

# Marjory Stoneman Douglas

“You have to stand up for some things in this world.”

Marjory Stoneman Douglas was an American journalist, author, women's suffrage advocate, and conservationist known for her defense of the Everglades against efforts to drain it and reclaim land for development.

Complete 3-Daisy, 4-Brownie, 5-Junior, 6-Cadette,  
and 7-Senior/Ambassador steps to earn your patch.

All monthly patches are custom designed patches. Once we get the final number of patches after the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, we place an order. Patches take about a month to create and then we mail them to you. You will get a confirmation email once the patches are headed your way.

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## Discover

1. Marjory first visited Florida at the age of 4; and she returned there to live with her father at age 25. She later reflected in her autobiography “I never forgot the quality of the tropic light as if I had been looking for it all the years of gray Northern light; as I came back many years later I recognized it as something I had loved and missed and longed for all my life, one of the things that made me so happy about being in Florida.” Do you have a place like this in your life? A place that you love to go on vacation or even a favorite spot in your backyard that

makes you happy? Discuss it with your troop. What makes it your favorite place?

2. Marjory was called the Grande Dame of the Everglades for the work she did to protect the everglades in South Florida. What do you know about the Everglades? What does it look like? What animals live there? Are there any endangered animals that have benefitted from Marjory protecting that land? Do research with your troop.
3. During a speech Marjory gave to the Friends of the Everglades group, a friend and group member said that Marjory made you remember your responsibility to nature. What do you think your responsibility to nature is? What actions can you take to protect nature? What actions do we practice in Girl Scouts to protect nature? Write a nature oath with your troop, family or friends. Be sure to discuss why nature is so important and how we can take on an important role in protecting and preserving it.
4. Marjory was a big advocate of equal rights for women. In college she joined the first women's suffrage club with 6 of her classmates. November 3<sup>rd</sup> is Election Day, and this year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's right to vote. Create your own suffrage poster or banner with your troop or individually. Focus on a historic or current voting rights issue, or research the timeline of the women suffrage movement. What key events happened on the road for women to earn the right to vote?

### Connect

5. Marjory moved to Miami at a young age to work for the Miami Herald newspaper. She was a freelance writer there and wrote short stories. Her most famous story was about the Everglades. Write a short story. It could be non-fiction or fiction, about your friends, family or about a cause you care about like Marjory did. Share your short story with your troop.

6. Marjory wrote in her autobiography, *Voice of the River*, the importance the Everglades play in the rainfall that Florida relies on. The water from the everglades evaporates, goes up into the clouds, rains down on the Kissimmee River and Lake Okeechobee. The lake and river fill up and then spill over into the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean, and back into the Everglades. Check out the link below on how to make your own water cycle in a bag with your troop or friends.

<https://www.mobileedproductions.com/blog/how-to-make-a-water-cycle-in-a-bag>

7. Marjory was very interested in the world around her. In her English class at college, her first assignment was to write a letter home. Marjory wrote her letter, but the teacher said it was not the type of letter to send home, so she had her read it in front of the class as an example of what not to do. In her letter Marjory wrote about how beautiful the campus was, how the scarlet colored leaves mirrored off the reflection of the lake and how blue the lake and sky was. The class loved her letter and applauded; she was immediately established as a writer. Observe the world around you like Marjory did, really take time to take it all in and notice the colors, smells, and sounds; then write a letter to a family member or friend telling them about it; or you could write a poem or draw a picture.
8. Marjory's time at her father's newspaper was put on hold when she volunteered with the American Red Cross during World War I. Even then, her passion for writing was utilized as she was assigned to write about the Red Cross's efforts in Europe. The life of a Red Cross volunteer during the war was strenuous, but Marjory cherished her French heritage (her grandmother was French) so she had fond memories of her trip to Paris. What is your family's heritage? Do you

have any special traditions from other cultures that you do because of your family heritage? Discuss with your troop! Trace back your family's roots and find out where your ancestors came from. Showcase your findings with your troop. Below is a link to a family tree worksheet to help you organize your lineage.

<https://freefamilytreetemplates.com/4-generation-family-tree-template/>

### Take Action

9. In 1969, Marjory formed Friends of the Everglades. The purpose was to create awareness of the potential destruction of a large portion of the Everglades by a huge jet runway being built in the wetlands. If you could form a group "Friends of the \_\_\_\_\_", what would it be? What would be your mission? Gather friends together to form this group, it could be your troop or a group of friends from school. Decide who or what organization you would like to help and advocate for. Develop a plan.
  
10. Marjory describes her struggle to preserve the wetland as "an enormous battle between man's intelligence and his stupidity- and I'm not all sure that stupidity isn't going to win out in the end." I think what Marjory means by this is that at the time Miami and South Florida were still being developed, so it was a sought-out area to drain the Everglades and develop houses and buildings; they wanted the economy to grow which is smart. However, the impact that destroying the Everglades has on nature and plant/animal ecosystems is extraordinary and at the time it wasn't fully known the impact it would have. Think critically about a current issue that may be similar to the Everglades. Do you think there is a situation or a way of doing something currently that we don't yet know the effects it will have on humans, animals or nature? How do you think it will impact us in 50



years, 100 years, 500 years? Discuss with your troop. Research your thoughts and see if there is any evidence to back up your thinking.