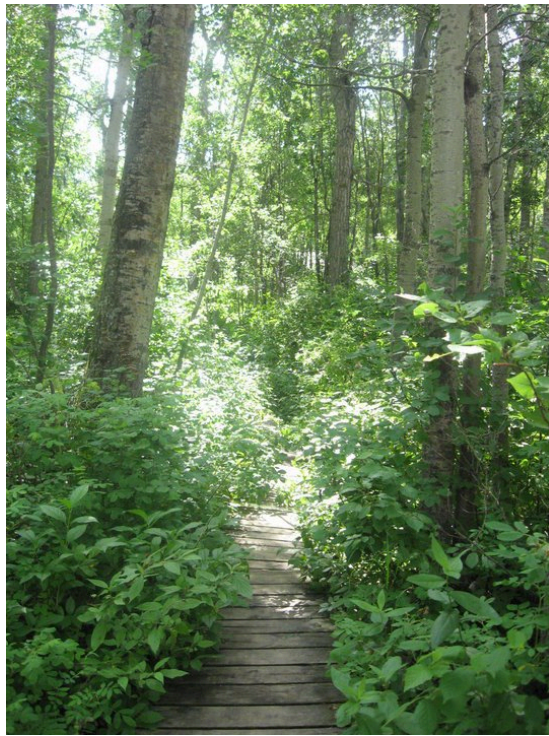


# TRAIL MIX



An Outdoor Resource

## Trail Mix

“We're on the Guiding trail, we're on the Guiding trail, swinging as we go,  
Guiding bound.” *The Guiding Trail*

Welcome to **Trail Mix**, a resource where you will find activities, games, arts & crafts, and great ideas for the Guider to use when taking the girls out of doors. Getting some fresh air and stopping to look at the natural world around you is a great way to engage the girls with their environment, and get some exercise at the same time. These ideas could be used in a stroll in a park, a hike along a river valley, or a walking tour of the camp, but they are especially useful when going out on a trail. Choose the activities that work best for you and the girls and feel free to change or adapt the activities to suit your needs or age levels.

Please use the most current Safe Guide forms, available on the website. Should you need help planning for a hike or walking a trail, consult your camping, program mentors and local trainers.

Activities used in this resource come from previous hiking/trail experiences, training sessions, and experienced Guiders sharing what the girls love to do.

Photos of the girls in action are encouraged! Ensure all image release forms are in order and don't forget to take group photos. Send photos to the Provincial Camping Adviser [camping@albertagirlguides.com](mailto:camping@albertagirlguides.com)

Thank you for choosing to use this resource!

AB Camping Committee  
April 2016

*Cover photo courtesy of Laurie Robertson. © All rights reserved.*

## Trail Mix

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## PROGRAMMING NOTES

“Who are these? Swinging along the road, with a pack on the back, a song in the heart, to ease the load.....” *The Guide Marching Song*

At every level in Guiding, the program encourages girls of all ages to get outside and experience nature. The benefits of getting outside in a nature setting are many. A hike can be a great adventure and a lot of fun for girls when they are challenged to think about their surroundings and given some guidance to explore. ***Unless our eyes and ears are trained to see, many of the greatest wonders of life go by unnoticed.*** The more we practice noticing, observing, and getting to know our natural neighbors, the greater our abilities and understanding will grow.

All of the ideas in this resource, will turn an ordinary 15 minute walk around the lake, into a two hour or more adventure, where much is learned and remembered.

Add variety to your trail walks and look for the following:

- Fallen logs – turn them over and see what kinds of fungi and invertebrates you can find.
- Places where bugs or animals could make their homes – spider webs, dead trees, hollow spots in trees, shrubs, holes in the ground, under rocks.
- Sources of water – puddles, streams, ditches, boggy areas.
- Birds, or signs of birds, like nests, scat, etc.
- Examples of items that can be food for people or animals – leaves, grass, berries, fruit, roots, nuts, other animals.
- Animal camouflage. How do the insects and animals blend into their surroundings?
- Different types of trees/bark.
- Signs that animals have been nearby – tracks, scat, half eaten nuts, bark nibbled off trees, holes in trees, middens.
- Different types of seeds.
- Different types of moss.
- Different flowers you can find. Are they attracting visitors?

You can visit the same trail time and time again and always find something new and different.

