

# Cub Scout Den Meeting Outline

Month: **April**

Week: **3**

Point of the Scout Law: **Loyal**

	Tiger	Wolf	Bear	Webelos	Arrow of Light
Before the Meeting	Gather materials for gathering and other activities, games and have home assignments (if any) ready.	Gather materials for gathering and other activities, games and have home assignments (if any) ready.	Gather materials for gathering and other activities, games and have home assignments (if any) ready.	Gather materials for gathering and other activities, games and have home assignments (if any) ready.	Gather materials for gathering and other activities, games and have home assignments (if any) ready.
Gathering	Tree Cookie Project				
Opening	To Do My Best Opening				
Activity	What about the Weather?				
Game	Extinct and Endangered Game				
Business items/Take home	None	None	None	None	None
Closing	Scout Spirit Closing				
After the meeting					

**Materials:**

Gathering: copies of tree cookie project, pencils

Opening: flag

Activity: instructions

Game: instructions, resource sheet copies

Closing: none

Home assignments: None

Advancement:

Tiger – Tigers in the Wild 1 (partial)

Wolf – Paws on the Path 4; Call of the Wild 2, 4

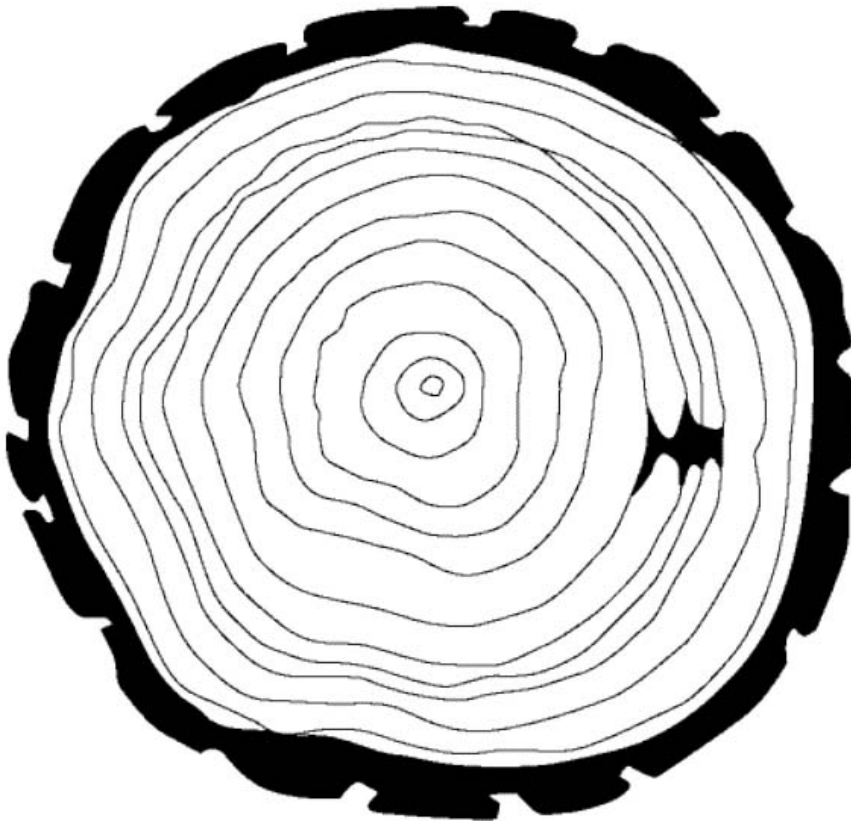
Bear – Fur, Feathers, & Ferns 3

Webelos – None

Arrow of Light – Outdoorsman B 2, Scouting Adventure 1b

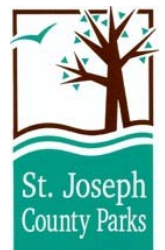
## Tree Cookie Project

If you have access to a real tree slice, you can use it for this activity, or use the diagram below.



