



# Field Book for OTTERS

Second Edition



Official Handbook for  
BPSA-US Otter Program

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Second Edition, Summer 2017.

"Friends of the Forest" Adapted from the original Canadian Beaver Program  
courtesy of Scouts Canada <http://www.scouts.ca> and found at  
<http://www.thedump.scoutscan.com>.

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Lisa Ward, and Travis Wittwer.

## ABOUT ME

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

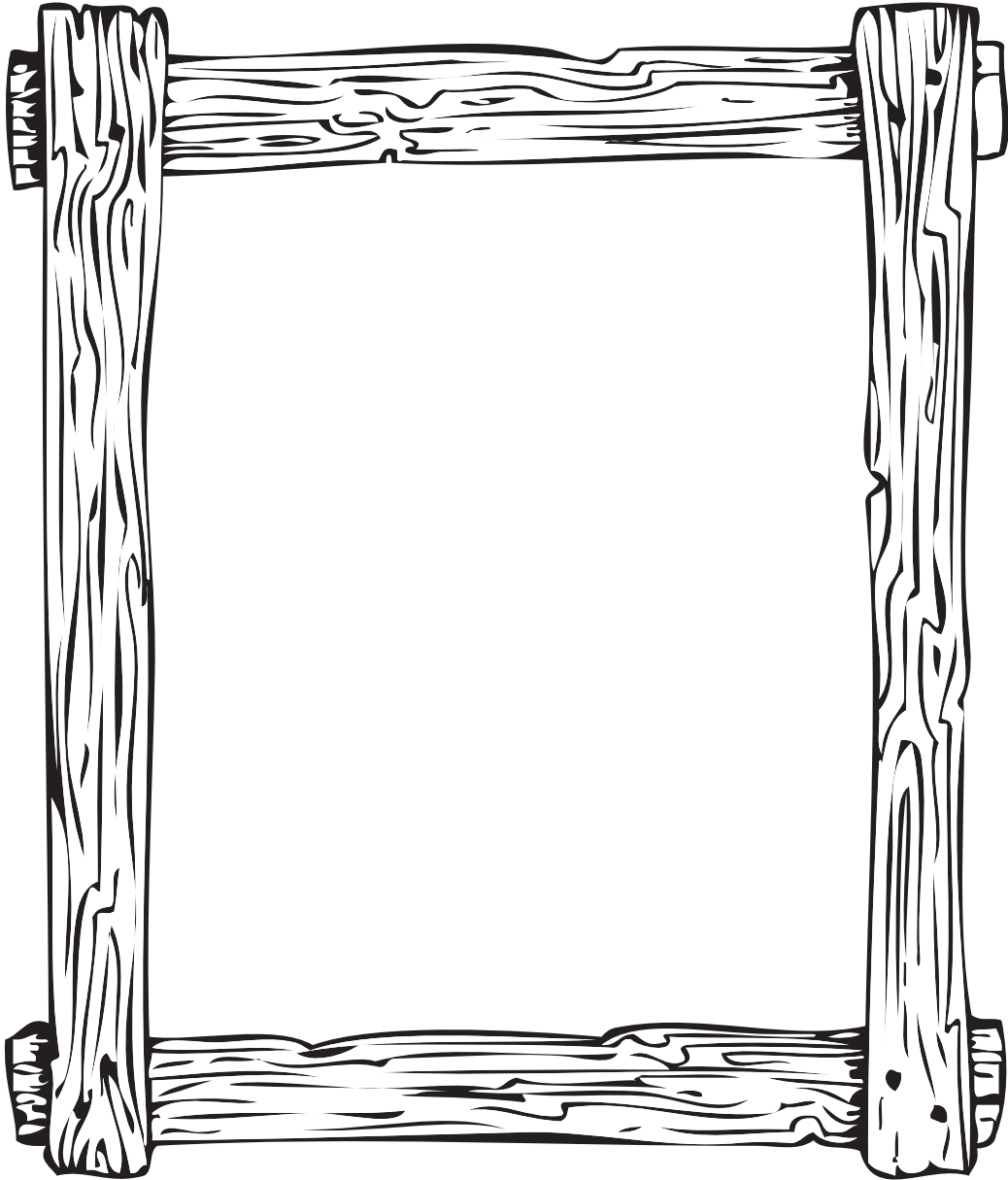
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Parent/  
Guardians'  
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

BPSA Group \_\_\_\_\_

Otter Den \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS IS ME!**



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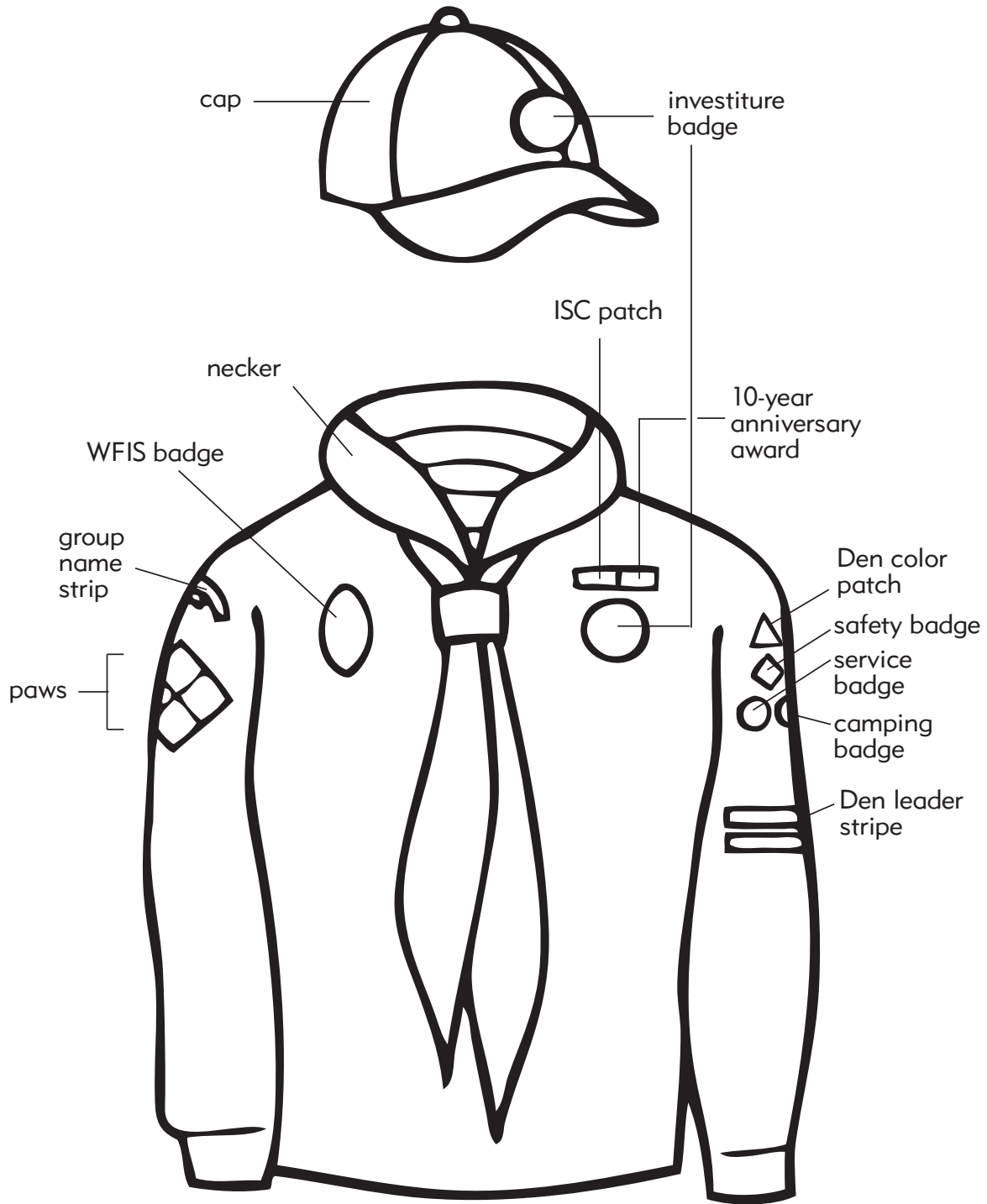
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# ABOUT OTTERS



# OTTER UNIFORM





## **OTTER SIGN**



Make the sign with your right hand, holding up the 1st (pointer) and 2nd fingers together.