## **What to Wear**

You may choose to use this resource for an activity at camp that will take some time, and give the girls a great deal of experiential learning, or it might be a planned hike that will take you further afield. Knowing the outdoor terrain ahead of time will enable you to let the girls know about suitable clothing to wear, such as sturdy walking shoes, socks, pants, long sleeved shirt, hat, backpack and water bottle, plus a snack.

If you are heading out on an all day adventure, you will want to be more prepared. Give the girls a list of clothing and additional things to bring in their backpack, such as rain gear, map and compass, small flashlight, fire making kit, toque or gloves, a whistle.

Try to keep your body covered as much as possible, to protect against the elements, plants you might be allergic too, and all manner of burrs and bugs that might want to come along for the ride.

Choose clothing that is lightweight, wicks away moisture, and breathes well. Layering is always a good idea. You can get chilly while taking a rest or the weather can suddenly change.

Sturdy shoes

Long Pants

Long sleeved shirt

Hat

A camera

Bug spray

Pocket knife

Food

Fruit (eg. apples)

Long thick socks

T shirt

Weatherproof jacket

Backpack

Sunscreen

First aid kit

Sunglasses

Water (in a leak proof bottle)

Snacks (Trail Mix)

## ART & CRAFT IDEAS

### **Leaf Printing**

Leaves of trees and plants can be used in a variety of ways to create unique art projects. Please ensure the plants have plenty of leaves to share and that any one plant isn't stripped for the purpose of using them in art. Learn which leaves are better to leave alone (ie. those leaves that cause an allergic reaction).

1. Press a leaf onto an ink pad and then press onto paper
2. Place a leaf under a piece of paper and rub with a crayon
3. Rub watercolor crayons on the backside of the leaf along the veins. Spray lightly with water then press onto paper for a great watercolor look
4. Select a piece of cotton fabric or a white pillow case. Lightly spray the fabric with water 'til damp. Place several leaves onto the surface and cover with waxed paper or another piece of fabric. Pound the leaves with a rubber mallet until the leaves have stained the fabric. Continue until you have a pleasing look. You will soon realize some leaves are better at releasing their juices more than others. Let the fabric dry and enhance with fabric markers for a nice look.

### **Nature Pictures**

Use a camera to take pictures of nature. They can be made into personal greeting cards, or used as a reference for a sketching project. Consider submitting your pictures to organizations.

### **Nature on a Coin**

Put a small piece of modeling clay or plasticine on the surface of a coin, or a wood round cut from a fallen tree limb. Select small items from nature and create an arrangement.

### **Leaf Crown**

Cut a strip of poster board approx. 1.5" wide and as long as you need it to fit around the head. Place a band of double sided tape along the strip and secure the ends to form a sticky band. While walking along the trail, find leaves to stick on the band to form a leaf crown. Small twigs, pine needles, and other items can be added to the crown.

## **The Walking Stick**

“The Scout stave is a distinctive feature about his equipment and it has its moral, as well as its practical uses.” Baden-Powell, 1917

The walking stick has moral and practical purposes. A good, sturdy walking stick or hiking staff, is made of strong wood that is as high as your nose, and is marked in feet and inches for measuring. It has a protected base, a hand grip to ensure a good and comfortable hold, and a wrist strap. It can be decorated with carvings, beads, feathers, lacing or medallions & charms recognizing an achievement.

The staff can give you confidence to try new things. In history it is only the wealthy in society who would walk with a staff and it gives us a boost to our well-being. It offers physical relief, too. Walking with a staff takes pressure off your back and legs. It reduces the shock on the knees when going downhill (acts as a brake). It offers support when carrying heavy loads. It will help prevent a fall, and it offers personal defense.

Practical uses are many and varied. Some of the more popular practical purposes for using a staff are:

- \*a center pole for a tarp
- \*a pacing stick
- \*as a latrine rod
- \*a pole snare
- \*a hammer
- \*a reaching aid
- \*to brush away cobwebs
- \*test the depth of water, or mud
- \*digging up tubers
- \*measuring distance and height
- \*to prop up your pack
- \*to use as a fishing pole
- \*to use in camp cooking
- \*for planting seeds
- \*as a signal flag
- \*as a splint, or stretcher
- \*to test the ground for obstacles
- \*for measuring tracks
- \*pushing aside branches
- \*to keep back aggressive animals

### **Wild Art**

Wild Art is a name for creating art or a craft from the materials found in the natural environment. It's great fun to make the forest faces in a woodland setting.

