



# WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF™ HOME

OFFICIAL HOME PAGE OF, "THE WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF ELECTRONIC BOOK, V. 2.0-C."

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

## PASSAGES

Quickshelter :

The Quickshelter is one of my personal favorites because I frequently use it to shelter myself from light rains that frequent the British Columbia coast. In "A Sample Day on the Trail," I use the Quickshelter to do just that and also, to have a quick lunch. It's very easy to construct.

With the W.W.S., dig a hole about 1-1/2" (inches) in circumference and about 1/2' (foot) deep. Place the lower end of the W.W.S. into this hole. If the staff isn't standing freely, place several small stones into the hole and around the base of the staff. Pack firmly with your foot.

When the staff stands freely (it doesn't have to be very rigid since the weight of the nylon line and tarp will keep the W.W.S. from moving), remove the Tarp/Solar Water Still from the staff and place the center of the tarp over the staff (the center is marked with the central square of rip-stop tape). Now tie four lengths of 8' - 10' braided nylon line to each corner of the tarp. Finally, stake each corner. The Quickshelter is now

### DEFINING A, "WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF."

What is a, "Wilderness Walking Staff?"

### READER'S COMMENTS

Read What Scouter's are Saying.

### CONTENTS

See What's Inside the Complete Version.

### W.W.S. ELECTRONIC BOOK EXCERPT

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...instructions now complete. (Tip: You can also use 3 or 4 large stones at the base of such a shelter, instead of digging a hole 1/2' (foot) deep)."



An Excerpt from, 'The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book; Version 2.0-C,' by Franjo Goluzza. Copyright 1998 by Pacific Quillworks. All Rights Reserved.

## RELATED ARTICLES

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*"No other electronic book has defined the myriad uses of a walking staff in North America's backcountry like, 'The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book.'"*



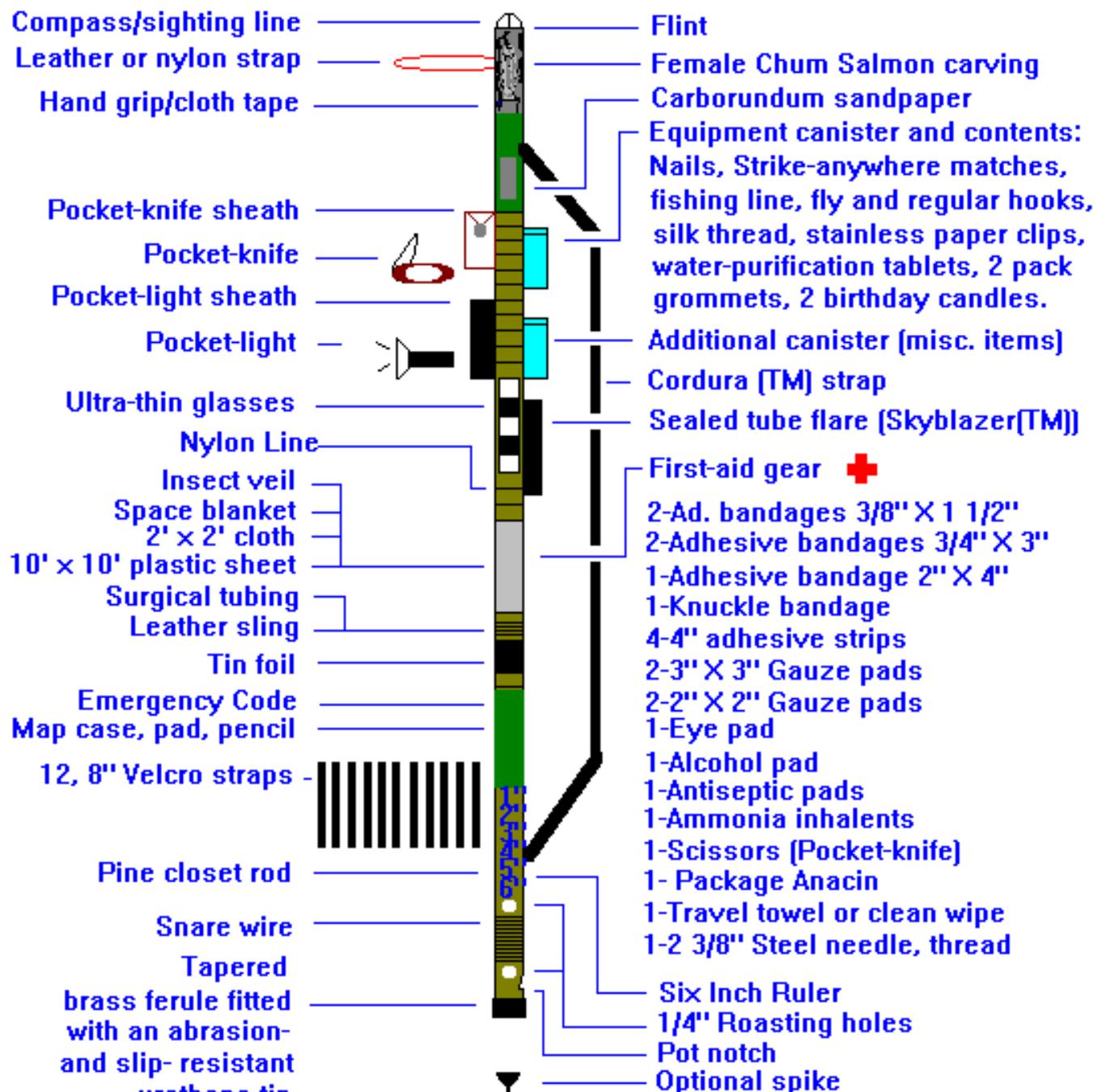
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## WHAT IS, "THE WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF?"

