



8th Ajax Beaver Scouts

P A R E N T S ' G U I D E



It starts with Scouts.

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Welcome to 8th Ajax's Beaver Scout Program! Scouting is the world's largest youth organization, with over 25 million members in almost every country in the world. This guide is a brief overview to Beaver Scouts to help everyone become familiar with the terminology, traditions, and opportunities that exist in the 8th Ajax Colony. **At any time, please feel free to email or approach a Scouter with questions, concerns, or ideas.**

Just starting Beaver Scouts?

Boys and girls in Senior Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 can join Beaver Scouts at any time of the year. Regular meetings and outings occur from mid-September until mid-June and are based out of the gymnasium at Westney Heights Public School at 45 Brennan Road in Ajax on Monday evenings between 6:30 and 7:45 pm. **Please check the calendar on our website for details and exceptions.**

In order to register, please complete a Participant Enrollment Form, pay the registration fee, and purchase a suitably fitting Beaver hat and vest (online at www.ScoutShop.ca or in Person at Camp Samac – 1711 Simcoe Street North in Oshawa. Additional optional Beaver Scout clothing and accessories are also available.) The registration fee enables the various groups and councils of Scouts Canada to develop program resources, provide training and support for the Scouters, and provide insurance coverage for all registered members. To help 8th Ajax pay for supplies, badges, and some of the outings, a \$5 per month “dues” will be collected. If an outing costs a lot of money, a supplement for that particular activity may be required.

After a few meetings (which includes learning the Beaver law, promise, and motto) the new Beaver will be “**invested**” receive a series of crests for the vest, a neckerchief and woggle, and a “tail” for the hat (see the diagram at right for the placement of the crests). Any other activity badges earned throughout the year **do not** go on the uniform, but instead can be attached to a “Scout Blanket” or similar memorabilia collector.

In order to be effective, the Beaver Scout program needs adults with a variety of expertise – please approach a current Scouter to indicate your interest in helping out. We will be glad to help you through the volunteer screening process.



The Beaver Scout Program

Beaver Scout Law: A Beaver Scout has fun, works hard, and helps family and friends.

Beaver Scout Promise: I promise to love God and to help take care of the world.

Beaver Scout Motto: Sharing, Sharing, Sharing.

The **mission** of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

Scouting is based on three broad **principles** which represent its fundamental beliefs:

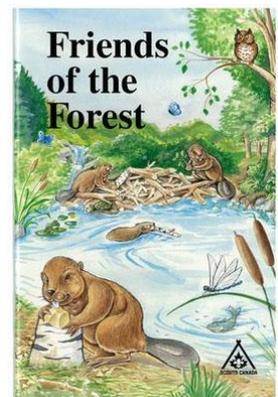
- **Duty to God:** This is defined as: “Adherence to spiritual principles, loyalty to the religion that expresses them and acceptance of the duties resulting therefrom.”
- **Duty to Others:** This is defined as: “loyalty to one’s country in harmony with the promotion of local, national and international peace, understanding and cooperation”, and, “participation in the development of society, with recognition and respect for the dignity of one’s fellow-being and for the integrity of the natural world.”
- **Duty to Self:** This is defined as: “responsibility for the development of oneself.” This is in harmony with the educational purpose of the Scout Movement whose aim is to assist young people in the full development of their potentials.

To meet the Mission and Principles of Scouts Canada in the Beaver Scout program, the following **goals** guide activities that encourage Beaver Scouts to:

- find examples of God’s love for them and the world;
- experience and express love and joy;
- express themselves;
- be healthy and have good feelings about themselves;
- develop a sense of belonging and sharing in small group activities;
- develop a sense of co-operation through non-competitive activities; and
- appreciate nature.

In Beaver Scouts, the Mission, Principles, and Goals are achieved through the use of a program of understanding, supportive fun. Activities are built around seven **program elements:** Games, Crafts, Music, Storytelling, Playacting, Spiritual Fellowship, and Outdoors.

