



AUGUST

Monthly Patch Program

Girl Scouts of Central Illinois

Margaret Murie

“I hope the United States of America is not so rich that she can afford to let these wildernesses pass by, or so poor she cannot afford to keep them.”

Margaret Thomas "Mardy" Murie was a naturalist, author, adventurer, and conservationist. Dubbed the "Grandmother of the Conservation Movement" by both the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society, she helped in the passage of the Wilderness Act and was instrumental in creating the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Complete 3-Daisy, 4-Brownie, 5-Junior, 6-Cadette, and 7-Senior/Ambassador steps to earn your patch.

All monthly patches are custom designed patches. Once we get the final number of patches after the 15th of each month, we place an order. Patches take about a month to create.

Order patch on-line by **September 15th, 2021** at www.getyourgirlpower.org

Discover

1. Who is Margaret Thomas Murie? Look for books at your local library or look online to learn about whom she was and what she accomplished. There are many books written about her along with books she has written.



Monthly Patch Program Girl Scouts of Central Illinois

2. Learn more about Mardy's passion projects. Research the Wilderness Act or the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Share your finds.
3. Olaus (Mardy's husband) and Mardy were the inspiration for John Denver's song "A Song for All Lovers." Listen to the song then share your interpretation of the song. Is there a song that inspires you or a song you identify with? Share the song with your troop. Do they agree with you?

Connect

4. In 1945, Olaus was appointed part-time director of the Wilderness Society, and went on to become the president in 1950. Mardy served as a council member for the organization and, with her husband, collaborated on letters, talks and advocating for wilderness legislation. An expedition in 1956 took them back to Alaska, this time to the Sheenjek River Valley in northeast Alaska, gathering information of local wildlife in order to make an argument for federal protection. Their work later led to the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Range in 1960. Create a brochure or flyer encouraging Americans to appreciate and support wilderness in the United States. Mention the wilderness, lakes, and wild animals.
5. The Murie's believed strongly in the importance of acting to protect the expanses of wilderness they cherished. "It was really better to be in the thick of the fight than to be standing in the corner with your face to the wall," Mardy once said. "So I'd hate to think that all I could do was moan and cry and make a fuss. You have to somehow do more than that. You have to try to influence people." What's your



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personal perspective on the wildness? Are you an outdoor person? Do you like animals? Have you ever gone hiking or spent the night under the stars? Write a paragraph describing your personal perspectives on wilderness. Maybe write it outside or during a campout.

6. The Muries also had helped to convince President Franklin D. Roosevelt to enlarge Olympic National Park in Washington State. Roosevelt added acres to the park, including neighboring rain forests. In 1943, they also inspired Roosevelt, through their research and stories, to create Jackson Hole National Monument in Wyoming. Most of that area is now part of Grand Teton National Park. Where would we be without our national parks? How would the world look? What would we lose if these places were destroyed by development and other human activities? How can we convince others that these places and creatures are worth protecting? Capture wilderness pictures. It can be at a local park, state park, or just in your backyard. You can take a picture with a camera, sketch it out on a notebook or use paint. In one month, come back to your location. Does it look different? Mark down the changes you see. In 10 years the image could look completely different.
7. Olaus and Mardy spent their lives researching the answers to questions such as: How much land is enough for different species, especially large mammals, to survive? Could you live in a tiny house? Try living in a small space, maybe set up a tent in your room and live in a small space for a weekend. Can you downsize your items? How much space do you need? How can humans determine how much space animals need? Talk about your experience with your troop.



Monthly Patch Program Girl Scouts of Central Illinois

8. The Muries worked tirelessly to get Congress to pass the Wilderness Act. The act included a legal definition of the term “wilderness” and protected 9.1 million acres of federal land across the nation. The act passed in 1964, but sadly Olaus didn’t live to see it. He had died from cancer in 1963 just a few months before. What is your definition of the word “wilderness”? Using a dictionary or the internet, find out what wilderness means. Are there many definitions? Create your own description of wilderness. You can paint a picture, make a collage, create your own wilderness using items at home, or simply write it out. Be creative.

Take Action

9. What can you do to reduce your carbon footprint? There are plenty of ways you can live more sustainably. Make sure the lights are off if you are the last to leave the room, take shorter showers, and consume less meat and dairy products. Think of other ways you can reduce your carbon footprint and put it into action.
10. Amidst the busy cadence of our lives, it can be hard to find the time to slow down and connect to the natural world around us. Tetot Science School created “sit spots”. Sit spots are places we can go to sit quietly, observe, and reflect – paying careful attention to any sights, sounds, smells and feelings we notice while there. Sit spots do not have to be grand places – a park bench, rocks along a local creek, the branch of a favorite tree, a balcony, or a backyard. Doing an activity like this with regularity can also deepen our relationship with nature as a whole. In this sense, regular immersion in our surroundings helps the earth to flourish, as well as us. As we develop our understanding of nature and place, we also increase our ability to



Monthly Patch Program Girl Scouts of Central Illinois

speak knowledgeably and passionately on its behalf. Create your own sit spot.

11. In her decades of conservation activism, Mardy advocated for the Wilderness Act, testified before Congress on protecting Alaska wildlands and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. What and where is wilderness today? How has wilderness affected the history and development of the United States? What benefits does wilderness provide to American society and culture? What is the future of wilderness in the United States? Come up with three ideas on how you can help protect the wilderness and take action.