



Mountain Man

Leaders' Guide - Blue Ridge Scout Reservation



In the 18th century, the mountains that are now our camp were trapped and hunted by long hunters who spent months at a time in the wilderness. In July of 1755, the Shawnee attacked nearby Draper's Meadows, killing or capturing most of the settlers. The famous Wilderness Road serves as the main street of Newbern, which is across the New River from our camp. In the 19th century, as the New River Valley filled up with farms, our mountains held families of lean, tough, Scots-Irish and Germans who cut timber, cleared hardscrabble farms, and fed their families with the game that they hunted. A muzzle-loading rifle was the trusted tool for hunting and defense. Step back in time and enter the world of the mountain men!

Program Goals

- To provide a living history experience for those Scouts 13 or older by the time of camp.
- Gain an appreciation of the life of the 18th century settler by practicing their life skills.
- Learn to cook all of your meals as a patrol over an open fire using Dutch ovens and cast-iron cookware.
- Learn to build a fire using flint and steel.
- Assemble a Russell Green River sheath knife and sheath. Russell started making knives in 1840.
- Safely shoot a .50 caliber muzzle-loading rifle.
- Learn about survival, traps, snares, edible plants, tracking and finger weaving.

Before Camp

What You Should Know

- Groups of 4 or more youth must send at least one adult leader to aid in supervision. We cannot guarantee that everyone in your unit will be in the same campsite, but we will do our best to camp your troop in the same general area (some may be in an adjacent site).
- Pack your personal gear so that you can carry it 1.5 miles to the outpost. Bring gear of an early style and wear earth tone pants (khakis or dockers are fine). Do not wear camouflage or jeans. Shorts are discouraged and not allowed at the blacksmithing area.
- We will provide you with a hunting shirt. In order for us to guarantee you a shirt on the first day, you must submit the shirt order form in this guide by April 16th, 2020.
- Get some experience in cooking and cleaning up over an open fire.
- Read some books about the area or the period before coming to camp.
- Adult leaders may have Scouts from other troops without leaders in their campsites (provisional Scouts). If this is the case, those adults will be asked to serve as leader for all Scouts in that campsite for the week.
- Participants with special diets should bring their own food. We will accommodate vegetarians, but will not be able to handle special conditions such as celiac. If a Scout or Leader has an allergy to foods or materials (such as latex gloves), we need to be notified ahead of time to be able to deal with these allergies. We ask that Scouts and leaders not decide to become vegetarians during the week of summer camp. It takes special accommodations to do this but we are glad to do it for those who have a serious need.

Administration

- Complete and bring the BSA National Medical Form (Parts A, B, and C)
- Remember to bring proof of Accident and Sickness Insurance (for out-of-council units).
- Submit the Hunter Shirt Order Form by April 16th, 2020
- Print and bring two copies of your completed Mountain Man Roster (page 5).
- Consult the Reservation Guide for other administrative details, forms, and duties.



All camps and programs offered at the Blue Ridge Scout Reservation have been nationally accredited through the Boy Scouts of America's National Camp Accreditation Program.

Additional Information

Provisional Scouts

If there are 1-3 Scouts in your troop who wish to attend, they are welcome to do so as provisional scouts. If you have 4 or more Scouts, you must send an adult leader. Most provisional Scouts who attend have a great time, though Scoutmasters and parents should consider the following points:

- Most of our campsites can hold 10 participants. Provisional Scouts will often be used to fill up empty spots. For example, if a troop has 8 participants, we will add 2 provisional Scouts to fill the extra tents. We will do our best to keep provisional Scouts from the same unit together, but it may not always be possible to do so.
- It may not be a good idea to send a provisional Scout by himself if he gets homesick easily or has special circumstances that may be complicated by being in a place where he is not familiar with others.
- If the Scout has any problems during the week, the Scout must be mature enough to tell a staff member or camp director.
- If we experience behavior problems from provisional Scouts, their Scoutmaster and/or parent will be notified. A Scoutmaster conference may be scheduled if his adult leaders are present on the Reservation.

Advancement and Opportunity

The purpose of Mountain Man is not to earn merit badges, but to experience an earlier style of living. We will not be running merit badge classes and do not provide merit badge counselors. By participating in our programs, the Scout will complete some of the requirements toward metalwork and Leatherwork merit badges, but it will be up to the unit to count these requirements toward the badge. Venturers can also qualify for requirements in hunting, outdoor living history, and shooting sports.

