

IV. RUGGED SCUBA (Rugged 'S')

There are few better ways to earn the Scuba merit badge and/or basic open-water dive certification than through Rugged Scuba Divers (Rugged S). We don't have a pool for training—that would be a waste of the world-class diving that begins at the shores of the Emerald Bay base camp. Divers from all over the world come to Catalina Island to experience what will be your underwater classroom. Participants will learn the essential dive skills required for the PADI certification and complete all tasks for the SCUBA merit badge as they explore the kelp forests that consistently rank Catalina as one of the top ten dive locations in North America. Scouts will have the opportunity to swim with sea lions, barracuda, bat rays, moray eels, leopard sharks, and the occasional octopus, just to name a few. Get dive certified as a Rugged S participant on Catalina Island and dive the world over.

Because Camp Emerald Bay is dedicated to practicing Scouting's values as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law, participants will have an opportunity to discuss those values as they apply to the underwater world. This opportunity leads to a better understanding of the environmental issues facing the world's oceans today. We also have added a leadership component to this program. Participants will be assigned leadership roles during the week. While the technical and safety aspects will be handled by PADI certified instructors, the class members will be organized according to the Patrol method with appropriate leadership positions and responsibilities.

Rugged S assumes that Scouts have no prior knowledge of scuba diving before registering for this program. All Scouts must complete the Swimming merit badge prior to participating in the Scuba merit badge program. They will need to complete the assigned coursework before coming to Catalina. Once on the island, the Rugged S participants will work with our professional dive staff and merit badge counselors to learn the finer points of scuba diving and will spend much of their week in the ocean practicing your skills and exploring the waters of Catalina Island's Emerald Bay. Scouts will leave camp with a lifetime Scuba certification and the Scuba merit badge!

Given the immersive nature of Rugged SCUBA Divers, it is important that everyone arrive in good health. Prior to participating, you must answer the 34-question Divers Medical Questionnaire available as a download on our High Adventure page of our website. If any question is answered "yes," it means you have a pre-existing condition that could affect your ability to dive safely. An exam by a physician is then necessary to ascertain the risks of these conditions. The physician must then sign the PADI Medical Release Form found at <http://www.campemeraldbay.org/emerald-bay/high-adventure-program>

RUGGED 'S' (continued)

Included in the cost of the Rugged Scuba Divers program are all necessary study materials, as well as a basic personal scuba equipment package Scouts get to keep. This includes a mask, snorkel, gloves, booties, and fins. The rental fees for the wetsuit, regulator, buoyancy control device, scuba tank, and weights are included in the overall cost of the program. While most of the gear will be provided, there are many important personal items Scouts must bring to camp. Please be sure to pay attention to the required and recommended items in the "What to Bring" section of this guide.

Rugged Scuba Divers is a program designed for active Scouts who have already attained their swimming merit badge. Participants must be willing to complete multiple hours of coursework prior to coming to Catalina. Those who do not complete their studying will not be able to earn their certification. Participants must be able to walk 100 yards in full dive equipment weighing between 50 and 100 lbs.

Rugged Scuba participants must be 12 years old by the start of their week of programming.