- 1 Each ring represents one year of growth. How old was the tree when it was cut down?
- 2 Assuming the tree was cut down this year, can you find the ring that represents the year you were born, or when you got your dog, or other family milestone?
- 3 Use push pins with little slips of paper to make your family milestones, or write them on the tree cookie diagram above.
- 4 Can you find any narrow rings that might indicate stress on the tree such as low rainfall?
- 5 Can you find any areas of the tree cookie that look like the tree was damaged? What might have caused the damage?

Diagram courtesy of *Project Learning Tree*. For more information visit: [www.plt.org](http://www.plt.org)



## “To Do My Best” Opening

**Cubmaster or Den leader:**

Everyone, please join me in saying the first line of the Scout Oath.

[Make the Cub Scout Sign and then say the first line of the Scout Oath with the Cub Scouts. “On my honor I will do my best...”]



Part of what we say is that we will do our best.

What does it mean to do our best? [Lots of great ideas will come from the Cub Scouts.]

“Doing our best” means we need to try our hardest to do whatever it is that we are doing.

It doesn't mean we have to be perfect, but we need to try our hardest and put forth the energy to do the best that we possibly can.

So let's do our best now as we repeat the Pledge of Allegiance and as we participate in our activities today.

# What about the Weather?



## Materials:

None

## Instructions:

**Go through the following questions and discuss the weather when we are outdoors.**

When we're outdoors, the weather may change. **What kinds of weather might we have to know how to handle? How about temperature changes between day and night? What will you bring to be prepared?**

[Rain – rain coat and boots, Wind – a light jacket to block the wind, Sun – a hat and sunscreen, etc; If the temperature looks like it may be colder in the morning – bring a heavier jacket and make sure my sleeping bag will be warm enough.]

**What about big weather events or natural disasters? What kinds of disasters do we have around Houston, Texas? What can we do?** Always stay calm and that will help you stay safe.

Floods

Thunderstorms

Wildfire

Hurricane

Tornado

On most outings, the worst weather you'll see is rain and annoying heat or cold. Sometimes, however, the weather can be dangerous. It's important to Be Prepared – that's the Boy Scout motto – for bad situations.

## Severe Rain and Flooding

Flash floods can occur when there is very heavy rain over several hours or steady rain over several days. Because flash floods can strike with little warning, you should never camp on low ground next to streams when rain is expected.

When you are camping in the mountains, be aware of the weather upstream from your campsite. Heavy rain miles away can turn into flash floods downstream.

If flooding occurs, move to higher ground immediately. Stay out of streams, ditches, and other flooded areas. Adults should never try to drive through flood waters, no matter how shallow they may seem. Just a few inches of water can carry off a car.

### **Severe Thunderstorms, Lightning and Tornadoes**

Thunderstorms can be loud and scary. Sometimes they produce dangerous lightning and tornadoes.

Lightning can strike 10 miles from a thunderstorm, so you should take shelter in a building or vehicle as soon as you hear thunder – even if the sun is shining overhead. Make sure you're not the highest object in the area, and avoid water, open areas, isolated trees, picnic shelters, and metal objects. If you're caught in the open, spread out 100 feet apart and crouch down like you do when you play leapfrog.

Tornadoes are funnel clouds that can form in spring and summer thunderstorms. The best place to be if a tornado hits is indoors, either in a basement or closet or against an interior wall. If you're caught outside, get in a ditch and lie as flat as possible.

### **Fires, Earthquakes and Other Disasters**

In very rare cases, such as if there's a forest fire, you may have to evacuate your campsite. Follow your leader or family to know where to go.

