

Field Trip Guidelines

by Wayne Braunberger, APS Events Director

The following guidelines have been developed so that you may prepare for the trip and so that everyone may have an enjoyable time. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

1) Registration

Register early as it makes planning much easier. Remember that **field trips are only open to members of the Society**. The stated deadlines are the last day that registrations will be accepted. After this date the field guides will be printed and any final arrangements will be made. Once you are registered you will receive either by e-mail (preferred) or regular mail all pertinent information regarding meeting time and place, driving times and directions, itinerary and any other information that may be required.

2) Arrive On Time

Plan to arrive at the appropriate time. In order to complete all the paperwork and distribute the field guides in a timely manner you need to arrive before the designated departure time. If you are going to be delayed please let me know. I will provide a contact number (cellular) for use in the field. Most of our field trip areas have cellular coverage.

3) Medical Questionnaire

A medical questionnaire will be included in the information package that is distributed prior to the trip. Inform the field trip leader if you have any medical conditions that they should be aware of in an emergency.

4) Waivers and Informed Consent Forms

Everyone who attends a field trip will be required to complete a Waiver Form if they are over the age of 18. Parents and/or Guardians will be required to complete an Informed Consent Form for any children under the age of 18 or dependents over the age of 18. One form is required for each participant and must be witnessed by the field trip leader or designate. You will not be allowed on the trip if you do not

complete the proper form. Copies will be included in the information package that you receive prior to each trip.

5) Be Prepared

Field conditions can vary. While every effort is made to scout locations and inform participants of conditions, be aware that changes can and do occur. Your vehicle should be in good working order and appropriate for the conditions. When necessary we will car pool so that everyone can get to the location. Refer to the article "Personal Safety in the Field" published on page 8 in the June, 2003 *APS Bulletin* for information on items that everyone should have with them.

6) Equipment

Proper equipment is a must. Sandals, running shoes or street shoes are not appropriate footwear. It is recommended that you wear a pair of good quality hiking boots that fit well and provide adequate support for your feet and ankles. Proper rock hammers and chisels must be used. Standard carpenters claw hammers are not acceptable and are very dangerous, as they are not intended for hammering on rocks. Hammers manufactured by the Estwing company are recommended and are available at most rock and lapidary shops, geological supply stores and at many hardware stores. Safety glasses or goggles should be worn when hammering or splitting rocks.

7) No Dogs

Please do not bring your dog on field trips. Many people find dogs on trips to be annoying and the dog may become injured in an encounter with a wild animal (coyote, rattlesnake, porcupine) Contact me prior to the trip if you need to bring your dog.

8) No Smoking in the Field

Humans are one of the leading causes of wild fires (both accidental and intentional) and in order to reduce the risk there will be a NO SMOKING policy on APS field trips. We would ask that you only smoke in your vehicle or at the parking lot. Many of the areas we visit are extremely dry and a fire could be devastating to the environment and/or private property. □

Personal Safety in the Field

10 Items Everyone Should Carry

by Wayne Braunberger

Personal safety is everyone's responsibility. You should not leave it up to someone else to have the items you may need if an emergency situation arises. Whether you are a participant on an APS field trip or just out for a day hike, everyone should carry the following items at all times. Relatively minor incidents can become serious if you are not prepared.

- 1) **First-aid kit.** You should be able to take care of any minor injuries (cuts, scrapes) that occur. Everyone should take a basic first-aid course and if you are in the outdoors much of the time a wilderness first-aid course is highly recommended. Wilderness first-aid courses are geared specifically to the prevention and treatment of injuries that can occur while hiking and camping.
- 2) **Whistle.** Everyone should carry whistles, as they are one of the most effective ways to call for help or alert others. You can blow a whistle longer and louder than you can yell and the sound carries much farther. Whistles should be carried where they are accessible to your mouth, not in your pocket or pack.
- 3) **Knife.** A good pocket knife can be a handy item to carry. Multitools such as those made by Leatherman are excellent but expensive. A very inexpensive and effective knife is a "Mora" knife, available at most outdoor stores.
- 4) **Flashlight/headlamp.** Hiking in the dark can be a real pain. Also great for signalling at night.
- 5) **Waterproof matches/lighter/fire starter.** You may need to start a fire for any number of reasons (signal fire, to dry out, keep warm).
- 6) **Extra food and water.** Besides your lunch, carry extra food as you may be out later than you planned. Always carry more water than you think you need. On a hot day you will drink it all. (By time you feel thirsty you're already dehydrated.) Water is also useful for washing off cuts and scrapes.
- 7) **Bad weather clothes.** Always be prepared for bad weather. You can always take clothes off but if you did not bring extra you can be in trouble very quickly.
- 8) **Toilet paper.** Besides the obvious use, it's great for wrapping specimens.
- 9) **Sunscreen, sunglasses, brimmed hat.** Direct sunlight as well as light reflected off rock surfaces can cause severe sunburns.
- 10) **Map, compass, GPS receiver.** You need to know where you are, where you've been and where you are going. Many people become lost by not knowing how to return to their vehicle. Also, you need to be able to locate any significant fossil discoveries and be able to tell others where they are or to find your way back to them. If you do not know how to read a map or use a compass or GPS receiver, take a course.

Other useful items to bring along include: one or two emergency (space) blankets to provide warmth or form part of a shelter; a small tarp to provide shelter; a ski pole or walking stick to provide extra stability when hiking, and a small foam pad to kneel on. □