

“My First Camping Trip” by Joshua Moan

**Third Place**

One of my best experiences with nature was my first camping trip. My first trip was with my Boy Scout Troop on Kodiak Island, Alaska. At the beginning of the scout year, we always went to Termination Point. To get there, we had to hike three miles along the coast and then set up camp. The hike was invigorating. Most of the time it was through the woods with Sitka Spruce trees all around us, and to the right was always the ocean. Hiking was up and down moss and grass covered hills. Occasionally, if you were not looking, you might run into a stalk of Devils Club thorns. You could even hear the Bald Eagles screeching overhead. About half way there, we stopped for a break and sat down on the damp moss and chewed some jerky. It was really good.

As soon as we arrived, we chose a partner and went to set up our tent by the campsite. My buddy and I chose to set up by the sea so we could hear and feel the wind. Before we set up our tent, we went around and gathered moss to put under our tent. When we were setting up our tent we made sure to face it to the wind so that we would not be blown over. After we set up the tent, we went to help other scouts and then started dinner. That night my team was having spaghetti. It had already been pre-made, and all we did was boil water and set the vacuumed packet in. Dinner was exquisite, just like home. After dinner was dessert and bed.

The next day was games. We played capture the flag, and this awesome seek and find game. You had two groups and one person chosen from each group, and they would go find a great hideout and then use a compass to map their way back. The person would then go out and hide where he had chosen so that the other group can start at camp and find them. I hid myself at the top of a grass covered hill that had a deep depression so that no one could see me. It was such a beautiful, majestic place to be. Because I was in the depression, I was out of the wind and could just marvel at nature and

all its beauty. As soon as the group found me, they had to treat my ailments. I had a sprained/broken ankle, possible neck trauma, and a broken right arm. These were all fake injuries, but they had to treat me and then bring me back to camp so that I could be “properly taken care of.” For dinner we had canned beans and bacon.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> day we had oatmeal for breakfast and then packed up. The hike back was just as beautiful and mysterious as the trip in.

Nature will always hold a precious place in people’s hearts, as well as mine.