**-Remember to always stay with a buddy.**

**-Let an adult know if you and your buddy need to leave the group, and tell where you are going.**

**-Carry a whistle to signal for help. Three blasts in a row is the universal distress call.**

**If you think you are lost... what do we do? STOP – Stop, Think, Observe and Plan!**

**If we were going hiking and camping today, what would we wear?**

[Have Cub Scouts determine the weather today and decide what they would wear. Will it be many layered with a jacket, and a stocking cap with gloves and long pants and with comfortable shoes and socks? Or will it be a t-shirt with a sun hat with shorts and comfortable shoes and socks? Or will it be something in between?]

**Remember that a Scout is cheerful. It's easy to be cheerful when the weather on a campout is great. If you are prepared with the right gear, you can also be cheerful on a rainy day.**

# Extinct and Endangered Animals Game

This game is best played in groups of 8-10 people.

## Materials:

Chairs for all players MINUS one or tape to mark spots on the floor.

**Setup:** If you have individual chairs, make sure you have one chair for every player MINUS one. Set up the chairs in a circle. If you do not have individual chairs, use tape to mark spots on the floor to sit on – one spot less than the number of people in the group. Mark the spots in a circle. Everyone sits in a chair or on a spot except one person. This person stands in the middle of the circle.



**How to play:** This game is played just like “Fruit Basket,” except that instead of each player having a specific fruit, each player has an extinct or endangered animal. Let each player choose an animal that became extinct in the last 100 years (see resource sheet) or that is endangered or threatened. You can suggest animals if they cannot think of any animals. Depending on the number of the players, you can do this several different ways.

**It may be easier to assign these animals (as Cub Scouts may not know that many extinct animals). Use the resource sheet as you assign the animals and tell the Cub Scouts why a particular animal became extinct or is endangered or threatened.**

Have each player sit in a chair or on a spot on the floor – except one player. This one player will be left standing in the middle. He is “It”. “It” starts the game by calling out the name of two animals, like “passenger pigeon” and “Golden Toad”! As soon as he calls out these names, players sitting in the circle with those animal names would jump up and try to find a new seat (switching chairs/spots before the person in the middle takes one of their chairs/spots). “It” would also try as fast as he could to sit in one of the open seats. In the end, a player would be left without a seat. That player left without a seat would then call out another animal and the game continues.

At any time, the player in the middle also has the option of calling out “I’m Extinct!” When that happens, *all* players get up from their chairs and find a new one. Mass pandemonium and good fun ensues as everyone tries not to be left without a seat. The game continues until you want to stop.

**Rules:** You can set a rule that a player getting up from a chair must find a new one at least two seats away (to encourage players to get up and run around). Also, if you’re halfway through your game and realize that there’s one or two fruits that no one’s calling because everyone’s forgotten about them (like the Cub Scout that is the “Tasmanian Tiger”), you might want to remind everyone of everyone’s animal.

## Eight Texas Endangered Animals

(text and photos condensed from the Texas Parks and Wildlife document entitled, "Endangered and Threatened Animals of Texas")



### Mexican Long-Nosed Bat

The Mexican Long-nosed Bat is a large bat compared with most U.S. bat species. It measures about 2.75 to 3.75 inches in total length. It has a long muzzle with a nose leaf (see the picture) at the tip. Its long tongue can go out 3 inches and helps the bat feed on flower nectar.

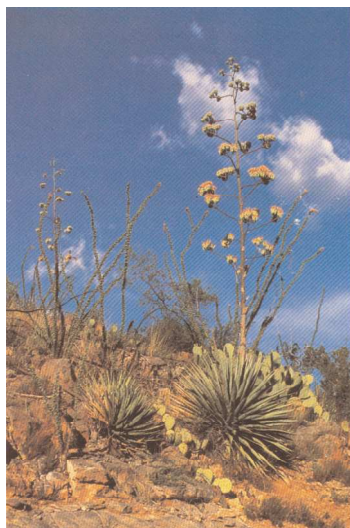
It lives in southwestern New Mexico, the Big Bend area of Texas, the Chinati Mountains in Texas and southward into central Mexico. In the daytime, Mexican Long-Nosed Bats live in caves, crevices, tunnels, abandoned mines and old buildings. They are often found in colonies at the openings of caves.



