

Massif News

Issue 4 April 2010

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The Tarn river in Cévennes national park. Photograph: Alamy

Important Dates for your diary:

Sunday, 11th July – Final Briefing Meeting

There will be a final briefing meeting for participants and their parents. We will be explaining the departure and return details, confirming your contact details during the event and outlining essential communications procedures.

Location: Boyne Hill Altwood Scout HQ, Maidenhead www.bhascouts.org.uk

Time: TBA, this will be held in the afternoon, following the expedition training weekend, see below.

Saturday, 14th August – Departure

The main party will leave in the evening of the 14th; participants will assemble at Boyne Hill Altwood Scout HQ during that afternoon, final timings TBA.

We have the capability, if necessary, for a vehicle to leave the morning of the 15th. If, for any reason, you cannot be available on the Saturday please let us know as soon as possible.

Sunday, 29th August – Return

We expect to be back in Berkshire late morning of the 29th, again final timings TBA.

Electronic Equipment - Important Information:

If you intend to bring any items that require electricity to function, e.g. mobile phones, ipods, digital cameras, etc., you should plan to provide your own power via disposable batteries or perhaps, a solar charger. We may, from time to time, be able to provide charging facilities but this should not be relied on as we have to prioritise essential expedition communications and equipment.

Expedition Training Programme:



Canoe and kayak training has started, dates as below: times are 6:30 - 8:30pm.

There will be 2 training weekends, 26th/27th June and 10th/11th July.

10th May, 6:30pm, Canoe/Kayak training, Wokingham Waterside Centre

24th May, 6:30pm, Canoe/Kayak training, Wokingham Waterside Centre

7th June, 6:30pm, Canoe/Kayak training, Wokingham Waterside Centre

21st June, 6:30pm, Canoe/Kayak training, Wokingham Waterside Centre

26th-27th June, Expedition training, details TBA

5th July, 6:30pm, Canoe/Kayak training, Wokingham Waterside Centre

10th-11th July, Expedition training, details TBA

19th July, 6:30pm, Canoe/Kayak training, Wokingham Waterside Centre

Help! I don't speak French!

[Pronunciation of the phrase is in brackets]

Where do I pay? – **Ou dois-je payer?** [oo dwah jer pay-yay]

Is this the drinking water? – **Est-ce bien l'eau potable?** [ais byern loh poh-tabl]

A tent – **une tente** [ewn tant]

A tent peg – **un piquet de tente** [ern pee-kay der tant]

A sleeping bag – **un sac de couchage** [ern sahk der koo-shahj]

Matches – **allumettes** [ah-lew-mait]

Please can we pitch our tent here for one night? – **Pouvons-nous planter notre tente ici pour une nuit?** [poo-von noo plan-tay nohtr tant ee-see]

And...

A French idiom:

It costs an arm and a leg - **Ca coute les yeux de la tete** [Sa koot layz yer der lah tait] = literally meaning 'it costs the eyes of your head'.

Health Matters – looking after yourself:

Sun Protection: The combination of increased sunshine and altitude will leave our Northern European bodies vulnerable to sunburn and to consequent skin damage; this will lead to short term discomfort and the long term risk of skin cancers. You will need to take a high factor sun cream and you should also have a wide brimmed hat, comfortable lightweight clothing which will cover your neck, shoulders, arms and legs, and be prepared to wear it for much of the day.

Insects: We are not sure how bad the problem will be, however, if you are like me and insects appear to be prepared to fly many miles just to bite you, it would be a good idea for you to take a quality (Deet based) insect repellent.

Dehydration: Again, sun and altitude both lead to dehydration; whilst in France it will be important to keep your bodies' fluid levels topped up. This should preferably be achieved by drinking adequate quantities of water. Don't forget that some drinks, coffee for example, are diuretic and will only make matters worse!

Explore Programme:



Horse Riding in Aveyron One of the Explore opportunities will include a horse-ride through the spectacular French countryside region of Aveyron. We are proposing an outing which will include a 2-hour pony trek with a local riding school (all equipment is provided locally), followed by a picnic, and then

returning through one of Southern France's "most beautiful villages". There will be the opportunity for a brief stop in the village before returning to site.



The Beach If riding sounds too strenuous, how about joining your friends for a beach day at one of the nearby lake beaches. Less than an hour away from the campsite stands the lake region of Lévézou boasting 1600ha of lakes. We will be visiting at least one of these where the crystal clear waters of

the lake are bordered by superb sandy beaches. There will be the opportunity to swim, paddle or laze under the supervision of local life guards. Perhaps you could even rustle up the energy for a game of beach volleyball or a pedalo ride?



Competition Corner!



Well, maybe your country doesn't need you, but we want your artistic contributions!

As on previous occasions, we will be offering an expedition polo shirt. For this, we need an expedition logo and we would like you to come up with the design.

The principal elements of the design are that it should be simple, preferably single colour and capture the essence of our expedition.

The chosen design will earn the contributor a free polo shirt.

Meet the Leader Team

Each month we feature a short profile of a member of our leader team.

Ray Tucker, Deputy Camp Leader (Logistics & Quartermaster)



I have been a Scouter in Maidenhead for over 25 years, initially as Scout Leader with Furze Platt, later as DC and currently, as District Explorer Scout Commissioner. I have qualifications for power and narrow boating and also archery. I am presently training as an assessor for D of E expeditions and will be performing this function in France this summer.

I have been involved in every overseas county expedition since 2004, visiting Belgium, Slovenia, Spain, Holland and France. Over the years I have gained a reputation as a fixer and provider of solutions, hence my role this time as Quartermaster; I will have begged, borrowed or "found" much of the equipment we will be using on this trip.

N.B. I don't usually look like the rather formal photo above!!

Useful Links

The Berkshire Scouts website www.berkshirescouts.org.uk

The Berkshire Scouts D of E page

www.berkshirescouts.org.uk/index_nav.php?cat=activities&sub=dukeofedinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme website www.dofe.org

The official DofE kit lists can be found at www.dofe.org/go/expeditionkit/

Check out our campsite at www.campinglesrivages.com

For passport information go to the main Government portal www.direct.gov.uk

For European Health Insurance Card information go to the NHS website at

www.ehic.org.uk

For details of our Scout travel insurance go to Unity Insurance at

www.unityins.co.uk

Save money on your kit!



If you are registered for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme then you can save serious money on your kit purchases at Cotswold Outdoor. D of E participants receive a partnership card with their Record Book Pack. The card is valid until 19 May 2013 and entitles you to 15% off all full price purchases.



Payment Details

A reminder of the payments schedule:

£50.00 with confirmation

£100.00 per month; January thro' June

By mail to:

Massif 2010, 52 Loosen Drive, Maidenhead, SL6 3UT

Cheques payable to: Berkshire Scouts Expeditions

By electronic transfer to:

Barclays, Sort Code: 20-59-14

Account Name: Berkshire Scouts Expeditions, Acct No: 40801607

Please use the participants' name as a reference and advise by e-mail to

bill.carter@ukgateway.net

For any comments, questions or feedback on this newsletter please

e-mail bill.carter@ukgateway.net