**A** Wilderness Walking Staff is a hiking staff designed for wilderness safety and subsistence living in North America's backcountry. Over mountain, through desert, forest, seacoast, swamp and bayou, the Wilderness Walking Staff (W.W.S.) caters to an outdoors person's basic needs. With over 50 pieces of equipment, wilderness safety and the means to subsistence living are at one's finger tips.

### The Wilderness Walking Staff



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*Image from, "The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book," by Franjo Goluz.*

With a W.W.S., a backpacker, day hiker, or, Scout, has a dependable, life-saving survival tool on their person at all times. With the equipment you place on the W.W.S., you'll have access to a high level of wilderness self-sufficiency like never before. Nothing compares to its versatility. Not only is a W.W.S. reliable in an emergency, it is also practical around camp and on the trail. You'll have the advantage of "Support," "Security" and "Service" as described in the e-book, as well as the ability to; build a plastic shelter, match-lit or flint and steel based fires, catch fish, set snares, write messages, purify water, store a small food source, keep warm with space-age technology, signal help, administer first-aid, provide lighting and so much more (as you'll see).

With a W.W.S., you'll have immediate access to all your survival gear, including all-important first-aid supplies--three quick pulls on the Velcro straps and you have first-aid supplies and a space-blanket at the ready. Another two quick pulls on the Velcro straps and you've got the W.W.S.'s map case, including a pad and pencil. You'll have fishing line and hooks and water-purification tablets, as well as a sealed tube-flare. Of course, there's much more than this-- the W.W.S. is more than simply "survival-orientated."

A W.W.S. is convenient. Need to sharpen your pocket-knife?--the W.W.S. has a sharpening pad just for that purpose--no fumbling for the stone in the backpack. Want to maintain course 47 degrees, but don't want to keep fidgeting with your compass to make sure you're still on track?--the W.W.S. will keep you on course with only an occasional glance at the recessed compass atop the W.W.S.. Thirsty in the morning?--use the W.W.S.'s 2' by 2' towel, soak up the morning's dew and squeeze for a quick, refreshing drink. Cold at night?--remove the W.W.S.'s space-blanket and put it in your sleeping bag. With all of these features (and there are many more), the W.W.S. is still more than the sum of it's parts: the W.W.S. is an outdoors person's safety system.