Mexican Long-Nosed Bat

Mexican Long-nosed Bats are thought to move from central Mexico into northern Mexico each year, with part of the population crossing the border into Texas and New Mexico. The young are born in Mexico during April, May and early June, then move northward with their mothers.

These bats are nectar feeders, emerging at night to feed on the showy flowers of plants such as agave plants (*Agave* spp.). They are very strong, highly maneuverable fliers, and like hummingbirds, are able to hover in flight while they feed. In Big Bend National Park, agaves begin blooming in mid-May at lower elevations and early June at higher altitudes. The bats arrive in Texas about one month after flowering of agaves has begun. After spending most of the summer in Big Bend, they leave the United States in late summer or early fall as the agaves go out of bloom.



Agave plant

### Why are they endangered?

Although the Mexican Long-nosed Bat occurs throughout much of Mexico, There are indications of population decline both in the United States and Mexico. Many years of watching the numbers of Mexican Long-Nosed Bats was the reason that the bat was added to the list of endangered species in 1988.

The reasons for the lower number of bats are thought to be associated with loss of roosting sites and food sources. Food resources are lost by both land use change and wild agave harvesting. Colonial roosting species, such as many bats, are particularly vulnerable to disturbance and destruction of roosting habitat, since this can result in the displacement of large numbers of animals at one time. Just a few roost sites are known for this species that provide the proper roosting environment including temperature and humidity.

Loss of food sources may be another threat contributing to the decline of the Mexican Long-nosed Bat. Agaves are an important food source, and are the primary blooming plants available in northern Mexico during their northern migration in the spring, and again in August when they move south. Harvest of agaves for the production of liquor, and in northeastern Mexico, for

preparation of "quiote," a traditional sweet, may be contributing to the decline of this important food source. When agaves are harvested, not only are they removed from the bats' present food supply, but future generations of agave plants also are eliminated. This is especially critical, since

a single plant grows for 10 to 20 years and flowers only once then dies. Other factors, such as wild fires and clearing of rangeland areas in northern Mexico may also reduce the food supply and thus affect bat populations.

### What's being done to help?

Recovery efforts also include planting agaves along roadways in Northern Mexico. More than 50,000 agaves had already been planted in the last three years. Agaves are very important plants to control soil erosion, and help to speed up the natural succession process in degraded areas. Finally, recovery efforts include providing information to the general public and school children concerning the great diversity and importance of bats.



## Louisiana Black Bear

The Louisiana Black Bear is one of 16 currently recognized subspecies of American Black Bear. They have five toes with short, curved claws on the front and hind feet. Adult males may weigh 300 to 400 pounds or more, and adult females 120 to over 180 pounds. Body length of adults ranges from 4 to 7 feet.

The Louisiana Black Bear was once a common inhabitant of forested regions of eastern Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

Their last strongholds in eastern Texas were in the swamps and thickets of the Big Thicket Region of southeast Texas. Presently the Louisiana black bear primarily occurs within the boundaries of the state of Louisiana. There have been some 24 confirmed black bear sightings within eastern Texas since 1977.



Key habitat requirements of black bears include food, water, cover, and denning sites. Louisiana black bears typically inhabit bottomland hardwood forests but also utilize other types of forested habitats. Remoteness is an important part of black bear habitat.

Louisiana Black Bears are opportunistic feeders, eating almost anything that is readily available. Hard and soft foods like acorns and berries, dead animals, and insect larvae found in dead and decaying wood are typical food sources. However, agricultural crops like corn, wheat and sugarcane may also be utilized. Bears are considered to be very intelligent animals.

They are basically shy and secretive, and usually intentionally avoid contact with humans. Conversely, bears have a keen sense of smell, and will locate and feed on human garbage. This tendency can sometimes create problems with humans.