Schedule

Sunday

Sign the attendance verification form with the Camp Director at Powhatan or Ottari (depending on where your troop arrives). Once at Camp Ottari and the attendance verification form has been signed, hike your troop down to the Mountain Man Outpost (a Mountain Man staff member will be stationed near the welcome center to direct you to the Mountain Man Outpost). Check-in at Mountain Man is 1 PM. Please do not arrive early. Flags are at 5:45 PM. Dinner will follow flags. Non-camp vehicles are not permitted in the Mountain Man area; therefore, Troop vehicles should be parked in any of the approved Ottari lots.

Monday-Thursday

Learn about frontier life. You'll shoot and care for a muzzle-loading rifle, make your own green river knife, spend time blacksmithing at the forge, throw knives and tomahawks, build fires without matches, and cook your own meals. You'll have time for activities ranging from basic blacksmithing to wilderness survival. On some days you'll also have the opportunity to hike into Camp Ottari and swim, visit the Trading Post, and take a shower. Those wishing to swim must pass a swim test on Monday during free time. Make sure that you arrive in plenty of time for the lifeguards to give you a test (don't wait until free time is almost over or you won't be able to complete the test). If you do not complete the test on Monday, you will not be allowed to swim during the week.

Friday

After lunchtime, we will have a closing ceremony (at about 1:30 PM). Troops are welcome to stay after the closing, but may leave if they desire. The Ordinary (our version of the trading post) will be open from 3-5 PM. Scouts and leaders are encouraged to attend the Ottari closing campfire and OA Ceremony.

Saturday

Check-out on Saturday morning and hike into Ottari. At the Ottari dining hall, you will be welcome to eat the available continental breakfast. Shuttle times for Camp Powhatan will be announced during the week.

Equipment List

Gear

- (1) Backpack - you will backpack your personal plunder into camp
- (2) Wool blankets (or a sleeping bag with a blanket to hide it). It can drop to 40°F some nights.
- (1) Waterproof ground cloth (to cover firewood)
- (1) Canteen
- (1) Small flashlight with extra batteries
- (1) Matches

Personal Items

- (1) Bandana
- (2) Towels and washcloth
- (1) Pocketknife
- (-) Pocket toilet items (toothbrush, etc.)
- (-) Unscented soap
- (1) Shooting glasses if you have them
- (-) Money for Mountain Man Trading Post

We Will Provide

- Cots
- Wall tents (plan on sharing)
- Cooking and eating utensils

Clothing

- (2) Pairs of earth tone, long pants (khakis are great) - no camo please!
- (1) Warm jacket (wool is best)
- (-) Extra socks and underclothing
- (1) Swimsuit (optional)
- (1) Spare shirt (you'll wear the hunting shirt all week)
- (1) Pair brown or black hiking boots
- (1) Pair of spare shoes
- (1) Wide leather belt to carry your camp knife
- (1) Early style broad-rimmed hat or scarf
- (1) Pair of leather gloves for cooking and working with wood tools. Gloves must be leather, not synthetic.

Do Not Bring

- Expensive Devices
- CD Players
- Firearms
- Sheath Knives
- Fireworks

Adventures of the Frontiersmen

To get into the spirit of reliving the lifestyle of the Mountain Men, here are some books that you may enjoy reading:

Set on the Eastern Frontier:

The Rifleman by John Brick
The Frontiersmen or any other book by Allan Eckert
From Sea to Shining Sea by James Alexander Thom
The Last Trail Betty Zane
The Spirit of the Border by Zane Grey
Forth to the Wilderness (& others) by Dale Van

Set on the Western Frontier:

The Big Sky by A.B. Guthrie, Jr.
The Long Rifle by Stewart Edward White
Give Your Heart to the Hawks by Winfred Blevins
The Great Adventure by Janice Holt Giles
The Journals of Lewis & Clark or any other book on their expedition

Movie: It is highly recommended that you watch *Jeremiah Johnson*.

Craft Projects & Background Info

The unbeatable source is the *Book of Buckskinning* series, published by Scurlock Publishing

Mountain Man Roster

Dates attending camp: _____ Unit Type: _____ Unit Number: _____

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