## **OTTER SALUTE**

Bring your Otter sign to the corner of the right eyebrow (or right corner of the hat) with elbow straight out.

## **OTTER MOTTO**

“Busy and Bright”

## **OTTER LAW**

“An Otter is always busy and bright  
and helps other people  
by doing a good turn every day.”

## **OTTER PROMISE**

“I promise to do my best,  
to obey my leaders and my parents  
and to be a good Otter.”

# INVESTITURE BADGE



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • INVESTITURE

LEADER  
INITIALS

- Learn a little about otters.
- Know a little about the Jones family from the *Friends of the Forest*.
- Learn a little about B-P, the founder of Scouting.
- Say the Otter Motto.
- Say the Otter Law.
- Show the Otter Salute and Sign.
- Say the Otter Promise.
- Participate in an opening and closing ceremony.
  
- Completed!

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DATE

LEADER

# MY BADGE WORK

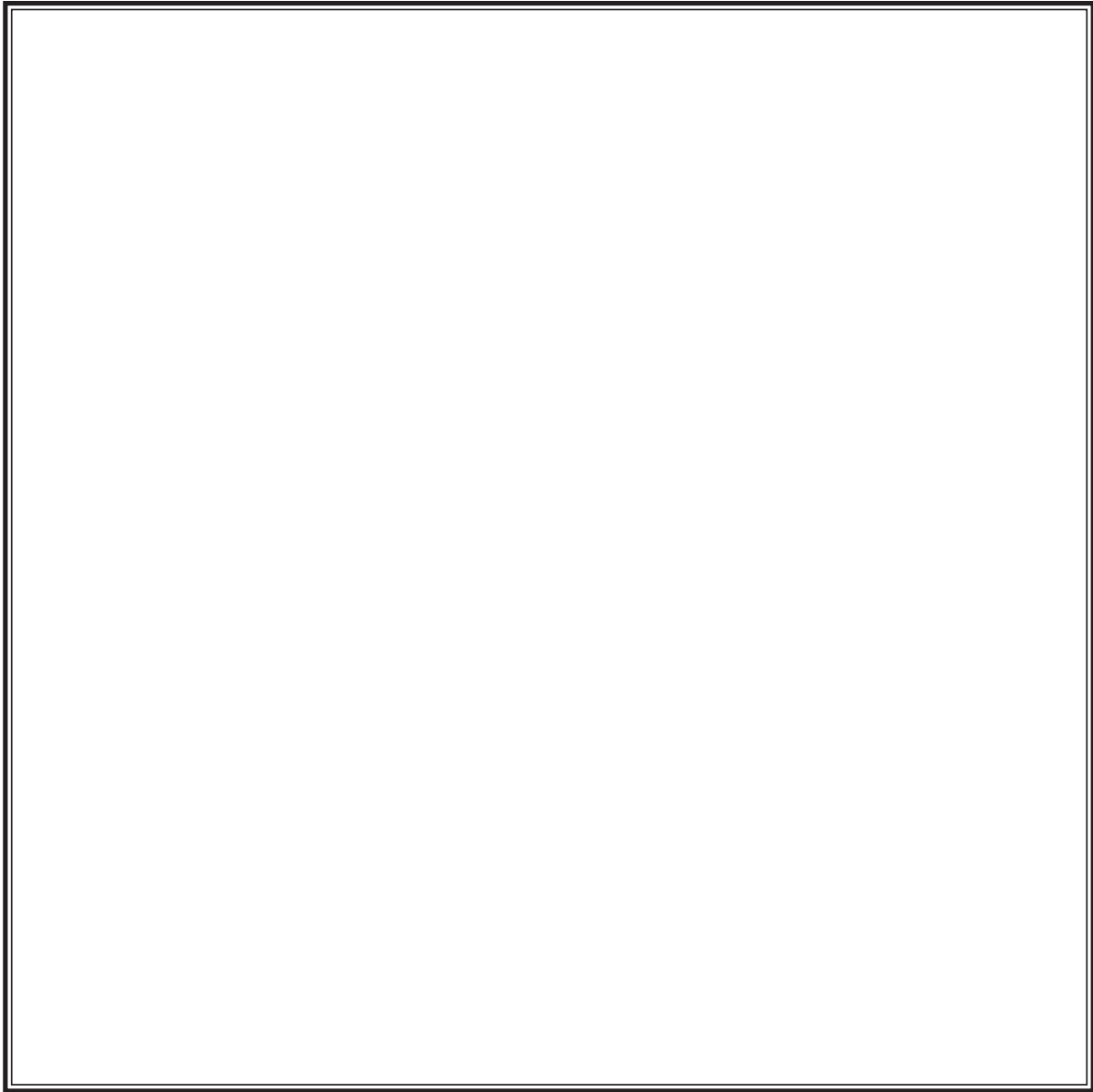
Three things I know about otters:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Three things I know about Baden-Powell:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of an otter.



# SAFETY BADGE



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • SAFETY

LEADER  
INITIALS

Know your full name and address.

Know your phone number.

Make a child identification kit for yourself.

Learn the full names of your parent(s) or guardian(s).

Learn about safety with strangers.

Show how to get help in an emergency.

Learn about safety around the home.

Learn about safety around the camp and while hiking.



LEADER  
INITIALS

Cross the road safely.

Discuss how to prevent accidents on the road, around stoves/fires, near the pool, and at the playground.

Learn the basic rules of health and hygiene.

Clean and cover a cut or scratch.

Tie your shoes.

Completed!

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DATE

LEADER



# HELPING BADGE (RED PAW)



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • HELPING

LEADER  
INITIALS

Show how to be nice and help others to feel happy.

Learn about caring for your clothes and your belongings.

Find three ways to help in your home.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Find three ways to help at camp.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

LEADER  
INITIALS

Be helpful around your home or camp.

Help set up or clean up a Scout meeting.

Play Kim's Game.

Play the Message Game.

Do a good turn for a friend, relative, or a neighbor.

Take part in a Raft good turn.

Completed!

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DATE

LEADER

# MY BADGE WORK

Describe your good turn(s):

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# ACTIVITY BADGE (BLUE PAW)



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • ACTIVITY

LEADER  
INITIALS

Practice being a good winner and a good loser.

Learn the names of every Otter in your Den.

Participate in:

Sport games

Physical fitness

Board/card games

An obstacle course

Go on two day hikes.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Go on a night hike.



LEADER  
INITIALS

Sing three songs.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Connect with another Otter Raft and make a pen pal.

Discuss ways to welcome everyone into your Otter games.

Visit a senior center and do some fun activities or crafts with them.

Completed!

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
LEADER

# MY BADGE WORK

How can we include everyone?

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# HANDICRAFT BADGE (TAN PAW)



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • HANDICRAFT

LEADER  
INITIALS

Make art showing a scene or event.

Create a picture of your home.

Make a Thank You card and deliver it.

Make a map or diagram.

Create trail signs using rocks or sticks.

Make a model.

Make two craft items.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Make a bird feeder from reused items.