### Why are they endangered?

Decline of this species, throughout its range, was due to depletion of populations through over harvest by humans, and to loss suitable forested habitats. Presently human population density with its high potential for human/bear conflicts is probably the most significant threat. Continued loss of forested habitat throughout eastern Texas, is a great threat to the black bear.

### What's being done to help?

The Louisiana Black Bear was listed as threatened in 1992. The goals in helping the bears are to 1) minimize loss of more forested habitat, particularly mature bottomland hardwood forests, 2) Promote reforestation programs, 3) Monitor the movements of black bears the move into Texas from Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma, 4) Find ways to help the black bears that do come into Texas from other states, 5) help other states conserve the black bear and 6) help educate people about the Louisiana Black Bear and how people can help.

## Red-cockaded Woodpecker

The Red-cockaded Woodpecker is an eight-inch long woodpecker with a solid black cap and nape, and prominent white cheek patches. The male has a tiny red streak behind the eye and near the ear (the cockade). The cockade is seldom visible in the field, making it difficult to distinguish males from females.



The Red-cockaded Woodpecker is found in mature pine forests of east Texas and the southeastern United States. It is the only species of woodpecker that excavates its cavities exclusively in living pine trees. In Texas, cavities have been found in longleaf, loblolly, shortleaf, and slash pines. Most cavities are found in trees 60 to 70 years of age or older. The tree must have enough heartwood (older, non-living, inner portion of wood) to contain the roosting chamber, since a chamber in sapwood (younger, living portion of wood) would fill with resin. Since heartwood is very hard, a large percentage of cavities are found in pines infected with a heart rot fungus called red heart. This fungus weakens the heartwood and makes cavity excavation easier. A cluster is a stand of trees containing and surrounding the cavity trees in which a group of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers nest and roost. Some things that cause these woodpeckers to die include infestation of the tree by bark beetles, winds breaking the tree and fire.

The Red-cockaded Woodpecker lives in groups which usually have two to six birds, although as many as nine birds have been observed. The group may consist of only a mated pair; a mated pair with their current year's offspring; or a mated pair, their current year's offspring and helpers. These helpers are one to three year old adult birds, typically sons of one or both of the breeders. A woodpecker group roosts and nests in a cluster of cavity trees. Major competitors for nest cavities include other woodpeckers (Red-headed, Red-bellied, and Pileated) and flying squirrels.

### Why are they endangered?

The main threat to the survival of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker is the decrease in the quality and quantity of old growth pine forest nesting habitat, primarily due to the cutting down of trees for timber.. Because of this bird's requirement for older mature pines, habitat loss takes a long time to rectify. It may take 60 to 70 years to begin to provide suitable nesting habitat. Southern pine beetle infestations have been found to be a major cause of cavity tree loss in Texas. This is particularly true during southern pine beetle epidemics, such as the one that occurred on the Sam Houston National Forest in 1983 following Hurricane Alicia. Another threat to Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity trees is damage from meteorological events like hurricanes, tornadoes and sheer winds. A large-scale sheer wind event that occurred in February, 1998, on the Sabine National Forest resulted in loss of the majority of cavity trees

### What's being done to help?

Despite the problems facing the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, recovery efforts are proceeding on federal, state and private properties in Texas. Overall Red-cockaded Woodpecker populations across the region are mostly stable or increasing as a result of active management through habitat improvements (removal of midstory vegetation, and prescribed burning), insertion of artificial cavity inserts (nest boxes placed on the inside of the tree), and relocation strategies. State and federal agencies are working with private landowners interested in developing Red-cockaded woodpecker conservation and habitat management plans for their property.



## Eastern Brown Pelican

This is a unique shore bird with a 6-foot wingspread and 18-inch bill with pouch along the underside. A brown pelican weighs about 9 pounds and is a graceful flyer. Its feet are webbed to provide power while swimming in or under the water.

In the past, the Brown Pelican was found in large numbers along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from South Carolina to Florida and west to Texas. Today, the birds occur throughout their historic range but their numbers have been greatly reduced.

