sixth person, and so on, continue in the same way. You cannot use a word that's already been said. If a person is too slow, repeats a word, or says an unrelated word, they are either out of the game, have to forfeit a turn, or become the last person in the hiking group.

Name that Tune

One person will sing or hum the beginning or section of a song or tune. Sing a verse instead of the chorus if it's a well-known tune. Others in the groups will try to guess the name of the song/tune. Alternatively, someone in the group can name a song/tune, and members of the group should sing it.

The Alphabet Game

Choose a topic. (e.g. countries, cities, animals, famous people, cartoon characters, foods, types of plants) Start with the letter A. Everyone in the group must think of something from the chosen topic that begins with the letter A. (e.g. the topic is countries. For A you can say Argentina, Armenia, Afghanistan, etc.) Continue with the letter B (e.g. Bolivia, Botswana, Belgium, etc.) Keep going until you've completed the alphabet, then choose another topic. If there's no word for a letter for your topic, you can skip it. (e.g. there are no countries that begin with the letter X). But if there is and your teammate can't think of it, they are out of the game.

Twenty Questions

One person in the group thinks of a word; it can be a place, person, or item. Other hikers take turns to ask questions and guess what the person is thinking of. As a group, you have a total of twenty questions. Whoever guesses the word, has to think of a place, person, or thing for the next round. You can make the game easier by deciding a category (e.g. cartoon characters, movies, foods, countries) and thinking of something from that category.

Name It

While hiking, try to name as many plants, grass types, trees, flowers, bugs, birds, and wildlife species as you can. You earn two points for every correct identification and lose one point for every incorrect identification. Whoever has the most points at the end of the hike is the winner.

Note: To avoid identification disputes it might help to bring along a reference book!

When I went Shopping, I Bought...

The first person says 'When I went shopping, I bought... (any item)' The next person repeats what the first person says but adds a second item. The third person repeats what the first and second person said but adds a third item and so on .i.e. **Person 1:** When I went shopping I bought an apple. **Person 2:** When I went shopping, I bought an apple and a backpack. **Person 3:** When I went shopping, I bought an apple, a backpack, and roller-skates... The game ends when players can no longer repeat the list of items.

Nature Photography

Even people who feel uncomfortable in front of the camera love taking photos. You can use your hiking trips to improve photography skills or set a photography challenge to slow down the fastest hikers in the group. (e.g. who can photograph the most colorful flower or the widest variety of plants). There's no need to buy a camera for this hiking activity as most smartphones have a decent enough camera.

Map Reading

Now that everyone has a GPS on a mobile phone, map reading is a challenge for adults as well as children. To practice navigation skills, head to an unmarked trail, switch off GPS, and practice using a map and compass instead. It's extra rewarding when you can find your way without electronic guidance! You can either learn basic map and compass reading skills at home or make sure that at least one person in the group knows how to use a map and compass.

Pick up Litter

Although it's not technically a backcountry game, outdoors lovers should take pride in cleaning up the countryside. Next time you go hiking with a group, bring some compostable trash bags and washable gloves so you can pick up trash on the way. Like photography, this hiking activity for adults and kids will slow down fast hikers and help you to keep a group at the same pace.

Catch my Shadow

Catch my shadow is a handy game for late afternoons when hikers are getting tired and losing interest in the hike. Walk ahead of the group so that your shadow falls a couple of meters in front of them. Then challenge them to catch your shadow. The trick is to set a pace that slightly faster than theirs but not too tiring. Remember that this activity won't work on shady trails.

Follow the Leader

If you're on a well-marked trail or you already know the area well, ask your group to lead the way. Allow them to take the wrong way if you have enough time and let them correct the mistake. Leading is more entertaining than following so they won't get bored. It'll help them develop a sense of direction too.

Trail Hide and Seek

On trails where it's safe to do so, let the group run ahead and hide somewhere on the trail. Either give them a whistle or teach them a bird call to help you find each one and tell them not to go out of hearing distance.

A Fistful of Sounds

Gather the group in a circle. Explain that you will all be silent for a minute and you will each be keeping track of all the different sounds you hear on your fingers. Have everyone hold up both hands and close their eyes and each time they hear a different sound, raise a finger. Announce when a minute starts and ends. Have everyone open their eyes with their hands still in the air and look around at everyone else's fingers. Ask people to name some of the different sounds they heard.

Nice-Smell Social

Take a deep breath in your habitat. Can you detect any special aroma in this place? Challenge each member of the group to think of this as an ice cream social, but instead of creating a sundae out of their favorite ice cream and toppings, they will create a "sundae" of the best smells they can find in the place. When sundaes are complete, have a social! Take a relaxing tour around all the members of the groups and find out what their aromatic ingredients are.