With the Wilderness Walking Staff all your needs are taken into account should you be visiting the backwoods. These are described in detail in the Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book or W.W.S.E.B.:

- Shelter: the W.W.S.E.B. describes 5 types, including the new Quickshelters.
- Clothing: the W.W.S.E.B. explains how to make emergency wear.
- Navigation Aids: the W.W.S.E.B. shows how to use astronomical indicators in conjunction with the W.W.S. & more.
- Emergency Food Source: the W.W.S.E.B. suggests a food items list for a small food canister.
- Fire: the W.W.S.E.B. covers emergency fires in detail, describing 5 methods including flint & steel (the W.W.S. has a recessed flint stick), the emergency shavings fire & more.
- Security: the W.W.S.E.B.'s tips on security range from using a staff for personal defense to constructing an emergency field hospital for an injured hiker.

- **Service:** the W.W.S.E.B. describes the myriad functions of a "plain" walking staff, from backrests to drying clothing.
- **Support:** the W.W.S.E.B. tells how a walking staff supports you physically on the trail.
- **Camp Crafts:** the W.W.S.E.B. shows you how to cook, plant seedlings, use a staff as a hiking record & more.
- **Life-saving Features:** the W.W.S.E.B. covers the Emergency Crutch, Emergency Stretcher and the W.W.S. Solar Water Still.
- **Training:** the W.W.S.E.B. encourages wilderness training in conjunction with a staff, i.e., building Quickshelters, emergency stretchers, & more.
- **Exercise:** the W.W.S.E.B. has a calistenics program which incorporates the use of a walking staff in one's camp morning routine. It lists 10 separate exercises.
- **Much more:** please see the [contents list](#) of, "The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book," for complete details on the various possibilities of a walking staff in the backwoods. No other book has defined the myriad uses of a walking staff in North America's backcountry like, "The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book".

**ORDERING INFORMATION**

**HOME**

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**The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book, Ver. 2.0-C. URL: <http://www.islandnet.com/~wwseb>**

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Note: There are also over 20 sound files that were not listed in the Contents list.

**END of W.W.S.E.B. Version 2.0-C.**

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**ORDER THE COMPLETE VERSION OF,  
"THE WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF ELECTRONIC BOOK  
VERSION 2.0-C," FOR ONLY \$19.95US FUNDS.**

If you order a, "Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book," you'll receive an electronic book with more than 75 pages of text, 21 audio files, and over 50 illustrations & diagrams all about that ubiquitous backwoods ally: the Wilderness Walking Staff. All e-books are now being shipped via e-mail so please print your e-mail address clearly to avoid late or misdirected delivery. **To order**, "The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book, Version 2.0-C," for Windows® 3.x, Windows® '95, '98, ME, 2000, XP please:

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3925 Garnet Place  
Victoria, British Columbia, CANADA  
V8P-5G7

Thank-you for your order.

Frank Goluz, [Author](#)

"The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book."

## READER'S COMMENTS

"The boys in my Troop will be real excited!"

N.G., Scout Master,  
Utah, U.S.A..

"I read about it in a Newsgroup and it sounds as if it would be a great resource for our troop. Thank-you!"

D.E.C., Scout Master,  
South Carolina, U.S.A..

"My husband is the Scout Master for our Troop and is looking forward to receiving your Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book (so am I)."

S.M.,  
Washington, U.S.A..

"What you're describing could \*help\* protect the inexperienced/careless... ."

J.H., Council V.P. for Programs,  
New York, U.S.A..

"Outstanding! And perfect for my Scouts back in Ontario. I'm a registered leader and would definately be interested in this."

R.R.,  
Lindsay, Ontario, Canada.

"I would appreciate receiving a copy of the Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book. It sounds like it would make a great Troop project."

R.P., Assistant Scout Master  
Tulsa, Oklahoma, U.S.A..

"I look forward to receiving this information! The tasty tidbit you provided has wetted my appetite!"

C.S., Boy Scout  
Ontario, CANADA

"An interesting concept. Let's see what you've got!"

C.R. Assistant Scout Master  
Oregon, USA

"I'd love to get a copy of the Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book."

T.B., Backpacker,  
Iowa, USA

If you want to know all about walking staffs, how they work in the backcountry, and in particular, the Wilderness Walking Staff, get the e-book. Over 75 pages of detailed instructions and text, over 50

illustrations and more than 20 sound files on how to assemble and use a Wilderness Walking Staff. It makes a fun and educational outdoor project and can be used as a resource for the entire Troop.