Today, Brown Pelicans are found along the Texas coast from Chambers County on the upper coast to Cameron County on the lower coast. Most of the breeding birds nest on Pelican Island in Corpus Christi Bay and Sundown Island near Port O'Connor.

It is quite an experience to watch a Brown Pelican feeding. Soaring overhead, the bird spots a fish near the surface and keeps it in sight. Rotating into a dive, the pelican plunges 30 to 60 feet bill-first into the water. The impact of hitting the water with such force would stun an ordinary bird, but the Brown Pelican is equipped with air sacs just beneath the skin to cushion the blow. As it enters the water, the loose skin on the underside of the bill extends to form a scoop net with an amazing capacity of 2.5 gallons. If the dive is successful, the pelican quickly drains the water from its pouch and tosses its head back to swallow the fish.



### Why are they endangered?

Brown Pelican numbers in Texas began to decline sharply in the 1920's and 1930's, when adult birds were killed and nesting colonies destroyed by fishermen, in the mistaken belief that pelicans compete with man for food. Even more damaging, however, was the widespread use of DDT and similar insecticides beginning in the late 1940's. These insecticides were used on farmlands across the United States and in coastal areas to control mosquitoes. DDT does not usually kill adult birds, but it does interfere with calcium metabolism. The result is that the birds lay thin-shelled eggs that break during incubation or are too thin to protect the embryo. Pelicans are fish eaters, and fish are great accumulators of all toxic chemicals that get into coastal waters. The pelican's favorite food, Menhaden, a small filter-feeding fish, trap plankton for food. The plankton absorbed DDT residues from runoff. Thus, the concentration of DDT and Endrin in the environment had a devastating impact on the reproduction of Brown Pelicans, along with other top-of-the food-chain birds such as Bald Eagles, Ospreys, and Peregrine Falcons.

### What's being done to help?

Recovery of these species has been steady since the early 1970's, when DDT and Endrin were banned in the United States. In Texas today, the major threats to the continued recovery of the Brown Pelican appear to be human disturbance and loss of nesting habitat. Pelicans need safe places to nest, away from predators and man.



## Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle

The Kemp's ridley is the smallest member of the sea turtle family. Kemp's ridleys have large, somewhat triangular heads and powerful, massive jaws.

Kemp's ridley adults are generally only found in the Gulf of Mexico. Juveniles have been reported most commonly in the northern Gulf of Mexico between Texas and Florida. Juveniles are also found along the eastern seaboard of the United States as far north as Nova Scotia, Canada.



Shallow waters are preferred habitat for juvenile and adult Kemp's ridleys. Hatchlings spend many months as surface drifters in the open ocean (pelagic phase). Recent evidence suggests that they may be found in surface water areas where drifting material, such as floating marine vegetation and debris, accumulate. These areas are called convergence zones or drift lines. Little is known regarding how long they drift, what they eat, or how they get back to the coast. Studies have shown that, after the pelagic phase, body size of Kemp's ridley is related to water depth. For example, the smallest juveniles are found in shallow waters of bays or lagoons, often foraging in less than 3 feet of water, whereas larger juveniles and adults are found in deeper water.

The diet of juvenile and adult Kemp's ridley turtles consists primarily of crabs, shrimp, snails, bivalves, sea urchins, jellyfish, sea stars, fish, and occasionally marine plants. Crabs are a preferred food and several species are eaten.

### Why are they endangered?

The Kemp's ridley population crash that occurred between 1947 and the early 1970's was probably a result of the combination of intensive annual harvest of eggs and the death of juveniles and adults in shrimp trawl nets. Kemp's ridley eggs were (and still are in many places) considered a delicacy to eat. Between about 1947 and 1966 people dug up truckloads of eggs and sold them in the towns and cities of Texas and Mexico. Since many of the eggs were either taken by people or eaten by predators, there was a drastic decline in the turtle population. Also, they were taken for meat by commercial fishermen in the northern and northeastern Gulf of Mexico.

