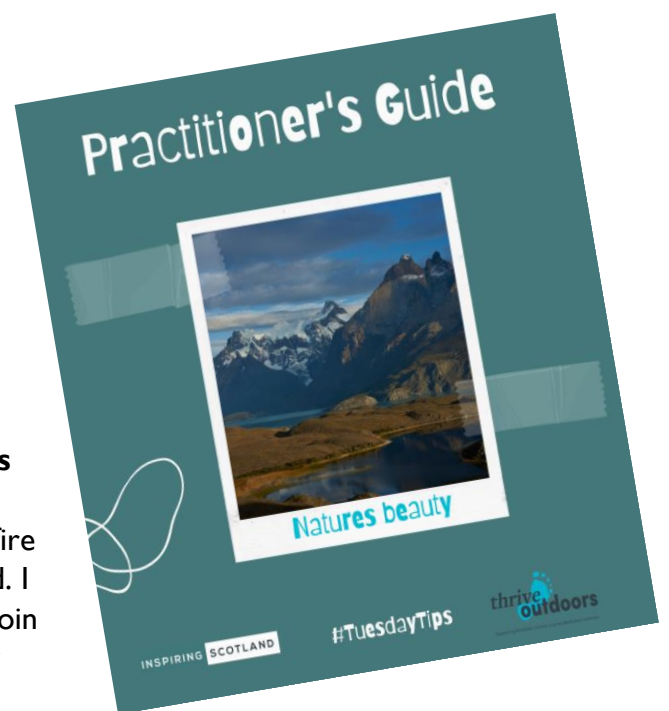


**A Practitioner's Guide
to
OUTDOOR PLAY BASED LEARNING**
Getting started with Bushcraft
**Guest Blogger: Ignacio Luna Borrás –
Scout leader and founder of Earth nature
Adventures**

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself Ignacio?

Coming from Argentina, a country where you can find nature's beauty in all its forms, I was blessed with the opportunity to explore and enjoy the Patagonian region of my homeland for 21 incredible summers and winters. It is a place that is graced with striking lakes, ancient forests and the awe-inspiring Andes mountains.

My passion for nature and the great outdoors was ignited with family trips wild camping, fishing and enjoying bushcraft activities. The fire was fuelled when I joined the scouts at 10 years old. I was encouraged by my Father and Grandfather to join despite my reservations. Just 3 hours on a Saturday afternoon changed my life forever, I was hooked.



What made you want to become a scout leader?

In my early teenage years, I developed a strong interest in bushcraft and developing survival skills that I managed to learn and develop through the scouts and with the help of further opportunities with the Marines. This allowed me to feel confident surviving in nature.

I became a troop leader in the scouts because when you love something so much you want to share it with anyone with a listening ear. It was an amazing feeling to share my knowledge

and passion with my troop and see them discover the new world of nature and thrive within it through the activities we shared.

Can you tell us more about the scouting programme you were involved in?

In every country the scout movement has a clear and well-developed programme depending on the age group. Mainly, I was in charge of working with children aged 11-13 (the scout troop) and 13-17 (the raider troop) both with a specific programmes depending on the children's abilities and maturity.

Usually, these programmes are blocks of 3 months and are agreed in collaboration with leaders within the same group to establish a shared set of goals in skill development. Scouting Argentina provided me with activity guides to follow and reference to develop quarterly and yearly programmes. Two books that helped me develop my own scouting programming in Argentina that I would recommend to anyone leading a group would be 'Scouting for Boys' by Sir Robert Baden Powell and 'The Patrol System' by Roland E. Phillips, both are easy to understand by anyone with or without scout experience.



What sort of outdoor activities do you do with your scouts?

Camping, fishing, climbing, mountaineering, bushcraft, hiking, building fires, making shelters, scouting safe areas to camp, orienteering, wooden camping constructions, navigation on water, survival skills and many more.

Any tips and hints for getting started with outdoor activities with your scouts?

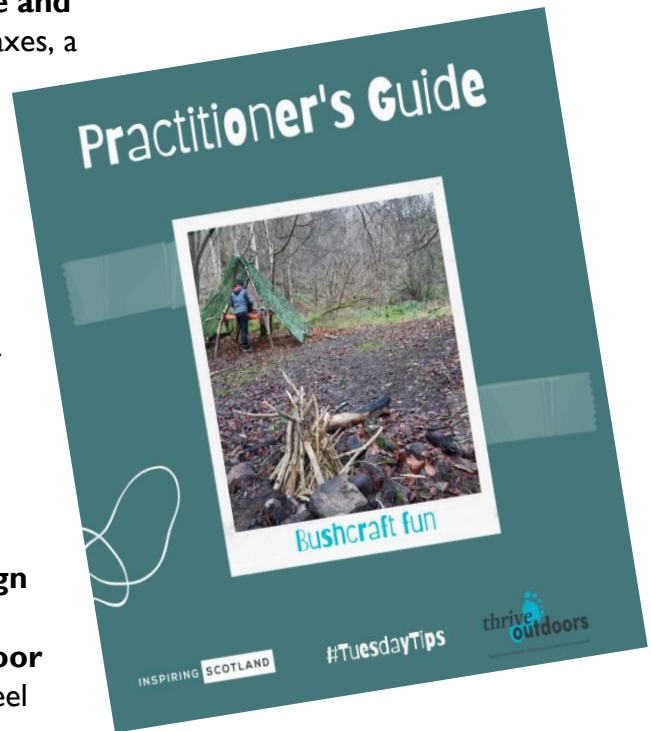
As previously mentioned, I highly recommend "Scouting for boys" by Sir Robert Baden Powell, which provides a step-by-step guide on what sort of activities you should do in which areas and the educational content of each experience.