Begin by giving everyone a lump of clay. Work the clay while it's inside a ziploc bag, to save it drying out and it won't be messy. Work it until it is more supple and easier to shape. Air dry clay is inexpensive and readily available at dollar stores. Choose a tree, and press the clay onto the bark, smoothing it out along the edges to help it stick better. Next, use leaves, moss, small sticks, stones, rocks etc. to make a forest face. Embed these objects into the clay and shape them to make facial features. This is a craft that you will leave behind. Make sure to take plenty of photos to enjoy and remember. Others using the trail may enjoy them, but they will dry and fall off, or the elements may dissolve them.

### **Leaf Slides**

You will need some heavy paper, scissors, and tape. Gather leaves large enough to fill a 1" square. Cut heavy paper into pieces 6" x 9", fold in half, cut a 1" square in the center of both layers and number the slide in the corner. Insert the leaf into the slide and tape the open ends. Share slides with the group.

### **Snake Sticks**

Select an interesting stick from the forest floor. It should be dry, but strong. Whittle the stick, removing the bark and side branches, and smoothing out rough spots. Carve into the stick, making bands and other marks, as desired. Sand the stick smooth. Now paint the stick with a variety of colors, making your snake stick unique and fun.



## TRAIL ACTIVITIES

### **Nature Study**

Collect various nature items on your hike. When you return, create a sensory table. Cover the items up with a cloth. The girls are all blindfolded and they use the sense of touch to feel each item and try to guess what it is. Items to include could be different cones, different evergreen needles, feathers, pieces of bark, fungus, smooth rocks, interesting twigs and leaves. Girls can then remove their blindfolds to see what they have felt. Have a Nature Nut on hand to talk about the fascinating things they are likely to see in the outdoors. This activity can be adapted as a Kim's game.

### **Engage the Senses**

Take time along the trail to stop and listen. How many birds do you hear? Do you hear any squirrels jumping and running along the branches overhead? Are they chittering at you in interest? Do you hear the hum of the cicadas (often mistaken for the hum of electricity of a power line). Encourage the sense of touch. Touch the bark on the trees and feel the smoothness, or the rough texture. What do you smell? Is that the bog where all the frog song is coming from? Is it the sweet patch of grass in that opening just ahead? Take along a magnifying glass and get up close to nature. Really look at all those veins in a leaf, or the inside of a wild rose.

### **Get Close To The Trees**

Explore the different trees around you. Collect different leaves so you can identify them and also take bark rubbings. Each type of tree is unique in the color and texture of the bark.

### **Meet a Tree**

A small group is blindfolded and led along the trail. The girls will concentrate on their senses, while you lead them through shade, open area, trees, grassy areas, rocky spot, going slowly. Leave each girl at a different tree and tell them to learn as much as possible about the tree by feeling, smelling, listening, and even tasting. Take each camper away from the tree and remove the blindfold. Are they able to find their tree?

### **Trailing Animals**

Have the girls follow you around stepping exactly where you stepped. Wind around and step in all kinds of ways, even mimicking the gait of other animals. This begins track awareness and further learning can be had afterwards about the various tracks of animals they might see.

Play a hide and seek game. Use your imagination to come up with a reason why they need to find you. You will be hiding and running away from them, but you will have to drag a log behind you that has nails pounded about halfway in all around it. As you drag the log along behind you it will leave scrapes and scratches on the ground. The girls will be able to follow these marks until they reach you. After playing a few times, start to remove some nails so it gets more and more difficult to follow, until the log is being dragged without nails.

Be a mentor. Have the girls follow along with you as you trail. Pass along and share your excitement and enthusiasm. Encourage the girls to follow every trail they find as far as they can.

### **Leaf Litter**

When dead leaves collect under a tree, they form what is known as leaf litter. Find out what lives in the leaf litter or soil beneath your tree. Here are some creatures you might find: Millipedes, spiders, wood lice, daddy-longlegs, springtails. They help to decompose the leaves and twigs that fall off your tree. It's a good thing!