LEADER  
INITIALS

Tie two different knots.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Display a collection with at least 25 things.

Participate in a service project making or  
collecting things to donate.

Completed!

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DATE

LEADER

# NOTES

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# NATURE BADGE (GREEN PAW)



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • NATURE

LEADER  
INITIALS

Learn about caring for the environment and the rules of “Leave No Trace.”

Learn about caring for pets.

Make a scrapbook about an animal you like.

Collect or show 10 nature items that are different types of the same thing.

Take a nature walk.

Grow a seed in a water soaked paper towel.



LEADER  
INITIALS

- Regrow a carrot top or other plant in water.
- Plant and take care of a tree, flower or food in a garden.
- Visit a zoo or wildlife rescue to observe different types of animals.
- Take part in a trail or park cleanup.
  
- Completed!

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DATE

LEADER

# MY BADGE WORK

Where did you plant your tree/plant?

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What kind of tree/flower/food did you plant?

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Draw a picture of your tree/plant.



# SERVICE BADGE



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • SERVICE

*The Service badge is awarded to an Otter who has completed all of the following activities, which must be carried out over a period of at least 8 months. Remember to send thank you cards after your visit!*

LEADER  
INITIALS

- Visit with local police and find out some ways to help prevent crime and be safe.
- Visit the local fire department and find out the danger of fire and some ways of preventing it.
- Visit with an ambulance crew or Emergency Room staff and learn about what they do.
- Visit your mayor or other government official and learn what it means to be a good citizen.
- Visit an exhibit or attend a performance to learn how art helps individuals and our community.
- Visit a sanitation or recycling facility and find out about recycling and help your family reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- Completed!

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DATE

LEADER

# CAMPING BADGE



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • CAMPING

LEADER  
INITIALS

Spend five nights camping with your family or Raft.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Completed!

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
LEADER

# MY BADGE WORK

Where did you go camping?

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Who did you camp with?

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What was your favorite meal while camping?

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What plants and animals have you seen while camping?

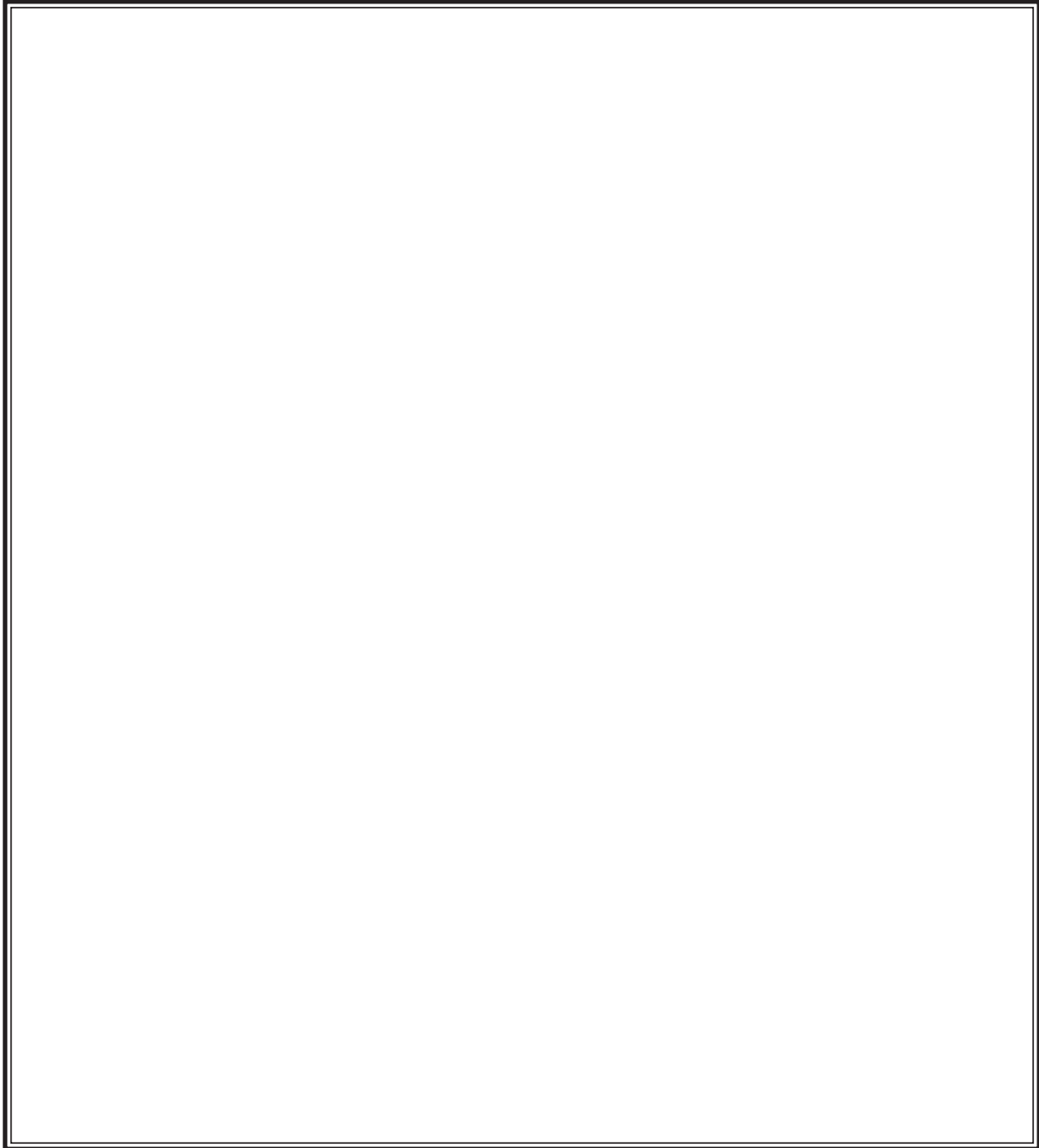
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Draw a picture of your campsite.





# SWIMMING OTTER BADGE



*Swimming up to Timberwolves!*



# MY BADGE PROGRESS • SWIMMING UP

*This badge is presented to the Otter at their Swimming Up Ceremony by their Otter Leader, and may be worn on their Timberwolf uniform.*

LEADER  
INITIALS

Learn the story of Mowgli.

Learn the story of St. George.

Know a little more about B-P and the other founders of Scouting.

Visit the Timberwolf Pack and get to know your future Sixer and Akela.

Say the Timberwolf Motto.

Explain the meaning of the code words *DYB* and *DOB* from the Grand Howl

Say the Timberwolf Law.

Show the Timberwolf Salute.

Earn the Safety Badge.

Earn all 4 Otter Paws.