Firstly, **you need to have the pull of the nature to model and inspire the outdoor spirit** and share the importance of respecting the environment.

Secondly, it is important to be prepared with the correct equipment to deliver and engage in the scout activities in a safe and effective way.

The gear that I recommend is axes, a static rope (25 metres), paracords in abundance (5 metres each), working leather gloves, bushcraft knife, swiss army knife, lighter/ matches or flints, handsaw, shovel, first aid kit (providing for all attendees), jute twine, head torch, tarpaulins, water containers, strong and resistant clothes, good footwear, a rucksack (minimum 40 L for the leader, 30L for the scouts) and as you will develop your skills you will be able to upgrade your equipment to match your skillsets.

Thirdly, I would suggest that if you are starting with little experience that you sign up to outdoor activities courses building knowledge in camping, survival and outdoor learning and first aid. This will help you to feel confident delivering the scout programme.



What has been your favourite outdoor experience with your scouts?

In terms of activities, my favourite experience was an end of year group camp in Junin de los Andes. I worked with my troop to build our own boats to cross the lake and build a camp on the other side of the lake and hike a volcano.

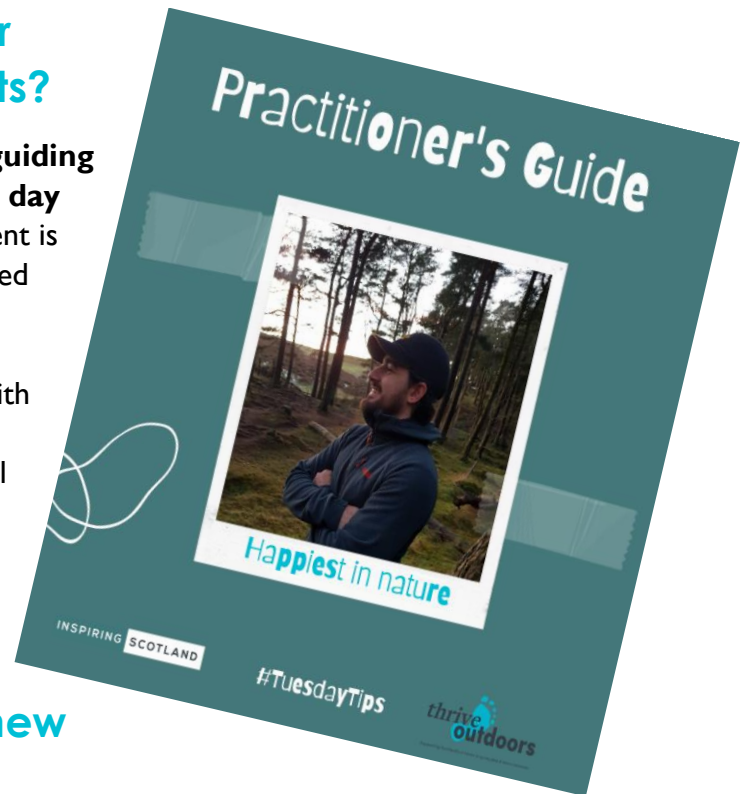
In the entirety of my scout life my most treasured memory was the celebration of the 100 year anniversary of the world scout movement, where more than 45,000 scouts from all over the world got together in a scout camp for 3 weeks. I was in a part of leading and running outdoor activities in Gillwell Park, the headquarters and training facility of the world scout organisation. In this Jamboree (the scout camp) you have the possibility to make friends from all over the world, learn from other cultures, languages, foods and traditions, exchange ideas and scout memorabilia and share good times. Certainly, it will be something I treasure in my heart and memory for the rest of my life.

What do you enjoy teaching the most?

The thing that I enjoy the most is bushcraft and survival skills. This is an area where you can clearly see the development of craft and skill over the years.

What difference has outdoor learning made to your scouts?

The scout movement allows children guiding laws, principles and virtues that to this day have been my north in life. The movement is something that I would recommend is enjoyed by every child and is encouraged by every parent. It allows children to experience and develop leadership, friendship, teamwork, faith and respect of the great outdoors. It allows children to develop personal qualities as well as being equipped with numerous skills to help them thrive in the natural and social environment.



Can you tell us about your new bushcraft venture?

Lockdown allowed my fiancé and I to enjoy time in nature. It gave me the opportunity to share my love of the outdoors with her and share experiences I enjoyed during my time in the scouts. Seeing the benefit of how these activities could positively impact the lives of others and encourage people to delve into the wonders of the great outdoors she encouraged me to share my knowledge and passion with the world. It is a project that we are just in the early stages of development but you can follow us on Instagram **@earth.nature.adventures** where we will share outdoor adventures and the educational opportunities they provide.

Enjoy this blog? Do you have top tips that you would like to share?

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Useful Links

Our handy hints and tips on #outdoorplay for parents and carers:

<https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/thrive/>