Franjo Goluzza, Author of The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book.  
Victoria, British Columbia

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## AN EXCERPT FROM THE WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF ELECTRONIC BOOK

**H**ere is a section entitled, "Unfavorable Terrain," culled from the information-packed e-book entitled: "THE WILDERNESS WALKING STAFF ELECTRONIC BOOK" (©1999).

Part 1

Walking and Walking Staffs.

**B**efore I talk about assembling what for several years I've called a Wilderness Walking Staff (W.W.S.), I'd like to devote this part of the W.W.S.E.B. to showing you some of the advantages of walking with a simple staff or stick. Any staff, whether it is fashioned from a dead, small jack pine tree, a straight piece of driftwood or even a broom handle, will do. I want to show you that a hiking staff has a fundamental place in every walker's inventory, no matter if you're a novice hiker, or, an experienced backpacker.

The first topic I'd like to discuss is how a walking staff provides a walker with

Support.

As you'll see, a staff will support a walker under an assortment of difficult conditions, especially in

Unfavorable Terrain.

Whether ascending, descending, or walking a level terrain, a staff that can support my full weight can be invaluable; in many cases, necessary to safe passage. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, I've noticed that blow-downs and dead-falls often pose a hazard to safe footing, especially with exposed boot laces, backpack straps or loose clothing (not to mention an errant arm or foot). Sometimes I've had to cross large, heavy-foliaged branches lying at the trail's foot or, once, a hundred year old Balsam Fir torn from its root during a particularly windy Autumn. Branches lay in a chaotic line, extending from the tree trunk like a wall. Many branches were snapped, broken from the tree's impact with the earth and more debris was strewn about; nature renewing itself can pose quite a barrier. Obviously, it's wiser to walk around these obstacles, but often times I can't; the circuitous route being an even greater hazard. In such cases, I am glad to have a staff with which to push or hold branches aside or underfoot (not only for deadfalls and blowdowns, but for stinging plants such as Hemlock, Stinging nettle and others) while I pass unencumbered (read unstung) over them. For small boulders, rock-like mounds of compacted earth and potholes lying under or beside fallen trunks such as these, a staff is a good probe, for obvious

reasons. I want to be aware of these "blind" hazards before I come to them.

In other words a staff guides me, turning an often unstable, unsafe crossing into one that can be traversed with confidence. Smooth, rain-soaked rock and leaf-littered surfaces for instance, abound in Autumn. These surfaces make for treacherous walking, with or without a load. With a staff, I'm on three legs instead of two. I'm more secure in my person than I am without one. In "The Complete Walker III," Collin Fletcher writes, "...[A staff] converts me when I am heavily laden from an insecure biped into a confident triped."

During the Winter months, a hiking staff distributes my weight more equitably over snow and ice, reducing the risk of slipping or even, collapsing into depressions such as ice pockets. Ice pockets form in the low spots on a trail and often get covered with fresh snow or ice. If I can't go around them, I can punch into these areas with my stick before I walk over them. Eskimos have long used what they refer to as "Oonoks" (hunting poles) to help them travel the Arctic ice fields and to stay clear of ice pockets. If an Eskimo falls through the ice the Oonok serves as a horizontal anchor, holding the Eskimo's weight over a wider surface area and thus allowing the person to crawl or squirm to safety. This technique saves Eskimo lives every year.

As in the Arctic ice fields or on high-elevation trails, in bog country, swamp, muskeg or other spongy ground, deep, hidden pockets also pose a problem. Often the only solid footing in Canadian bog country is on hummocks of vegetation such as sparse willows, smaller arctic birch and spruce trees where the roots appear in clumps at their bases. Moss and various grasses grow on these "islands" as well, providing a rather precarious, but surer footing than what you would find between them, which is, where the caribou moss grows, the hardpan that made the bog. Sometimes the hardpan can be as deep as six feet below the surface. In "Outdoor Lore and Woodcraft," outdoor guru Clyde Ormond writes, "If you do fall in boggy terrain, try to land "spread-eagle--that is, with arms and legs outspread. This distributes the weight over a greater surface."