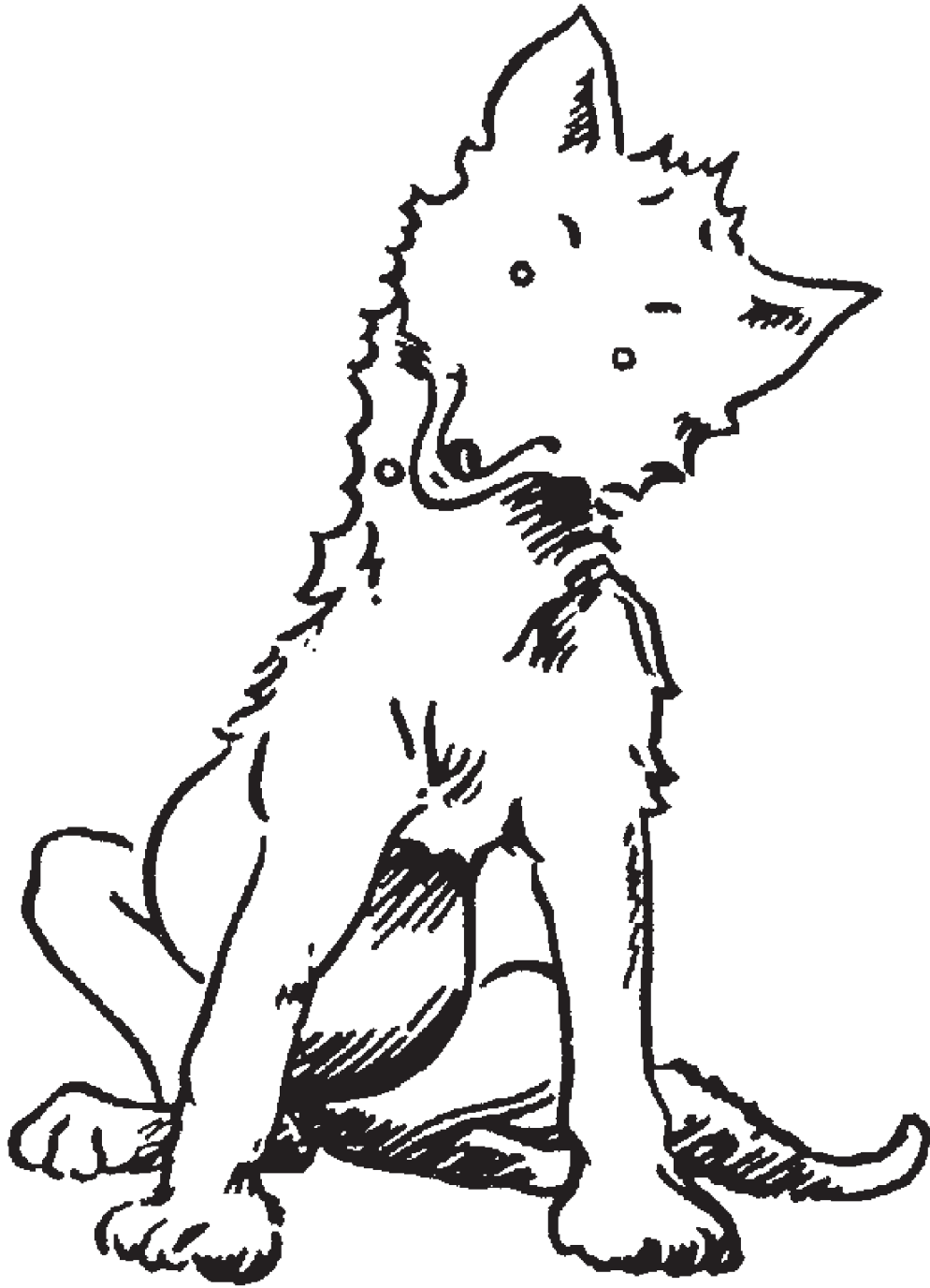
Completed!

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DATE

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LEADER



*Good hunting to you, new Timberwolf!*

# OTHER BADGES AND PATCHES



## WFIS BADGE



Every BPSA Scout wears the World Federation of Independent Scouts (WFIS) badge on their uniform. It shows we are members of an international organization.



## GROUP NAME STRIP (OR "GROUP FLASH")

Each Scout wears a patch with the name of his/her BPSA Scout group on their right shoulder.



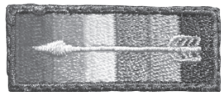
## DEN COLOR PATCH (OR "DEN FLASH")

When you are assigned to an Otter Den, you wear a color triangle (red, blue, yellow, etc.) on your left shoulder showing your Den.



## **DEN LEADER STRIPE(S)**

Your adult leader will choose Scout helpers who wear 1-3 white stripes on their left sleeve.



## **ISC PATCH**

Any BPSA Scout can wear the Inclusive Scouting Campaign (ISC) patch. Talk with your parent/guardian and your leader about inclusivity, diversity, and treating all humans with respect. The patch is placed above the Investiture Badge with the arrow facing the heart.



## **ANNIVERSARY AWARD**

The 10-Year Anniversary Award was earned by Scouts in 2016 and can be worn above the Investiture Badge, beside the ISC patch.

# OTTER SONGS



## OTTERS ON A CEDAR LOG

*(Tune of "Old Grey Mare")*

Here we sit like Otters on a Cedar log,  
Otters on a Cedar log,  
Otters on a Cedar log.

Here we sit like Otters on a Cedar log,  
Waiting for the fun to start,  
Waiting for the fun to start.

Here we sit like Otters on a Cedar log  
Waiting for The fun to start.

YEAH!

## TAPS

Day is done,  
Gone the sun,  
From the lake,  
From the hills,  
From the sky,  
All is well, safely rest,  
And Goodnight.

*[Alt. "God is near." "Friends are near."]*

## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

Thank you, friends, for this day  
For my family, and for my play.  
Thank you for good things to eat,  
For eyes and ears, and hands and feet.  
Thank you friends for all you do  
And, I will try to help you, too.

## **SCOUT VESPERS**

*(Tune of "O Christmas Tree")*

Softly falls the light of day  
As our meeting fades away;  
Silently each Otter asks  
Have I done my daily task?  
Have I kept my honor bright?  
Can I guiltless rest tonight?  
Have I done and have I dared  
Everything to 'Be Prepared.'





# OTTER KNOTS



**SQUARE (REEF) KNOT**



**CLOVE HITCH**



**FIGURE 8 KNOT**





# FRIENDS OF THE FOREST

An Otter Adventure

*The “Friends of the Forest” is a traditional scouting story used in the Canadian Beaver Program. The tale has been rewritten to reflect the BPSA Otter Program.*



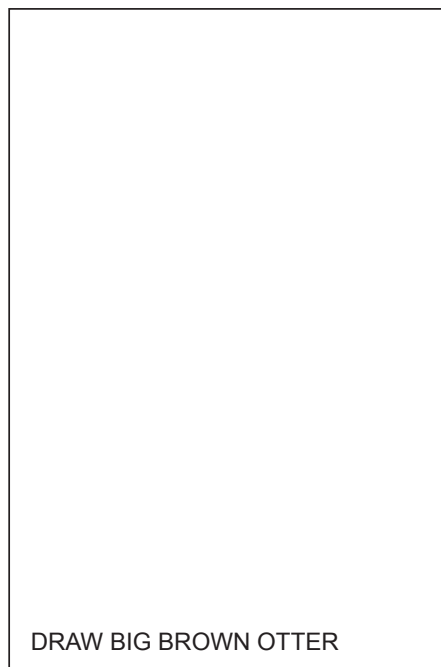
# Meeting New Friends

**B**ig Brown Otter had a very important announcement to make. Swimming to the middle of the pond, he sounded a shrill whistle three times. *Screech! Screech! Screech!*

Hearing his sharp signal, all the other otters in the pond wondered, “What do you suppose is happening?”

From all over the pond, otters, young and old, swam quickly to Big Brown Otter. He was such a wise animal, and he knew so much about the forest and the pond. All of the other animals and birds in the forest were his friends.

“Big and little otters,” Big Brown Otter announced. “Some people have come to live in the clearing along the river bank. Tic Tac, the squirrel, told me they are called the Jones family. They seem very friendly. When I called you, they all waved to me. If they are to be our friends, we should go and give each of them a forest name.”



There was much excitement amongst the otters as they swam from the pond down the river to the forest clearing where the Jones family lived.

At first, none of the Jones family saw the otters who were quietly peeking over the side of the riverbank.

Then, one of the taller people finally noticed the otters' brown heads and whispered, "I think we have some otter visitors. Don't turn around too quickly, or we might frighten them away."

The other five family members slowly looked around and saw the otters watching them. With a big smile, one of the



DRAW THE JONES FAMILY

people said, “Didn’t I tell you that we would meet new friends in the forest? There must be an otter raft in the pond near the river.”