Mystery Collection

Materials: One egg carton per pair or group, with two words written on bottom (one word on left, one on right) Ask the pair or group to look at the words written on the bottom of their egg carton. Keep the words secret from other groups! The challenge is to fill six spaces in the carton with items that fit one descriptive word and fill the other half of the carton with items fitting the other word. When the collection is as good as it can be, take it to another group and challenge them to figure out what the hidden words might be! Or you can gather all the groups in a circle and the group can work together to guess the words on one carton after another.

Sample words: round, square, curly, straight, prickley, tickley, white, black, green, brown, soft, hard, whole, holey, smooth, rough. This activity takes about 20 minutes, depending on group size.

Trail Poetry

Materials: three objects in nature and three envelopes each containing several small pieces of paper and one big one, and several pencils.

Instructions: Let's just take trees as the example. Here's a way to take a closer look at the differences between characteristics of three trees. Select the trees you will use by laying an envelope next to each one. (To make this easier, chose three very different trees, such as a sapling, a mature tree, and a rotting stump!) Pile the pencils and small papers outside the envelope. Each person should visit each of the three trees in any order, taking as long as they need. They should spend a little time contemplating the tree, choose a word or short phrase that they feel captures the spirit or feel of the tree, write it on a small paper and put it in the envelope. Their word or phrase should not say the name of the tree, such as "White Pine", but rather capture its essence, such as "King of the forest!" Each person does this for each tree. When finished, gather the envelopes and bring the group together. Divide them into three groups and give each group an envelope. Have them create a poem from the words inside the envelope.

Rules: Participants may NOT omit any words (if there are four "tall" words, they must include them all. They CAN add extra words if they wish, but just simple connecting words. When the group has compiled their poem, they should copy it onto the larger piece of paper and figure out a way to do a dramatic theatrical reading of their poem for the other two groups. Which poem described which tree?

Place Poem

Materials: one piece of paper and pencil.

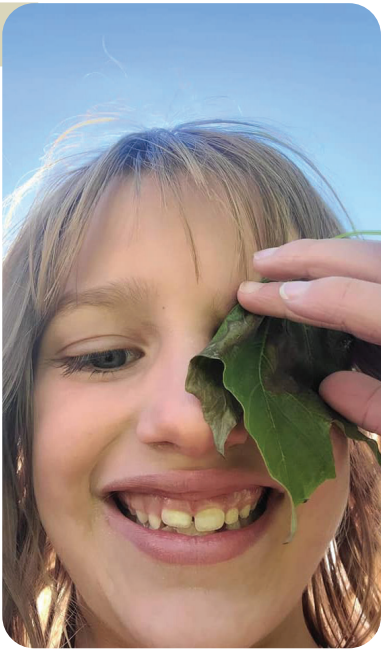
Instructions: With younger children, one can use a similar technique to capture the essence of a place. Gather the group in a circle or on a log. Ask them to look around this place and think of one word that describes it for them. Silently! Walk down the line and have each person WHISPER their word to you as you record them on a paper. Simply read back the list with a "poetic" voice, and you have all created a wonderful poem that can transport any reader to this place.

Jenny's Game

Materials: one item in nature per person – choose an appropriate item, but make them all similar – i.e. all maple leaves

Instructions: Gather in a circle. Give a leaf to each person. Ask them to take a couple minutes to get to know this leaf SO well that if they were to lose it they could recognize it again. Gather all leaves. Begin to pass the leaves, one at a time, to your right.

Example: "If it's YOUR leaf, hold onto it. If it's not, pass it on". When all have been reunited, share some of the characteristics they used for identification. How did they feel when they found their friend again??!!



Last Picture

Before you leave a place, have the group imagine that they have one picture left in their camera. The “camera” is made by framing pointer fingers and thumbs into a square and looking through it. Which “shot” would each person choose for their last picture. Share.

Hiking Scavenger Hunt

Create a visual record of your day hiking on the trail, by taking photos of things you might not normally even notice. Make sure you pack a camera and some spare batteries if you need them and don’t forget to take photos of all the normal things too!

Take a photo of the following items and check them complete:

	Sign posts		Bird footprint		An unusual gate
	Foot prints		A bridge		A rainbow
	The route on a map		A flower		An animal shaped cloud
	Walking boots of someone not in your group		A pattern in nature		An up close insect
	A water droplet		A multi-colored plant		A birds nest
	A wild animal		Someone jumping in the air		Something red