If I do chance a fall in such terrain, spread-eagle or otherwise, my staff can catch solid foundation, which means I'll be able to pull myself to safety. By carrying a staff in such areas, small jumps or hops between "islands" are made much safer, reducing the risk of falling considerably. A pocket one meter across, for example, doesn't pose a problem even when I'm carrying a heavy backpack; but, I don't expect to travel great distances either. A staff will also protect against tipping in difficult terrain; will take a considerable impact when I land (better a broken staff than a foot), and allows me to vault potholes I couldn't otherwise cross.

Other types of crossings are also made safer, not to mention possible. Forging fast-flowing streams, creek beds or even rivers are just a few examples. In each case, particularly if through murky water I can't see the bottom (often you can't see the bottom even when it's clear), a staff searches out loose boulders and rocks, muddy soft spots and holes. In the far north, where rivers are quick and unforgiving, having a staff can make the difference between crossing and staying on the same side. In cases where a shaky log bridge is available to cross a stream, creek or even river, a staff acts as an important balancing aid.

For larger rocky outcroppings in deserts or elsewhere, a staff will not only help keep my balance while walking a curvy, loose sand- or soil-ridden section, but lends a helping hand in case I need a push up and over or down and out of a difficult stretch.

On a gravel, dirt or forested slope or hill, whether on my way up or down at night or day, whether the earth is wet or dry or windy, a staff lends the support that is vital to walking safe in unfavorable terrain.

**ORDERING INFORMATION**

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## DOWNLOAD SITES

The following list of download sites are currently available to download the shareware edition of, "The Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book." Please click on the "order," button below to order the complete version.

Download WWSEBV20S.ZIP (365KB) from: [Shaw@Home](#)

**ORDERING INFORMATION**

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## GENERAL INFORMATION: THE PREVIEW (2.0-S) & COMPLETE (2.0-C) VERSIONS OF THE W.W.S.E.B..

### Instructions for Downloading and Installing the Preview Version of the W.W.S.E.B..

1. The preview version of the W.W.S.E.B. Version 2.0, entitled, [WWSEB20S.ZIP](#) may be downloaded from the latter link, or from the home page link. After you've downloaded, read step 2. This version is the PREVIEW version, to order the complete version for \$19.95US, please see the [order form](#).
2. You'll need PKWARE's PKZip® program or, if you use Windows '95 or '98, Nico Mac's WinZip® to extract the e-book after you download it. If you don't have the PKZip® or the WinZip® programs, you can download the latest version of PKZip®, PKZ204G.EXE (for Win 3.x, Win '95, '98), or the latest version of [WinZip](#) (Win'95, '98-only), before you begin. The following instructions show you how to install PKWARE's PKZIP® on your PC. If you already have PKZip® installed, please see item #3. WinZip comes with a self-explanatory installation program. Please follow the directions on-screen after double-clicking the file in Windows® '95 or '98 Explorer.

#### Setup Instructions for PKWARE INC.'S PKZIP® Program.

These instructions show you how to set up and install the compression program, "PKZip®." All you have to do is type everything that appears below in caps (capital letters). The (enter) after each command means to hit enter on your keyboard.

#### Setting Up PKZip® on Your Computer (if you don't already have it):

- A. At the c:\ prompt, type: MD PKWARE (enter).
- C. Find the file PKZ204G.EXE you just downloaded and type: MOVE PKZ204G.EXE C:\PKWARE (enter).
- D. Now type: CD\ (you'll return to the c:\ prompt).
- E. Then type: CD PKWARE.
- F. At the c:\pkware\ prompt type: PKZ204G (the file will extract...).
- G. Then type: CD.. (enter) (You'll return to your c:\ prompt).
- H. Now type: EDIT AUTOEXEC.BAT (enter).
- I. In your PATH line type: C:\PKWARE;
- J. Below that line type: SET PKZIP.CFG=C:\PKWARE
- K. Now select FILE, then SAVE. Exit.
- L. Restart your computer and return to your DOS prompt. PKZip® is now installed and ready for use.