The otters watched carefully to see if they could pick a name that would describe each member of the Jones family. Finally, a loud screech from Big Brown Otter signalled that it was time to return to the pond.

Later, as the otters sat inside their holt, they began to share everything they had seen at the clearing. They began to suggest their ideas for forest names for the members of the Jones family.

“Otters, do you remember the tall person who saw us first?” asked Big Brown Otter. “He must have eyes as sharp as a hawk’s. Let’s call him ‘Hawkeye.’”

“Oh, that’s a splendid name!” chorused all the other otters.

Chip and Chatter, the otter twins, remarked, “When we saw the one who was wearing the clothes of many colors, we thought of the beautiful rainbow that arches over the forest after a rainstorm. Why don’t we call her ‘Rainbow’?”

“Wonderful!” cheered the otters. “I saw a person who moved by using a chair with wheels. He seemed very clever to be able to do that,” observed another Otter.

“Then why don’t we call him ‘Ringtail’ since he’s as clever as a raccoon,” suggested several otters.

When the smallest otter began to talk, everyone became

quiet and still so they could better hear each of her words. “One of the people had such sparkling eyes, and when she smiled, her smile made me feel so warm and good inside. Could we name her ‘Sunshine’?”

“Warm as sunshine,” agreed the Otters. “Yes, let’s name her that.”

“And then there was the person having so much fun splashing her feet in the water,” observed one of the Otters. “We could call her ‘Bubbles’ .”

“Yes, yes. And don’t forget the one whose hair was the color of a red fox,” shouted yet another otter. “He could be called ‘Rusty.’” And so it was that the pond’s otters named the people in the Jones family so they could be friends of the forest.



# The Otter Law

*An Otter is always busy and bright and helps other people by doing a good turn every day.*

That same evening, as the members of the Jones family were getting ready for bed, they heard the sound of raindrops striking the roof. Throughout the entire night while the family slept, the rain continued to fall. As the sun rose in the morning, its rays glistened on the raindrops that clung to the leaves and grass.

When the Jones family were seated around their breakfast table, Rainbow frowned and said. “I’m worried about our new otter friends. Last night’s rain will have flooded the river quite badly. Why don’t we all go and see how our otter friends fared?”

After putting on rubber boots and their jackets, the family trudged up the forest trail in the direction of the otters’ holt. Whenever a muddy part of the path made it difficult for the wheels on Ringtail’s chair to turn, Rusty and Bubbles would help him.

Arriving at the river, Rainbow saw that she had been correct.

The storm had blocked the main entrance to the otters' holt, and their slide and runs were covered by branches and loose dirt and leaves.

"Look!" said Sunshine. "The otters' home is a wreck! What can we do to help?"

"I don't think we'll have to do anything to help," replied Rainbow. "Let's just sit on those big rocks over there and watch carefully."

Even as they went towards the rocks, the family saw the first otter appear. Just like a little builder, the otter examined the damage. Quickly, she was joined by several other otters each carrying away fallen branches, and they began to work together to clear the debris and make everything right again. As each branch was cleared, another otter would arrive to sweep away the loose dirt and leaves and make the ground smooth and clean again. Again and again the otters would finish clearing one area and move together to the next, and gradually their home was put back the way it had been before the storm. The otters learned that by working hard and helping their family and friends, even a big, tough job, like cleaning up after a big storm, could get done and still be lots of fun.

"Well," said Hawkeye. "Now I know why they're called 'Busy and Bright'."

"Yes," laughed Rusty. "That's a good motto for them."



DRAW THE HOLT

“Oh, look at that little pup over there!” exclaimed Sunshine.  
“The one pushing the big log.”

“What’s a pup?” Bubbles asked.

“A pup is a young otter,” Ringtail replied. “Once pups learn how important it is to help one another, they become ‘Busy and Bright’. By pushing that big log into place, that pup is learning how to be helpful to the other otters in the raft.”

The otters continued to clear the branches and remove the leaves and loose dirt. When they were done, the otters ran over all their runs and slid down their slide to make sure everything was as it should be, and then, taking a big breath

of air, they all dove to the bottom of the pond where the other entrance to their holt was located. After swimming up the tunnel connecting the holt to the pond, the otters rested, safe and warm.

Walking back down the trail towards home, the Jones family talked about how the otters all seemed to work together. “You know,” said Hawkeye. “Clearing up that mess would have been very hard work for just one otter. And it would have taken that one otter an awfully long time to finish such a big job. But when all of the otters, even the smallest, helped, the hole in the holt was fixed quickly, and all the otters were happy.”

“Maybe we could work like otters in our home,” suggested Rusty. “We could share in doing things like cooking and cleaning up after meals or keeping the house neat and tidy.”

“And by working together,” said Rainbow, “we could make doing the hard jobs fun and get them done quicker.”

“And then everyone would have more time for playing,” suggested Sunshine.

“Or swimming!” added Bubbles.

“And eating cookies!” shouted Ringtail.

“Hurray!” shouted everyone in the Jones family as they continued down the trail.

# The Otter Motto

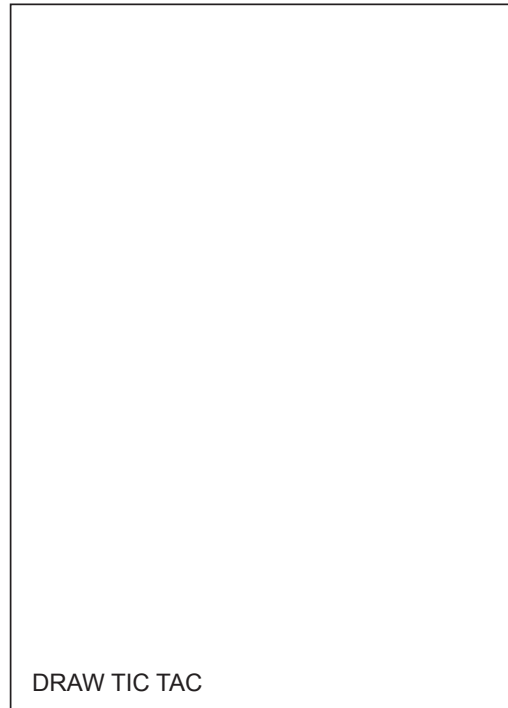
*Busy and Bright*

Sitting on a branch of the great oak tree which overlooked the pond, Tic Tac, the squirrel, could not believe his eyes. Below him, all of the raft's otters were busily working together gathering fish and crayfish for dinner.

“I can't understand it. I simply can't understand it!” exclaimed Tic Tac, his bushy tail flicking back and forth.

“Why do otters share all this work? Why don't they just behave like squirrels and each collect food just for himself and not bother with the others?”

Chattering to himself, Tic Tac ran back and forth along the branch of the tree until he decided he needed to talk to someone about this strange behavior of the otters. Tic Tac wondered if perhaps Malak, the great wise owl, awake at his perch atop the tall oak. Running up the rough trunk and then





DRAW MALAK

scampering from branch to branch, Tic Tac finally arrived at the top of the tree where he found Malak, the owl, peacefully asleep.

“Wake up, Malak! Wake up!” scolded Tic Tac.

Slowly opening one eye and then the other, Malak yawned. “Whoooo is it?”

“It’s me, Tic Tac, the squirrel! Why do they do it? Why are they doing that?”

“Why are whoooo doing what?” asked Malak, ruffling his feathers and slowly stretching one wing and then the other.

“The otters!” Tic Tac chattered. “The otters are sharing all the work. I watched them gathering all the food together. I don’t understand why they do that.”

“Oh, that’s whoooo you are talking about, Tic Tac,” said a now thoroughly awake Malak.

