Otter Program

Structure

Otters are guides who are 5 - 7 years old. They are organized into small groups of 6 - 8 which are called Dens. All the dens of a group together are referred to as a Raft. Groups should not have more than 32 guides in their raft altogether (4 dens of 8 Otters each).



Uniform

Otters wear red t-shirts (short or long sleeve) that the badges are sewn onto and red ball caps with the group necker.

General Program

The Otter Program is broken down into 4 main “paws” plus the safety, service, and camping badges. Scouts who earn all four paws plus their safety and camping badge are able to earn the swimming otter badge to display on their Timberwolf uniform once they swim up.

Groups may handle their rafts in different ways. Some groups have a defined scouting year where a group of Otters comes in at the start of the year and scouts together for several months. Others may have scouts joining at various points throughout the year. Having a 2 year cycle of getting through the 4 paws, with safety, camping, and service opportunities included throughout seems to be a good way of keeping things fresh while still accommodating guides who join when they are a little older.

Many groups focus on two paws per year. However many activities and meeting themes can cover several badge requirements simultaneously, and so you may end up covering some requirements from the other badges even if you are not focusing directly on them. You may also find that once your group has been scouting together for a while, you may want to plan meetings based around which badges the scouts in your group are still working on. Using a spreadsheet to keep track of the progress of all your otters can help you figure out what you want to focus on.

Otter 3 Year Plan from the 17th Black Bears

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Last update: **2024/03/27 19:38**