

## William T. Hornaday Awards

FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Conservation and the Boy Scouts of America have been partners for a long time. Camping, hiking, and respect for the outdoors are a part of the Scouting heritage. Many of the requirements for advancement from Tenderfoot through Eagle Scout rank call for an increasing awareness and understanding of the natural sciences. Many former Scouts have become leaders in conserving our environment and protecting it from abuse. Right now Scouts are involved in learning about environmental problems and actively working to make a difference.

This awards program was created to recognize those that have made significant contributions to conservation. It was begun in 1917 by Dr. William T. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Park and founder of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. Dr. Hornaday was an active and outspoken champion of natural resource conservation and a leader in saving the American bison from extinction. He named the award the Wildlife Protection Medal. Its purpose was to challenge Americans to work constructively for wildlife conservation and habitat protection. After his death in 1938, the award was renamed in Dr. Hornaday's honor and became a Boy Scouts of America award.



In the early 1970s, the present awards program was established with funding help from the DuPont Company. At that time, the late Dr. Hornaday's idea of conservation was broadened to include environmental awareness.

The Hornaday Awards are highly prized by those who have received them: Only slightly more than a thousand medals have been awarded over the past 70 years. These awards represent a substantial commitment of time and energy by individuals who have learned the meaning of a conservation/environmental ethic. Any Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturer willing to devote the time and energy to work on a project based on sound scientific principles and guided by a conservation professional or a well-versed layperson can qualify for one of the Hornaday Awards. Any of the awards will take months to complete, so activities should be planned well in advance.

The fundamental purpose of the Hornaday Awards program is to encourage learning about natural resource conservation and the environment. Understanding and practicing sound stewardship of natural resources and environmental protection strengthens Scouting's emphasis on respecting the outdoors. The goal of this awards program is to encourage and recognize truly outstanding efforts undertaken by Scouting units, Scouts and Venturers, adult Scouters, and other individuals, corporations, and institutions that have contributed significantly to natural resource conservation and environmental protection.

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