“When I go out and gather my food, I hide it in little piles all over the forest,” explained Tic Tac. “And so do all the other squirrels. We each keep our own supply of food. But not the otters. They work together, and they share everything. I suppose all the otters share their food too?”

“Indeed they doooo,” said Malak. “Those busy otters are very smart. If you watch them closely, you’ll see some of them

working on the holt, and some of them will be teaching the younger otters how to swim. Look down over there, Tic Tac. Can you see Big Brown Otter teaching the pups how to feel the mud of the riverbank for hiding crayfish? They share their work, they help each other learn, and they share their holt. Helping each other's such a happy way of living."

"Mmmmmmm. An interesting idea," said Tic Tac thoughtfully. "I wonder if sharing would work for other animals like squirrels? I'll have to think about that. Thank you, Malak." Tic Tac scurried back down the tree, chattering to himself as he went.

Before Malak dozed off again, he looked down smilingly at the otters busily working below. "Yes, they're pretty smart, those otters. They know how to work, and how to play, and how to share together. Whoooo-hum," he yawned. "If I weren't an owl, I think I might like to be an otter!"





# Keeo and the Magical Light

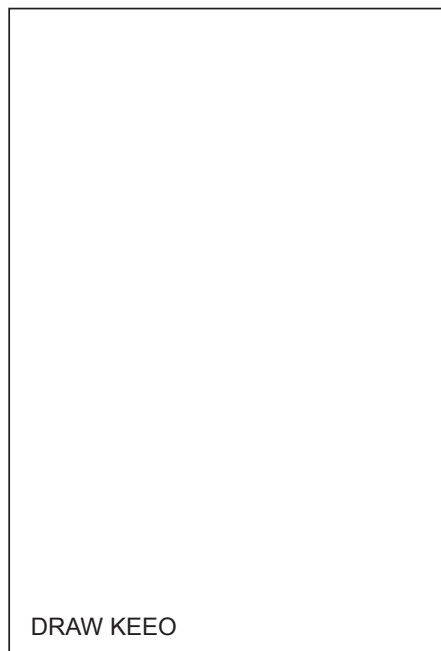
**W**hile Big Brown Otter was a very large otter, he was not the biggest otter in the pond. That otter was Keeo. When Keeo swam across the pond, his passage made waves that would lap noisily against the shore.

Today though, the waves were not being caused by Keeo's swimming. Instead, a storm appeared to be sweeping across the forest towards the pond.

As Keeo looked up at the quickly approaching clouds, he remembered the recent heavy rain which had flooded the pond and blown debris everywhere. Because the otters had just finished cleaning up the mess, Keeo did not want any more floods.

Just then in the distance, Keeo saw a bright flash of light and heard a distant rumbling.

“Well,” thought Keeo as dark clouds began to cover the sky.



“The pond is going to have another storm.”

As it often does just before a storm begins, the wind began to grow stronger. When tree branches began to whip about and white tipped waves rolled across the pond, all of the otters scurried to take shelter. Keeo quickly checked to make sure that each and every pup was safely inside the holt.

Suddenly, another brilliant flash lit up the sky, but it wasn't really lightning, nor was it a bright ray of sunshine.

As Keeo was soon to find out, there was something magical about it. The light illuminated the log on which Keeo was sitting, bathing the huge otter in its wonderful glow. Keeo felt



DRAW KEEO SEEING THE FLASH OF LIGHT

strange. Somehow he knew something magical had happened to him. Glancing down, he discovered that all of his brown fur had turned completely silver! And then he realized something even more strange had occurred. To his great surprise and amazement, Keeo found he was thinking not just in otter words but also like a person!

When the storm passed, the pond's otters all gathered around the now silver colored Keeo. In otter language, Keeo told them what the magical flash of light had done. He even spoke a few words of people talk just to show the otters what he could now do. Keeo also told the otters about the other magical powers he now seemed to have.

But Keeo wondered why he was able to speak both the otter language and that of the people. So he asked all of the otters, "Why do you think I can speak our otter language and also the language of the people?"

The otters thought and they thought, and then they thought some more until finally the littlest otter said in a tiny voice. "You can speak to both people and otters because it is up to you, Keeo, to talk with the Jones family on behalf of all the animals of the forest, and especially us otters. Then we animals can learn from our people friends, and they can learn many important things about nature from us. You, Keeo, will be able to help all of us learn how to take better care of the world than we could before."

Keeo knew that the littlest otter's words were true, and he was both excited and a little bit scared. He wondered if he could do such an important job. How would the Jones family react to his new ability to talk? But because he was now a special, magical otter, Keeo realized that this was the beginning of much new and exciting fun.

# An Invitation for Fun at the Pond

**A**s Keeo slowly swam down the river towards the home of the Jones family, he thought nervously, “How will I be able to go up to people and just start talking to them?”

He considered all the things he might first say to them and finally decided, “I’ll just tell them who I am, and then we’ll see what happens after that.”

When Keeo reached the clearing that contained the home of the Jones family, he saw Hawkeye and Sunshine standing near the riverbank.

“Look!” exclaimed Sunshine in a surprised voice. “A silver otter!”

Before Hawkeye had an opportunity to reply, Keeo spoke up boldly. “Hello there. My name is Keeo. I’m a magical otter!”

Sunshine and Hawkeye both looked at each other as if to ask, “Did I really hear a large silver otter speaking to me?” When neither Sunshine nor Hawkeye appeared prepared to say anything, Keeo added, “I’ve come to visit with you.”

Though Sunshine was still not completely certain that she was really hearing a talking silver otter, she decided to be

polite. “Well, hello to you too, Keeo. I’m pleased to have you visit.” And with those words, she stuck out her left hand and shook Keeo by the left front paw.

“Hey, everybody!” shouted Hawkeye. “Come quickly and meet our new friend!”

When the rest of the family members were gathered about, they had many questions for Keeo, the first one being, “How did you get to be a magical otter?”

Throughout the evening, Keeo answered all of the family’s many questions. He told them the entire story about the bright light and how his coat turned silver and his surprise at



DRAW KEEO MEETING THE JONES FAMILY

discovering that he could talk like people.

He went on to explain how the otters had given each of the Jones family members a special forest name.

Keeo was very pleased when he discovered that everyone liked their new names.

At one point when Keeo was telling his story, his stomach made a long, low rumbling sound like that thunder makes when it is far away. Keeo realized that it had been several hours since he had last eaten. When Ringtail heard the sound coming from Keeo's belly, he recognized what it meant, for his own stomach sometimes made a similar sound.

"Keeo?" asked Ringtail. "Would you like something to eat? You can share the rabbit I caught yesterday."

In his whole life, Keeo had never tasted, or even seen, a rabbit. He took the meat that Ringtail offered him and cautiously bit into it. "Mmmmmmm," he thought as he chewed, "Quite tasty, but not as soft as the fish I had earlier."

And so Keeo spent most of the night talking and having fun with the Jones family.

When the sun began to rise behind the trees, he knew it was time to return to the pond and to the other otters in the holt. Shuffling back to the river, Keeo suddenly had an idea and so he asked, "Would all of you like to come to the otter holt tonight and meet all of the other otters?"

"What a great idea!" said Rainbow. "We would love to visit

you. We'll meet you at the pond early in the evening.”

That day, sleep was slow in coming to the members of the Jones family and also to the otters snuggled in the holt. They thought about the magical things that were going to happen next.



# The Magical World of the Otters

That evening, as the sun sunk slowly over the pond, each of the otters in the raft was busily bustling about. In fact, there was so much excitement that Big Brown Otter had to call all of the otters together in an attempt to calm them down.