### **Journey Stick**

Give everyone a small bag of colored pieces of yarn, or string. Then, everyone finds themselves a stick that's about 12 inches long. Start your walk along the trail, and begin adding string to your stick, or tie on other pieces of nature that will help you remember what you saw. An example would be seeing a bluejay in the distance. You might choose a piece of blue yarn to remind you of the sighting. You may see squirrels skittering about and may want to tie a piece of brown yarn onto your stick. When you return from your walk, your journey stick will be a reminder of all that you have seen and experienced. This activity is also great for a Guides' Own at camp.

### **Magic Eye**

A magic eye is a piece of cardstock or cardboard with a hole in the middle. It can be held at varying distances from your eyes to focus on different things. Start by holding it next to your eye and focusing on any object. Slowly stretch out toward this object, always looking through the magic eye. When your arm is at full length, look carefully at what you have framed. Walk up and examine it closely. Continue choosing different things to look at.

### **Pooters**

These are so much fun! Take two straws, one a regular straw and the other a milkshake straw. Cut a small piece of nylon or other tight mesh fabric or ribbon and hold it on the bottom of the small straw, then insert it into the larger straw, pushing down about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way down. Tape the smaller straw to the larger straw at the opening. You now have a pooter! Search for a bug crawling along the forest floor. Carefully place the bottom of the large straw over the bug and suck it up. The mesh will prevent the bug from going all the way up the straw and into your mouth. Now transfer (blow) the bug into a bug viewing jar. These jars are small and have a magnifying piece as the lid. Screw on the lid and now you can safely view your bug. Once you've identified what type of bug it is, kindly release it where you found it.

### **Nature Journal**

Make yourself a journal that you can take with you on the trail. In it you can record specifics about what you see, and even sketch items of interest. Include pocket pages, where you can collect small, dried bits of nature to identify later. If you are using a blank book for your journal, consider collecting a few leaves and pressing them between the pages. Make notes on where you found the items, and record the date, maybe even the weather.

**Nature Hikes** Here is a short list of the many types of hikes to try.....

### **100 Inch Hike**

You will need 100 inches of string for each participant. Shrinking your field of perception adds to your awareness. Place the string on the ground and explore the area carefully along the string. Share what you found with the group.

### **Walnut Shell**

Give everyone a shell and see how many different items they can find to fill it. Alternately, an empty matchbox can be used to collect the smallest items. See who can collect the most!

### **One Meter Hike**

Do you know there are many creatures under your feet? An entire world in the grass? Imagine you are a small creature, and you are going on an adventure.

Find a patch of ground, or grass. Place a meter stick on the ground. This is the length of your hike. Pretend you are a very small creature, such as an ant. Place your eyes very close to the ground and begin your hike. If you have a magnifying glass, use it to observe closely during your hike. Make a list or draw what interesting objects you see, such as rocks, twigs, bird poo, worms, or any animals, butterflies or bugs that cross your path.

### **FBI Hike**

(Forest Bureau of Investigation)

This challenge is to explore the environment to find evidence of criminal activity within the natural world. Trees might be littering by carelessly scattering needles or leaves, birds murdering insects or worms, or squirrels kidnapping the “children” (seeds) of trees. This can lead to discussions about food chains, interrelationships within the natural world and many other natural principles. Document the crime with a digital camera and make notes about evidence. Make “Wanted” posters describing each criminal they find.

### **Alphabet Hike**

Somewhere along the trail, stop and lay out a white plastic sheet that has squares marked out and labelled with each letter of the alphabet. Items of nature can be searched for that start with the letter of the alphabet and continue til the sheet has been filled. Talk about the findings and offer any interesting notes about what was found.

### **Un-Nature Hike**

Plant 15-20 man-made items along the trail. Have the girls work in pairs, leaving a few minutes between groups. The girls are not to disturb the items, just write down what they see.

### **Paint Chip Hike**

Give each girl a set of paint chips swatches to use during the walk. Choose colors you may not expect to see in nature. They should try to find something in nature to match the colors. After the walk, talk about what each person found for the different colors. Optional - turn the paint chips into a camp hat craft! Cut off a square of color and write on the back what you found for that color. Stamp and color an image on the front and punch a hole in the corner and adding a safety pin. Attach to the camp hat.

### **Unusual Object Walk**

Give each girl a bag to place an unusual object in during the walk. At the end, compare objects - anything that is the same as what someone else has is taken out. The most unusual objects win!

### **Geocaching**

Plant a few caches along the hike, to encourage getting into the bush and away from the trail (if the area allows for it).