### What's being done to help?



Since the principal nesting beach is in Mexico, the continued, long-term cooperation of two nations is necessary to recover the species. A joint United States-Mexican management program is underway which includes nesting beach protection and incubation of eggs. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided assistance at the Rancho Nuevo nesting beach since 1978. Continued assistance to Mexico is needed to ensure long-term protection of the major nesting beach, including protection of adult turtles and enhanced production and survival of hatchlings. Education efforts and beach nest protection work in Mexico is supported by a partnership which includes the Gladys Porter Zoo, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, National Marine Fisheries Service and the seafood industry, along with others from the U.S. and Mexico. It is hoped that through education of children, the conservation message will be spread throughout local communities. Regulations went into effect in the United States in 1990 and in Mexico in 1993 which require commercial trawlers to install Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) on their boats. This device guides turtles and other

large objects out of the net through an escape opening in the net. Hopefully, the use of these devices in the Gulf of Mexico by the shrimp fleets of the United States and Mexico will substantially reduce mortality associated with net entanglement.

## Houston Toad

The Houston Toad is a terrestrial amphibian associated with deep sandy soils within east central Texas. Since Houston Toads are poor burrowers, loose soils are required for burrowing. The toads burrow into the sand for protection from cold weather in the winter (hibernation) and hot, dry conditions in the summer (aestivation). For breeding, including egg and tadpole development, Houston Toads also require still or slow-flowing bodies of water that persist for at least 30 days.

The Houston Toad is a year round resident where found, although its presence can most easily be detected during the breeding season, when males may be heard calling.



### Why are they endangered?

Habitat loss and alteration are the most serious threats facing the Houston Toad. The change of wetlands for urban and agricultural uses eliminates breeding sites. Draining a wetland, or converting a temporary wetland to a permanent pond, can eventually cause the Houston toad to decline or be eliminated entirely. Conversion to permanent water makes them more vulnerable to predation by snakes, fish, and other predators. but also Periodic drought is also a threat, particularly long-term drought such as that experienced during the 1950s. Drought may result in the loss or reduction of breeding sites as well as greater death of toadlets and adults.

High traffic roads are a barrier to Houston Toad movement, and toads are sometimes killed on roads. Other linear features such as pipelines and transmission lines can create barriers between foraging, hibernating, and breeding sites, especially if native vegetation has been removed. The invasion of the Red Imported Fire Ant makes it harder to ensure the long-term survival of the Houston Toad. These toads occur in small, scattered populations, and may be more seriously affected by fire ants than species that are more common and widespread. Fire ants kill young toadlets (less than 7-10 days old) moving out of the breeding pond into the surrounding land habitat.

### What's being done to help?



The Houston Zoo received its first Houston Toad eggs in 2007. The reasons that the zoo received the toad eggs were to 1) safeguard the Houston Toad in case something caused them to go extinct in the wild. The second reason was for the toad to be reintroduced into new habitat. The third reason is to protect and release the toads after they are a certain age. The fourth reason is for research. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department are the organizations charged with conserving the toad and work with partners such as Texas State University, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the myriad of private landowners who recognize the need for and appreciate having the little toad around. Knowing the situation is grim, everyone

is responding with active stewardship increasing the chance for long lasting positive changes for the species.

## Black-Footed Ferret



Black-footed Ferrets are tan in color with distinctive body markings, including a black face-mask, dark “saddle” on the back, black feet and legs, and a black-tipped tail.

The Black-footed Ferret once inhabited extensive areas of the Great Plains ranging from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains east to Nebraska and from southern Canada south to Texas. Ferrets rely on prairie dogs for food and shelter. Because of this, active prairie dog colonies provide potential habitat for Black-footed Ferrets.