“Big and little otters,” he announced. “Because the Jones family will be here soon, let’s check to be absolutely certain that everything is completely ready. Now, is the otter holt all cleaned and tidied for our visitors?”

“Yes!” replied the otters enthusiastically. “And do we have something to offer them to eat when they arrive?” asked Big Brown Otter.

“Fish!” chorused the otters.

“Oh!” said Keeo. “I don’t know if people eat raw fish. I do believe we need to think of something else.”

“Now, just one last question,” said Big Brown Otter. “Have we made the underwater entrance bigger so that the people can swim in?”

“Yes!” shouted the otters. “We shared in doing the work, and

so absolutely everything is ready.”

“Well done, otters,” said Big Brown Otter proudly. “Then we are all ready. It won’t be long now before the Jones family comes up the trail.”

The otters were not the only ones who were excited that evening. The entire Jones family, not used to sleeping during the day, had awakened early. Dinner was quickly eaten, and then the family was happily hiking along the trail towards the pond.

Reaching the pond’s shore, the family greeted Keeo with shouts of, “Hello!”

“Welcome,” said Keeo. “I hope you are ready to play in the pond with us.” The Jones family members looked at each other, and then an embarrassed Ringtail said, “Oh, I’m afraid we’re not dressed for swimming,”

“That’s all right,” smiled Keeo. With my magical help, you will be able to swim and act exactly like an otter. Just do as I say. First, hold hands and gather around me in a circle. That’s right. Now, take your first two fingers and straighten them to look like otter ears. Squat down as if you’re ready to jump in after a fish. Get set, for once I say the magic words, you’ll be able to dive into the pond like real otters. Is everyone ready?”

“Yes!” shouted each member of the Jones family.

“All right,” said Keeo. “Here we go.” And with that, he chanted the magic words.



DRAW THE OTTERS SWIMMING

“Otters, Busy and Bright!”

Jumping up with a HURRAY!, the Jones family members dove into the water after the silver otter. “Wow!” exclaimed Rusty. “We’re just like otters.”

As Keeo swam ahead as their guide, tiny air bubbles clung to his whiskers and to his thick silver fur as he glided through the water. “Look at all the fish,” gurgled Ringtail.

“Yes,” replied Keeo. “Besides the fish, our pond is home to many other animals such as ducks and geese and frogs and turtles. We all depend on one another to keep the pond safe and clean.”

Turning towards the holt entrance, Keeo gave a final grunt and swam through the wide tunnel opening.

One by one, each member of the Jones family followed Keeo



DRAW THE JONES FAMILY VISITING THE DEN

through the passage until, with a slight push upwards, their heads surfaced inside the otter holt.

“Hurray!” exclaimed all the otters as they recognized their new friends. When everyone in the Jones family was comfortably seated, the littlest otter came forward and said, “We wanted to share some of our food with you, but Keeo said he didn’t think you would like raw fish. We finally decided that wild apples from a tree in the woods would be fine because it doesn’t matter if they get wet.”

“That’s true,” said Ringtail. “What good thinking.” Looking around the holt, Rusty marvelled at how its walls were made

of strong branches and mud. “Gee, your holt is large,” said Rusty. “It’s wide enough for me to lie down in, and I could even stand up and not hit my head on the roof.”

“When you’re in here,” asked Hawkeye, “can you hear the noises of the forest?”

“No,” replied Keeo. “Except for the sounds of the water, we rarely hear anything. When Ringtail and Rainbow come in their canoe, we can hear their paddles splashing in the water, and we can hear you when you all go swimming.”

“Well,” commented Rainbow, “your holt must certainly be a peaceful place then.”

The Jones family stayed in the holt for a long time and they told the otters many things about the lives of humans. Finally though, it was time to return to their home in the clearing. With Keeo once again acting as their guide, they slipped out of the holt and swam toward the pond shore. Following a wave of his paw, Keeo left them to become people once again.

Watching Keeo glide away, Sunshine remarked, “I can’t believe we live so close to a pond with otters in it! They are so playful and busy.”

“Yes,” replied Hawkeye. “You know, the otters share their pond with many other animals and plants. If we’re lucky, we may see baby geese in the late spring.”

“If the pond and the forest around it aren’t kept healthy, all those plants and animals, including the otters, might not have

a place to live. We should do something to protect the forest and pond.” said Rainbow.

Pointing to an old, rusty tin can that Bubbles had picked up, Ringtail suggested, “I know what we can do. We can help keep the pond and forest clean of things that other people leave behind. That way the pond will stay a safe place for all the animals to use.”

“And we can build nesting boxes for ducks and swallows that can’t find a home around the pond,” suggested Rusty. Everyone began to talk excitedly about all the fun projects they could do to help keep the otters’ pond a beautiful, magical place.

As Keeo watched the Jones family disappear down the trail, he knew that these people had now become best friends of the forest. And that was the greatest magic of all.

# Remembering the Otter Promise

**D**awn was rising, and now, with all the excitement of the Jones family visit past, the otters finally began to feel sleepy. As they lay snuggled together, they thought of all the day's happenings.

Looking up with heavy eyes, one of the otters asked, "Big Brown Otter, are all otter rafts as happy as we are?"

"Yes, I think they are," replied Big Brown Otter. "You see, as otters, we have learned what it truly means to share. We have learned how important it is to work together as a raft. Everyone, from the pups right up to the oldest otter, shares in the work. Our new friends, the Jones family, also know what sharing is. They listen to each other and help out whenever they can. They work as a family to have fun, and that is why they are a happy family."

"And," added Keeo, "what also makes otters happy is to make new friends as we have done with the Jones family. As otters, we shared all we know about nature with the Jones family. In turn, they have told us about doing your best. Just as animals in the pond have learned to help one another, the

Jones family have told us about how people everywhere do their best.

Together, we can all promise to do our best and to obey our leaders and our parents and to be a good otter.”

As the otters began to yawn, Big Brown Otter hushed them to bed with a low shhhhhh. “Sleeping, sleeping, sleeping,” he whispered as each otter curled up to sleep. With one last soft grunt, he gently murmured, “Good night, and busy building tomorrow.”

“Good night Big Brown Otter,” the other otters softly replied. And, nodding off to sleep, each otter said goodnight to the rest of the forest.

“Good night trees.”

“Good night bees.”

“Good night logs.”

“Good night frogs.”

“Good night air.”

“And goodnight to otters everywhere.”



# Swimming up

As the evening light shimmered on the pond, the older busy otters were the first to awaken. Being both bigger, and stronger than the pups and older than the other otters, they had more energy and curiosity. Often they asked Keeo about what went on in the world beyond the pond, and this evening was to be no different. Tumbling over the still sleeping Keeo, they began to shout their questions into his ears, “Please, Keeo, tell us about what goes on in the bigger world?”

Keeo woke up and smiled at them. He knew the time had come for these otters to discover for themselves the answers to their questions, and so, with a twinkle in his eye, he said, “If you older otters are ready to learn about the world beyond the pond, then follow me.”

“Hurray!” shouted the older otters, for they knew that Keeo only asked the oldest otters to follow him and they felt very proud and grown up.

As the younger otters cheered and waved, Keeo and the older otters dove out of the holt and began to swim up the

river. Using his magical powers, Keeo gradually transformed the forest into a lush, green jungle.

The older otters began to smell, hear and see things they had never experienced before. All these new odors, sounds and sights made them a wee bit nervous, and they began to wish they were back in their warm, cozy holt.

As they swam, the older otters began to hear a playful howl that echoed from the jungle. “Ooo-woooo, come jump with us. Ooo-woooo, come run with us,” it seemed to say. The inviting call excited the otters with its mystical charm. As they continued to swim along, the howling appeared to be coming closer. Seeing shadows running between the trees sparked the older otters’ curiosity even more. And so on they swam until they saw a steamy clearing along the bank of the moonlit jungle river.

