

Hornaday and DCS Awards Comparison

Many Scouts and Scouters are familiar with the requirements for the now replaced William T. Hornaday Awards. This section provides a short overview of the requirements for the new DCS Awards and compares them to the old Hornaday Award requirements.

DCS Award Structure:

- Youth: 1 award available.
 - Earn Environmental Science, Fish and Wildlife Management, Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation, Sustainability, and two other conservation-related Merit Badges or complete special Venturing requirements (Ranger Award Ecology and Plants and Wildlife Electives, plus two additional requirements).
 - Complete two major conservation projects.
 - Final approval rests with the Council Conservation Committee.
- Adult: 1 award available. Nominate an adult with 20 or more years of service to conservation at the regional or national level. Final approval rests with the National Conservation Awards Committee.
- Unit: No award.
- Non-BSA Organizations: 1 award available. Nominate an organization to receive recognition. Final approval rests with the National Conservation Awards Committee.

Comparison of Old and New Program Award Requirements:

Audience	Old Hornaday Program	New DCS Program
Youth	Badge	Distinguished Conservation Service Award
	Bronze Medal	
	Silver Medal	
Adults	Gold Badge	None
	Gold Medal	Conservationist
Unit	Unit Award Certificate	None
Non-BSA Organizations	Certificate	Certificate

- Youth:
 - Projects: Youth must complete two (and only two) projects. No options exist for receiving an award for completing any other number of projects. All project requirements remain the same as for Hornaday projects.
 - Project Categories: A project category in Pollinator Management has been added to the existing Hornaday categories.
 - Project Workbook: Use of the Project Workbook is now required. The questions in the Project Workbook remain the same as the Hornaday Workbook.
 - Project Approvals: Pre-approval of the Project Proposal is now required.
 - Other Requirements:
 - For Scouts BSA: Earn Environmental Science, Fish and Wildlife Management, Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation, Sustainability, and two other conservation-related Merit Badges. Public Health Merit Badge is no longer considered conservation-related. Sustainability Merit Badge is now required.
 - For Venturers and Sea Scouts: Complete a list of ten requirements, some with several parts. The bulk of these requirements are identical to earning the Ecology and Plants and Wildlife electives to the Venturing Ranger Award. There are two additional requirements: Venturers must complete both of Plants and Wildlife 21e(i) and Plants and Wildlife 21e(ii) (instead of selecting one as required for the Ranger Award). Venturers must also complete DCS Award requirement 10b, which is not part of the Venturing Ranger Award requirements. This requirement asks Venturers to “present your findings [from the investigation you completed in DCS Award requirement 10a or Ecology 12d(i)] to a Unit or another group.”
 - Approval: Final approval for the DCS Award now rests with the Council Conservation Committee and the Scout Executive. National does not approve DCS Award applications. The Council conducts a Board of Review to approve DCS Award applications.
 - Award: Consists of a square knot and certificate; no hanging medal.

- Adult:
 - Conservationist award is the same as the previous Gold Medal with no requirement or application changes. The limit on six awards per year has been dropped. Award consists of a square knot and certificate; no hanging medal.
 - The Council-level adult award previously known as the Gold Badge has been eliminated.

- Unit: All unit awards have been eliminated. This means that this awards program no longer allows for Cub Scout participation.

- Non-BSA Organizations or Individuals: Certificate is the same as the previous Certificate with no requirement or application changes. The limit on six awards per year has been dropped. Award remains a certificate.

Impact:

- The change to final Council Conservation Committee approval for youth DCS Awards means that it will be wholly up to Councils to interpret DCS Award requirements. Councils should work together to share resources and to ensure uniformity in the ways in which requirements are interpreted.
- The elimination of the Badge, Unit Award Certificate, and Gold Badge removes awards that were gateways for youth and adults into the award program. This will likely make it more difficult to reach and educate many potentially interested Scouts and Scouters.