Black-footed Ferrets hunt primarily at night, so they are rarely seen. They live in burrows made by prairie dogs. Prairie dogs comprise about 90 percent of the ferret’s diet, although they also eat rabbits, mice, voles, ground squirrels, pocket gophers, birds, and insects.

### **Why are they endangered?**

In Texas, the prairie dog population has declined, so the Black-footed ferret population has declined as well. When the prairie dogs are not there to be the food for the ferrets, then the ferret population goes

down. When rangeland is converted to cropland, when prairie dog towns are eliminated, when cities grow, then you will lose the black-footed ferret population. Disease has also been a reason that the prairie dog population has gone down.

### **What’s being done to help?**

State and federal, are beginning to reintroduce Black-footed Ferrets to the wild. Reintroduction efforts have begun in Wyoming, and other states plan to follow. The first releases are planned on public land and will be experimental, as researchers learn the best ways to return Black-footed Ferrets to their native habitat. Black-footed Ferrets are also being maintained and bred at several zoos and other facilities around the country. In Texas, efforts are being made to inform landowners and the general public regarding the importance of conserving and managing prairie dogs.



## Ocelot

The Ocelot is a beautiful medium sized spotted cat with body dimensions similar to the bobcat. A key feature is the parallel stripes running down the nape of the neck. The under parts are white spotted with black. The Ocelot's long tail is ringed or marked with dark bars on the upper surface. The backs of the rounded ears are black with a white central spot.

In Texas, Ocelots occur in the dense thorny shrub lands of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Rio Grande Plains. Over the years, the Ocelot population declined primarily due to loss of habitat and predator control activities.

Ocelots normally begin their activities at dusk, when they set out on nightly hunts for rabbits, small rodents, and birds. They move around during the night, usually within a well-established home range.

The extensive shrub lands of the Lower Rio Grande Valley have been converted to agriculture and urban development over the past 60 years. Much of this land, particularly the more fertile soils, has been cleared for production of vegetables, citrus, sugarcane, cotton, and other crops. Unfortunately for the Ocelot, the best soil types also grow the thickest brush and thus produce the best habitat. Only about 1% of the South Texas area supports what is currently defined as optimal habitat. Road mortality is a more recent reason for decline. As Ocelot habitat in South Texas becomes fragmented by bigger highways with faster traffic, Ocelots have become increasingly vulnerable to being struck by vehicles while crossing roads.

Conservation of remaining habitat, and maintenance or creation of brush corridors connecting these habitats, is necessary for survival of the Ocelot population in Texas. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, The Nature Conservancy, and many local landowners have been working to protect, acquire and restore Ocelot habitat in the Rio Grande Valley. Restoration generally involves revegetating previously cleared areas with native trees and shrubs. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Texas Department of Transportation are also working together to try and reduce Ocelot road deaths by installing Ocelot underpasses under roads where Ocelots are known to frequently cross.



# Scout Spirit Closing Minute

**Materials:**

None

**Cubmaster or Den leader:**

What is Scout Spirit? [See how Cub Scouts respond]  
[Scout spirit applies to how you live and how you conduct your daily life - that is, your life both in and out of Scouting activities.]



You show Scout spirit by being a role model, living by the Scout Oath and Law. Scout spirit is not based on how many Scouting events or outings a Scout attends, but rather by how he helps bring out the best in others as a reflection of his own character and attitude.

Some ways that we show that we are trying to do our best are by:

- telling the truth
- sticking up for the kid being picked on
- handing out papers for the teacher
- letting everyone play a game
- saying thank you to anyone that helps you
- helping a kid that dropped his books instead of laughing at him
- playing fair to have fun rather than to win no matter what
- looking for a little fun in every job you have to do
- using something old because it still works
- asking your friends to not use bad language around you
- listening to music that doesn't promote hate, violence, and other negatives
- taking 5 minutes once in a while to just quietly sit and focus on your goals and your life

(that was a simple example of each of the 12 points in the Scout Law)