When Keeo had gathered the otters around him on the shore, he asked, “Older otters! Before we go on, tell me, what have you learned from being part of the raft?”

“How to share,” replied one otter.

“How to have fun, work hard and help family and friends,” added another.

“And to do good turns and to help take care of the world,” said still another otter.

“Very well done,” said Keeo proudly. “You are now ready to learn about life beyond the pond.”



DRAW THE TIMBERWOLF PACK

As the sounds of Keeo's words died away, the otters began to feel their fur tingle and their whiskers twitch.

Suddenly, there was a bright flash, and a magical light enveloped the otters.

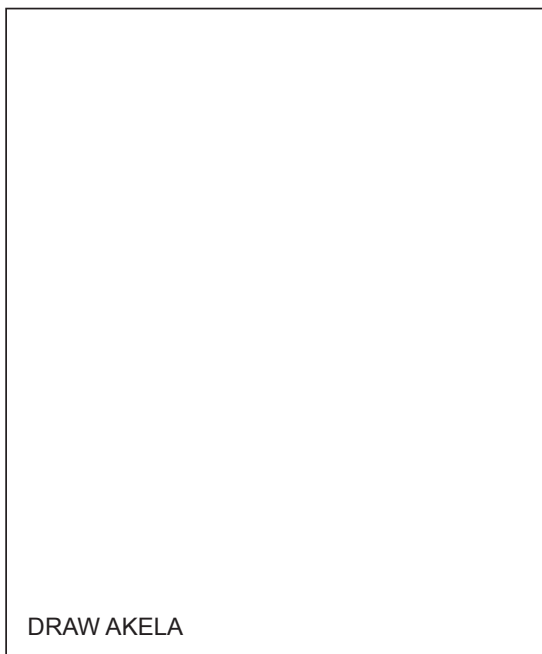
Staring at one another, the otters realized that their long tails and webbed feet had been replaced by bushy tails and strong legs. In a blink, they had changed from otters into timber wolves. Keeo, they saw, had also been changed and was now an older timber wolf.

Eager to try their new feet, the new chums jumped about, but, after just a few hops and bounds, each was yelling, "Ouch!"

Eeech! Ouch!” As otters, they had been used to walking on the soft mud around the pond. The tender skin of their new paws was not prepared for the jungle floor’s sharp sticks and hard rocks.

Amidst all their excitement, the new chums did not notice the silent arrival of the jungle timber wolf pack.

As the pack made a circle around them, a large wolf padded forward and spoke to Keeo. “Are these the new chums, Keeo, who wish to explore the jungle and all it has to offer?”



“Yes, Akela, leader of the timber wolf pack,” responded Keeo. “They have learned their lessons well.”

Turning to the tenderpads, as all new chums are called, Akela said, “Look well, oh tenderpads. You are welcome to run with our pack and learn the ways of the jungle.”

“But,” asked the tenderpads, “how can we run with you if our feet hurt?”

“Keeo and the older timber wolves will help you find the soft paths to follow at first,” replied Akela. “And, if you remember always to do your best, then soon your feet will be as tough as ours. You will then be able to run not only with the

pack, but also on your own adventures.”

The other timber wolves in the pack first cheered in agreement and then howled, “Ahhh-keh-hh-laaaa, we’ll do our best,” to welcome the new tenderpads.

And, with Keeo and the older timber wolves helping the new tenderpads along the way, Akela and the pack slipped softly into the jungle where more exciting timber wolf adventures lay ahead.

*The Beginning!*

# MY BADGE SUMMARY



## INVESTITURE BADGE

INITIALS    PROFICIENCY

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- Learn a little about otters.
- Know a little about the Jones family from the *Friends of the Forest*.
- Learn a little about B-P, the founder of Scouting.
- Say the Otter Motto.
- Say the Otter Law.
- Show the Otter Salute and Sign.
- Say the Otter Promise.
- Participate in an opening and closing ceremony.



## SAFETY BADGE

INITIALS    PROFICIENCY

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- Know your full name and address.
- Know your phone number.
- Make a child identification kit for yourself.
- Learn the full names of your parent(s) or guardian(s).
- Learn about safety with strangers.
- Show how to get help in an emergency.
- Learn about safety around the home.
- Learn about safety around the camp and while hiking.
- Cross the road safely.
- Discuss how to prevent accidents on the road, around stoves/fires, near the pool, and at the playground.
- Learn the basic rules of health and hygiene.
- Clean and cover a cut or scratch.
- Tie your shoes.



## HELPING BADGE (RED PAW)

INITIALS    PROFICIENCY

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- Show how to be nice and help others to feel happy.
- Learn about caring for your clothes and your belongings.
- Find three ways to help in your home.
- Find three ways to help at camp.
- Be helpful around your home or camp.
- Help set up or clean up a Scout meeting.
- Play Kim's Game.
- Play the Message Game.
- Do a good turn for a friend, relative, or a neighbor.
- Take part in a Raft good turn.



## ACTIVITY BADGE (BLUE PAW)

INITIALS    PROFICIENCY

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- Practice being a good winner and a good loser.
- Learn the names of every Otter in your Den.  
Participate in:
  - Sport games
  - Physical fitness
  - Board/card games
  - An obstacle course
  - Go on two day hikes.
  - Go on a night hike.
  - Sing three songs.
  - Connect with another Otter Raft and make a pen pal.
  - Discuss ways to welcome everyone into your Otter games.
  - Visit a senior center and do some fun activities or crafts with them.



## HANDICRAFT BADGE (TAN PAW)

INITIALS    PROFICIENCY

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- Make art showing a scene or event
- Create a picture of your home.
- Make a Thank You card and deliver it.
- Make a map or diagram.
- Create trail signs using rocks or sticks.
- Make a model.
- Make two craft items.
- Make a bird feeder from reused items.
- Tie two different knots.
- Display a collection with at least 25 things.
- Participate in a service project making or collecting things to donate.



## NATURE BADGE (GREEN PAW)

INITIALS    PROFICIENCY

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- Learn about caring for the environment and the rules of “Leave No Trace.”
- Learn about caring for pets.
- Make a scrapbook about an animal you like.
- Collect or show 10 nature items that are different types of the same thing.
- Take a nature walk.
- Grow a seed in a water soaked paper towel.
- Regrow a carrot top or other plant in water.
- Plant and take care of a tree, flower or food in a garden.
- Visit a zoo or wildlife rescue to observe different types of animals.
- Take part in a trail or park cleanup.





## SERVICE BADGE

INITIALS PROFICIENCY

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- Visit with local police and find out some ways to help prevent crime and be safe.
- Visit the local fire department and find out the danger of fire and some ways of preventing it.
- Visit with an ambulance crew or emergency room staff and learn about what they do.
- Visit your mayor or other government official and learn what it means to be a good citizen.
- Visit an exhibit or attend a performance to learn how art helps individuals and our community.
- Visit a sanitation or recycling facility and find out about recycling and help your family reduce, reuse, and recycle.



## CAMPING BADGE

INITIALS PROFICIENCY

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- Spend 5 or more nights camping with your family or Raft.



## SWIMMING OTTER BADGE

INITIALS PROFICIENCY

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- Learn the story of Mowgli.
- Learn the story of St. George.
- Know a little more about B-P and the other founders of Scouting.
- Visit the Timberwolf Pack and get to know your future Sixer and Akela.
- Say the Timberwolf Motto.
- Explain the meaning of the code words *DYB* and *DOB* from the Grand Howl.
- Say the Timberwolf Law.
- Show the Timberwolf Salute.
- Earn the Safety Badge.
- Earn all 4 Paws.





# NOTES

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