### **Nature Bingos & Scavenger Hunts**

There really is a great variety of nature bingos and scavenger hunts on the world wide web. Check out Pinterest, or simply do a Google search. Home school networks have amazing resources as well.

There are some free printouts on the Buggy and Buddy website, including checklists for different scavenger hunts.

[www.buggyandbuddy.com](http://www.buggyandbuddy.com)

Becky Vincent has a compilation of different themes for hiking on her site here:

[http://dragon.sleepdeprived.ca/camping/camping\\_11.htm](http://dragon.sleepdeprived.ca/camping/camping_11.htm)

The BC Camping Committee has an instant meeting for Hiking here:

<http://www.bc-girlguides.org/web/Documents/BC/program/Guide-Hike.pdf>

Nature Detectives (Woodland Trust) is a go-to site for endless ideas on what to do out of doors. There are plenty of activities to inspire and teach the girls.

<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/>

## TRAIL GAMES

### **Walking in the Woods Game**

Teach the girls how to walk quietly in the woods by taking steps going from the outside of the foot to the inside, slowly. Have them practice while they are on the hike. When you reach an area that has a lot of forest floor litter (twigs and old leaves are great), but is open enough to move around in, you can play a game using the technique to move quietly. One person is chosen to be a sleeping animal, and one person is a referee. Everyone else spreads out in a circle then tries to sneak up on the animal. As the animal hears a noise she can point towards it (without opening her eyes) and the referee determines whether the animal has heard someone sneaking up on them. The caught 'sneaker' sits down in place and waits for the game to finish. The game continues until either the animal has caught all its predators or until a predator has caught the animal by getting close enough to tag it. At first the girls will give themselves away by either moving noisily or giggling. But as you repeat it, they will improve and the animal will get caught. It leaves a great impression on the girls and future hikes will provide more nature experiences as the girls learn the importance of hiking quietly.

### **Seek and Hide**

(also known as Sardines)

This game is fun to play and it gets the girls used to getting off the beaten path and into the woods. Make sure you designate the boundaries first. Everyone closes their eyes while one person goes a little further along the trail and then hides herself in the bush. Everyone then has to seek. Once she is found, the seeker also hides with her until almost everyone is hiding in the same spot and there are only one or two seekers left.

### **Camouflage Hide and Seek**

Establish a secret word ahead of time and let the girls know that when that word is shouted out, one person who is it will close their eyes, and everyone else has 10 seconds to jump into the woods and hide themselves. After a 10 second count, the person will stay where they are and try to see if they can locate anyone. They have to call out the name of the girl and she must come out from the woods right away.

## **Owls**

This is a wide game, best played just before dusk. The fading sun will afford the Owls a better chance to hide, yet it isn't dark enough to be a danger. Choose 4 or 5 Owls, who will go out along the trail and hide themselves. Once they are hidden, the girls will strike out in pairs, or in teams and listen for the hoot of the Owls and try to locate them. The Owls will each have a pile of stones, sticks, leaves and other nature items, to give out as a reward. The Owls will give a 'hoot' about every 4 or 5 minutes. This will help the girls hone in on where they might be. Once the girls have found all the Owls and collected their rewards, they can head back. Once the Owls have dispersed the rewards to each girl, they know it's time to head back. See who makes it back first! This game can be made a little bit more difficult for older girls, by having the Owls asking questions that must be answered, and the game can be treated as a Quest.

## **RCRP** (Royal Canadian Rice Patrol)

This is a wide active game, that uses some strategy and is played after dusk has fallen. Divide the group into two. Half the group will be hidden alongside the trail. Pick a trail that has some open areas for the girls to hide. They are the RCRP. The RCRP has received a tip that there has been illegal rice activity, and their goal is to catch the criminals and confiscate the rice into evidence. The other group must each pick up a grain of rice, and begin to manoeuvre along the trail, using stealth. They try to reach the other end of the trail where their rice can be handed over safely to the buyer. At any point a member of the RCRP may jump out onto the trail and tag the criminal, who must hand over the grain of rice. The courier must return to the beginning and try again. After a certain time, play stops and the sides switch. See who has the most grains of rice at the end.

## HEALTHY EATING & RECIPES

Trail mix was invented in 1968 by two California surfers who combined raisins and peanuts for a quick snack. (GORP – Good Old Raisins and Peanuts). Since then, food choices have changed with the times and can vary from sweet to savory. There are thousands of combinations! Combine any favorite dry ingredients and stash the mixture in an airtight container.