The Beaver Scout Program stems from the book *Friends of the Forest*, written specifically for Beaver Scouts. The book describes how the Jones family have come to live in the clearing along the river bank and how they quickly become aware of their new neighbours, a colony of beavers that also live along the river bank. The story illustrates how the beaver colony observes the Jones family, giving them names and then eventually how the beavers meet the members of the Jones family, mom, dad and their three children. The story is the background resource which provides the terminology, setting, theme, and program material for operating a Beaver Scout Colony. For example, *Friends of the Forest* names used by Beaver Scout Leaders are Hawkeye, Rainbow, Bubbles, Rusty, and Sunshine. Some of the other animals’ names are also used by Scouters and activity leaders.



Beaver Scout Terminology

Beaver Scout Hand Signal –Scouter’s arm straight up with hand forming Beaver Scout Salute. This signals Beaver Scouts to stop everything they are doing and pay attention to the Scouter.

Beaver Scout Salute - Special sign of greeting, made with bent fingers. It represents the two front teeth of a beaver.

Big Brown Beaver - A large toy beaver mascot used in ceremonies.

Chopping Position - Squatting down with elbows on knees, and both hands making a Beaver salute. (Used in the opening and closing ceremonies)

Colony - The entire group of Beaver Scouts and Scouters.

Dam Formation - Circle formation used for organizing Beaver Scouts.

Eager Beaver Scout - A Kit who has learned the Promise, Law and Salute and the opening, closing and investiture ceremonies.

Investiture - The ceremony in which a Kit is invested (receives the Beaver Scout neckerchief) and becomes an Eager Beaver.

Kit - In nature, a growing beaver. In the program, a Beaver Scout who has not yet been invested.

Lodge - Lodges are smaller working groups of five or six Beaver Scouts and a Scouter. Lodges are useful for some activities like crafts and discussions, or, at times during the meeting when Beaver Scouts would benefit from more individual attention.

Lodge Patch – Beaver Scouts usually decide upon a name and symbol for their lodge and attach their symbol (lodge patch) to the right hand pocket of their uniform as a sign of identification and belonging.

River Banks - A formation used to organize Beaver Scouts quietly. Beaver Scouts stand side by side in two wavy lines that are about three feet apart.

Swimming-Up - The ceremony in which the oldest Beaver Scouts are transferred to the Cub program. A Beaver Scout normally goes to Cub Scouts when he/she is entering Grade 3.

Tail Groups - A sub-grouping system which is used to create smaller working groups within the Colony. Tail groups are indicated by Beaver Scouts wearing different colours of tails on their hats. Typically, they are the same age: 5 year olds (Senior Kindergartens) wear a Brown Tail, 6 year olds (Grade 1s) wear a Blue Tail, and 7 year olds (Grade 2s) wear a White Tail. This type of grouping is very practical at different points in the program. It allows Scouters to give older Beavers a different or more challenging activity than younger or newer Beaver Scouts.

Investiture

When a child joins Beaver Scouts, he/she is a Kit, the term used to describe a young beavers. Kits are placed in a lodge when they attend their first Beaver Scout meeting. They may wear the Beaver Scout hat and vest right away, but not the neckerchief as it will be presented to them when they are invested. To become an Eager Beaver Scout, a Kit must know the Beaver Scout Promise, Law, and Salute, and the opening and closing ceremonies. Parents/Guardians are invited to participate in the investiture ceremony. They are asked to stand behind their child when the Beaver Scouts receive their neckerchief. This is an important event in the life of a Beaver Scout – it is even more special if the Beaver Scout’s parents/guardians are present and included in the ceremony. If, for some reason, a parent/guardian or other member of the family is unable to attend, a Scouter will act as a fill-in.

Opening Ceremony

At the beginning of each Beaver Scout meeting, a Scouter stands in the middle of the pond next to Big Brown Beaver and calls, "River Banks." At this command, the Beaver Scouts form two wavy lines (river formation), one line on each side of the hall, and face inward, holding hands.

The Scouter then calls out, "Build the Dam." At this command, the Beaver Scouts go into dam formation by closing the ends of each bank to make a dam across the river which encloses Big Brown Beaver and the Scouter in the middle.

The Scouter stretches out his/her arms sideways and then lowers them. At this signal, Beaver Scouts take the chopping position: feet on floor and body in crouching position, with elbows touching knees, forearms straight up and both hands in Beaver Salute (position representing paws on tree trunks.)

