

JULY 2023

CLUB DE EXPLORADORES

Third adventure - Waterfall and Fire Skills



Tagging along with the Exploradores

BY VIVIANETTE ORTIZ FROM LATINOS
AVENTUREROS

Today was a good, good day. The laughing and joy are contagious. The participants are enjoying every step, every insect, every pool of water. They listen with curiosity. I see myself represented. My inner child is activated. I see my 12 year old self, running around the island with friends, enjoying the waterfalls and mountains without worries, without judgement, just living in the moment. I am miles away from my country of origin, yet today I feel like I'm there.



"It is essential to instill lessons and love for the outdoors now" - Vivi

Table of Contents

Third Adventure

Leave No Trace
PRINCIPLE 5

Getting out of our
comfort zone

Map and Special Thanks



LET'S GO EXPLORE!

FIND OUTDOORS



Morning trash pick up and Magical Waterfall Adventure

A group of fourteen Exploradores came out to give the forest some love by picking up trash left behind by others with the support of Packout Pisgah. After collecting a good haul, we had snack, met Vivianette and Iván from Latinos Aventureros who shared their story with us and the mission of their amazing community.

After that, we got ready for the day by reviewing LNT #1, #2, #4, and #7 before heading out to our remote destination.



We loaded the vans and headed out to look for an impressive waterfall that sits in a lush, picturesque cove in the Pisgah National Forest. We parked on a forest service road and hiked for a couple of miles with our friends from Great Trails NC who wanted to experience and document a day with the Exploradores.

After splashing around and enjoying the beauty of this spot, we headed out to a campsite located on the side of the road where we had an amazing volunteer waiting for us with lunch and a lesson on fire building and safety. The timing was impeccable; right after we finished our activities of the day, we watched as the big dark clouds approached rapidly and brought an intense but beautiful afternoon rainstorm, a very typical occurrence in the summer months in our beloved temperate forest.

Leave It Better and Packout Pisgah are local initiatives designed to inspire explorers of our bountiful natural wonders to leave the land and water better than they found it.



We swept one of the most popular picnic areas in the forest before heading out on our big adventure. It feels good to do good!



#5 Minimize Campfire Impacts

Once necessary for cooking and warmth, campfires are steeped in history and tradition. Some people would not think of camping without a campfire. Campfire building is also an essential skill for every camper. Yet, the natural appearance of many areas has been degraded by the overuse of fires and increasing demand for firewood. Moreover, wildfires continue to threaten outdoor spaces and are primarily caused by humans. Together, we can make a difference.



- Evaluate the site before starting a campfire:
 - Is there an established fire pit?
 - Are there low-hanging branches or dense bushes?
 - Remember to use dead or fallen wood.
- To build a successful campfire, you'll need three types of fuel:
 - Tinder: small twigs, pine needles, or forest debris.
 - Kindling: small sticks.
 - Firewood: larger pieces of wood that will keep the fire burning.
- There are three popular methods for building a campfire:
 - The Pyramid: This was our strategy during this adventure.
 - To build a pyramid campfire, start with unlit tinder as the base and stack sticks around it in the shape of a pyramid. Once it's lit, add more firewood.
 - The Log Cabin
 - Kindling on Top
- Never leave your campfire unattended!

ASH SOUP!

Be sure to have a plan for putting your fire out before you light it.

Campfires must be completely extinguished before you leave them. Before you walk away from your campfire, douse your fire with a large amount of water, stirring the coals and ashes into a thick, muddy soup, incorporating the white ash from the fire's edges. Feel for heat in the center of the fire, on the larger pieces of wood, and along the edges of the ash. Repeat this process until no heat remains.



Getting out of our comfort zone



Reflection Time



Latinx outdoor leaders inspire future generations by demonstrating what is possible. When young individuals see members from their community leading outdoor adventures, it ignites a sense of curiosity and possibility within them. Outdoor leaders play a crucial role in inspiring and empowering individuals within their community to engage with the outdoors, fostering a sense of belonging and connection to nature. Representation matters greatly, as it provides a powerful narrative that challenges stereotypes, encourages inclusivity, and motivates others to pursue their passions in outdoor activities.

ADVENTURE JOURNAL

"Got out of my comfort zone when going to the cold water. It was fun anyways but hurtful because of the rocks. I really had so much fun. My body was numb but I got used to it; also, the sound of the water was helping me calm down". - M

"Even though the water was cold and I'm not used to it, I gathered my courage and braveness to do it and did it!" - C

"Today I got out of my comfort zone by getting into the cold, freezing water. And getting really wet when I said I wasn't going to get wet". - L

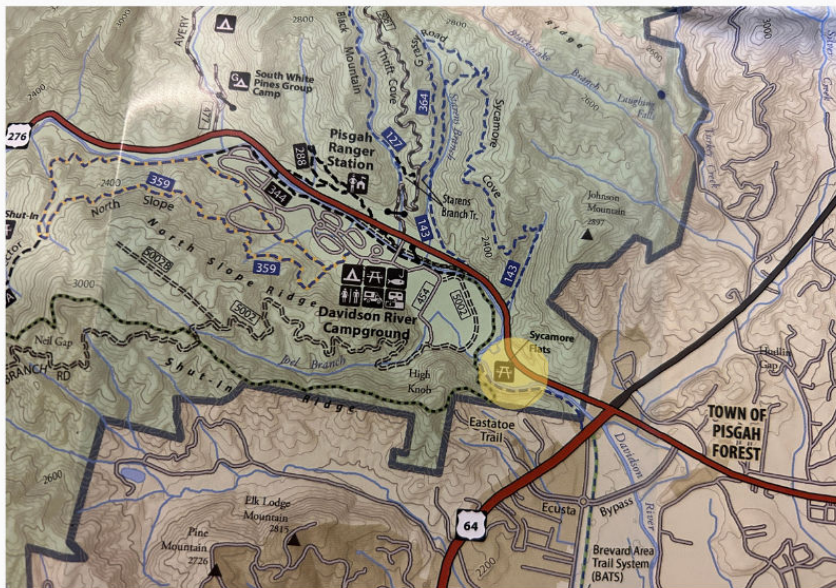
"Today was fun and very hot. I had lots of fun getting wet and being with new people and making friends. I really enjoyed eating with friends. I liked going on the hike because it was challenging but very fun!" - Y



Where we went...

We started our day at Sycamore Flats, a very popular picnic area that is perfect for families as it offers plenty of open space with tables, grills, and restrooms. It also sits along the Davidson River and it provides easy access to swimmers and cold water enthusiasts. This area is located just past the entrance to the forest on hwy 276 and right before the Pisgah Visitor Center.

We spent the rest of the day at a beautiful waterfall that sits on a less visited area of the forest. Did you know that Transylvania County has 250 waterfalls?



SPECIAL THANKS

Club de Exploradores is immensely grateful to our sponsors and collaborators who make this program possible. By contributing funds, discounts, transportation, services, and more, they help us provide unforgettable experiences to this group of enthusiasts in this beloved forest of ours.

Special thanks to Latinos Aventureros for coming to spend such a wonderful day with us, to Packout Pisgah for leading us on another organized litter pick up, and to the "Leave It Better" initiative from City of Brevard for providing the coolest stickers to reward the Exploradores after collecting 4 bags of trash!



Latinos Aventureros is a bilingual community of outdoor enthusiasts dedicated to helping everyone experience the joys of nature. Their mission is to support and educate community members, with a focus on serving the BIPOC community. Through their adventures, they aim to promote physical and mental health, provide environmental conservation education, and inspire a love of the great outdoors.