Nuts – loaded with healthy unsaturated fats, protein fiber, antioxidants, vitamin E and other essential vitamins and minerals. Favorites are almonds, pistachios, cashews, peanuts and walnuts.

Seeds – they provide many of the same nutritional benefits as nuts. Favorites are pumpkin, sunflowers, sesame, flax or hemp seeds.

Dried Fruit – great source of fiber, antioxidants, calcium and vitamins A, C and K. (use in moderation because of the sugars) Favorites are dried apples, cranberries, blueberries, apricots, raisins, pineapple chunks, mango, and dates.

Grains – full of complex carbohydrates, full of fiber. Favorites are pretzels, cheerios, bran flakes, granola, puffed rice cereal, popcorn.

Sweets – use sparingly with just a sprinkling of M&M's, chocolate chips, yogurt-covered raisins, mini marshmallows, chocolate-covered nuts. Choose dark chocolate varieties for extra antioxidants.

Try these favorite combinations:

Old School GORP – Peanuts, raisins, M&M's

Tropical Mix – Cashews, Brazil nuts, dried mango, coconut flakes, banana chips

Power Mix – Goji berries, pistachios, dried blueberries, flax seeds, dark chocolate chips



Beachy – Macadamia nuts, white chocolate chips, dried pineapple, coconut flakes

Coffee Shop – Hazelnuts, almonds, raisins, chocolate-covered coffee beans, white chocolate chips

Monkey Munch – Banana chips, peanuts, sea salt, almonds, dark chocolate chips, raisins, coconut flakes

Cereal Lover – Bran flakes, shredded wheat cereal, puffed rice, granola, cashews, dried cherries, dried cranberries, dried blueberries

Cajun Blend – Almonds, pecans, walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sea salt, garlic powder, chili powder, ground cumin, cayenne pepper

The following is from the October 2002 Canadian Living magazine. The article is called Trail Blazers.....

Lunch Box Trail Mix – 2 cups mini pretzels; 2 cups cornflakes; 2 cups yogurt-covered raisins; 2 cups small fish-shaped crackers

Movie Night Trail Mix – 3 cups unsalted popcorn; 2 cups pretzel sticks; 2 cups raisins; 1 cup salted peanuts

Hiker's Happy Trail Mix – 2 cups raisins; 1 ½ cups banana chips; 1 ½ cups multigrain cereal flakes; 1 cup shredded sweetened coconut; 1 cup chocolate chips; 1 cup pecan halves

Sesame Soy Trail Mix Crunch – 2 cups sesame sticks; 2 cups soy nuts; 2 cups roasted green peas; 2 cups chow mein noodles

Spa Trail Mix – 2 cups multigrain cereal flakes; 1 cup dried cherries or cranberries; 1 cup whole almonds; 1 cup banana chips; 1 cup toasted oat cereal squares; 1 cup puffed rice cereal; 1 cup dried cantaloupe or pineapple bits

## HIKING SONGS

Singing a song while out on a hike with your friends, can set the mood for the hike. The uplifting beats of the song can speed along the stride of the hike, or you may want to serenade the soaring eagle high above the lake. Here's a small selection of favorites:

The Happy Wanderer	Jubilee Song Book, pg 23
Alberta Hiking Song	Celebrate With Song, Pg 63
Land of the Silver Birch	Our Chalet Song Book, pg 16
Listen to the Earth	Celebrate With Song, pg 54
The World Is Such a Lovely Place	Celebrate With Song, pg 51
I Like The Flowers	Celebrate With Song, pg 54
I Know A Place	Our Chalet Song Book, pg 88
Boom Chicka Boom	Campfire Activities
I Met a Bear	Campfire Sing Along

## TRAIL MIX

### **GUIDER EVALUATION FORM**

Please share with us what you liked about the Trail Mix resource and anything that can be improved on for the next time. Thanks for your input!

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST?

WHAT WORKED/DIDN'T WORK FOR YOU?

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED ON FOR NEXT TIME?

GENERAL COMMENTS

Please send to us at:

AB Camping Committee  
11507 – 107 St.  
Edmonton, AB  
T5H 2Z6

or email to:  
[camping@albertagirlguides.com](mailto:camping@albertagirlguides.com)