When the Beaver Scouts are in the chopping position, the Scouter asks, "Who are you and what do you do?" As loudly as they can, the Beaver Scouts reply: "Beavers, Beavers, Beavers. Sharing, Sharing, Sharing,"

Immediately after saying this in unison, the Beaver Scouts call, "oo-oo-OO!", starting quietly and building ever louder. At maximum volume, the Beaver Scouts leap up to do a Tail Slap (clap hands behind back). They are imitating the swishing sound of the water as the beavers swim from the bottom of the pond to break the surface.

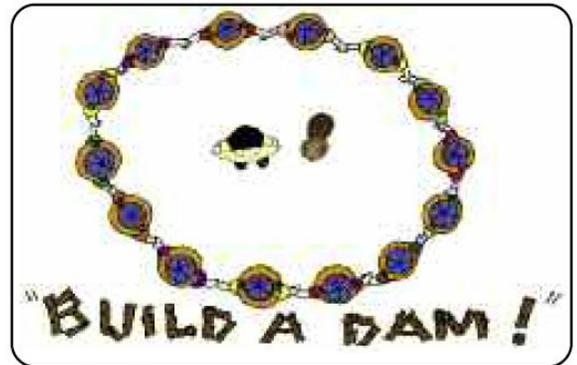
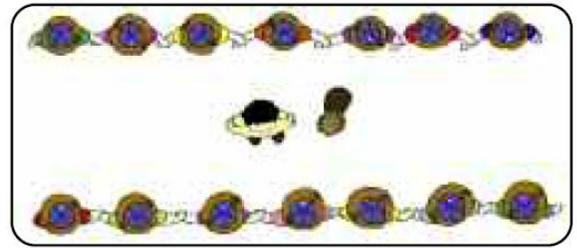
Closing Ceremony

As in the opening ceremony, the closing ceremony begins with the Scouter standing in the centre of the hall next to Big Brown Beaver and calling out, "River Banks", followed by "Build the Dam", so that the Beaver Scouts end in dam formation.

The Scouter then calls out, "Lodge" and at this command, all slowly sink to the floor in a sitting position. As the Beaver Scouts go down, they say the sleepy sound, "Sh, sh, sh, sh, sh, sh", until all Beaver Scouts are sitting cross-legged on the floor. The Scouter then claps his/her hands once and all "sh-ing" ceases. Softly, Beaver Scouts call out, "Sleeping, Sleeping, Sleeping."

The Scouter raises an arm above the head, and Beaver Scouts follow the action. With the palms of their hands, both Scouter and the Beaver Scouts make one resounding slap on the floor in front of themselves. The Scouter calls out, "Good night and busy building tomorrow."

The Beaver Scouts reply, "Good night, Hawkeye" (or the name of whichever Scouter is conducting the ceremony).



Typical Beaver Scout Meeting Format

6:30 pm	Arrival and sign-in – dues, permission forms, update contact info, etc.
6:35 pm	Opening Ceremony and Discussion/Story
6:45 pm	Themed Activity (Craft / Song / Video / Workshop)
7:10 pm	Game
7:30 pm	Lodge Meeting / Small Group Activity
7:40 pm	Closing Ceremony and Announcements
7:45 pm	Sign-out and departure

Please ensure Beaver Scouts arrive properly prepared for the program and activities scheduled for the evening or outing.

- Beaver Scouts should arrive and depart from all meetings and outings in full uniform.
- When we are in the gym, indoor running shoes are required.
- When we are outside, appropriate shoes / boots and coat / hat / mitts are required, depending on the weather.

Typical Beaver Scout Yearly Overview

While the specific events and activities that occur each year will vary depending on Beaver Scout interest, Scouter expertise, and availability of resources, here is a glimpse of some of the activities that happen over the course of the year in Beaver Scouts.

Themed Meetings: Camping, Thanksgiving, Hallowe'en, Remembrance Day, Winter Holidays, Animals, Respect, Safety, Environment, Valentine's, Arts, Canada, Easter, Mother's Day, Multiculturalism, Giving Back, Movies, and Father's Day.

Outings: Museums, Santa Claus Parade, Hikes, Campfires, Retirement Home, Beaver Buggies (with many other Beaver Scout groups), and Sports (going swimming, skating, etc. plus watching hockey, basketball, etc.).

Camps: All Section Camp (with 8th Ajax Cub Scouts, Scouts, Venturers, and Rovers), a Beavers-only Camp, and Beaveree (with many other Beaver Scout groups).