At any DOS prompt, you can now type the PKZip® commands needed to extract the e-book. Now you can use the "-D" switch when "PKUnzipping" the e-book so that your e-book will decompress into its own directory. WinZip will do this for you automatically.

For example, to extract the preview version of the e-book, a PKZip-user will type: "pkunzip -D wwseb20s.zip" at the DOS prompt (without the quotes, remembering to hit enter). The preview version of the W.W.S. electronic book will then decompress into the WWSEB20S directory. Click the file, "wwseb20s.hlp," to enter the e-book.

3. Please read the "readme.txt" file after you've decompressed everything.
4. That's it! If you need any other help, or have any questions or comments, please feel free to send the author an [e-mail](#).

## **After a Peak at the -P-R-E-V-I-E-W- Version, order the W.W.S.E.B. Version 2.0-C and -S-E-E- What's Inside the -C-O-M-P-L-E-T-E Version.**

Inside the Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book Version 2.0-C (the "C" stands for COMPLETE) you'll find more than a plethora of interesting facts on walking staffs. You'll find an electronic book enriched with over 20 sound clips that give you walking staff tips voiced by an actor, written by the author. There are also more than 50 specific, detailed drawings and illustrations, and concise instructions throughout on how you can assemble one Wilderness Walking Staff. This is the definitive guide on how to use and build, "The Wilderness Walking Staff." See what some of my [readers](#) have said about the e-book.

## **How and When Your Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book Arrives.**

Your electronic book will arrive at your home through the regular postal service in an attractive, protected package with a clear label on the front indicating that it is the Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book. In the Americas (Canada and United States), it should take about 2-4 weeks, sometimes less, for the electronic book to reach you. In Europe and Australia, a wait of 6-8 weeks can be expected.

## **Computer Requirements.**

You'll need the following items to view your Wilderness Walking Staff Electronic Book:

1. IBM(tm)-compatible computer
2. Windows® 3.x, Windows® '95 or Windows® '98
3. 3 1/2" floppy drive
4. 8 megabytes of hard disk space (Version 2.0-C), 1.5 megabytes of hard disk space (Version 2.0-S)
5. Sound card, speakers (optional really, you can still read the e-book)
6. Remember, you'll need either PKWARE's PKZip®, or Nico Mac's WinZip95, program to extract the e-book from the disk. Download PKWARE's PKZip® program, PKZ204G.EXE, or for Windows '95, '98 users, [WinZip](#), if you haven't got either already.



## WALKING STAFF RELATED ARTICLES & BOOK EXCERPTS.

### [The Spirit of the Staff](#)

This piece comes from the, "Leader Magazine." It delves briefly into the history of walking staffs, how walking staves are used on the trail, and how to make a staff. Suffices as an introduction on the subject of staves.

### [The Scout Staff](#)

This short article is an excerpt from "Scouting for Boys," Scouts Edition, 1963. Suggests a few useful outdoor activities with a walking staff.

### [The Staff in Treacherous Terrain](#)

Another short excerpt from the "Complete Book of Outdoor Lore and Woodcraft." On the utility of hiking staffs in treacherous terrain. Written by Mr. Clyde Ormond.

### [The Staff: A Third Leg](#)

A great little piece from "The Backpacker's Handbook," written by the popular outdoor writer, Chris Townsend. A brief sojourn into the world of walking staves.

### [Attack Back When Cougars Cross Your Path](#)

An article I discovered in my local paper advocating the use of a walking staff as a means of protecting oneself from predatory animals. From the Saanich News.

### [An Article by Baden-Powell.](#)

A piece which appears on my home page relating to walking staffs and their role in the Scouting movement. This piece was written in 1934 by the founding father of Scouting, Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell.

### [Download W.W.S.E.B. Version 2.0-S \(Preview Version\).](#)

For a much more comprehensive perspective on walking staffs and how they work in the backcountry, with particular focus on the Wilderness Walking Staff and its myriad functions, download the preview version of the W.W.S.E.B. (version 2.0-S), or, please click the order button below for the complete version (version 2.0-C).

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## AN EXCERPT FROM, "LEADER MAGAZINE."

### The Spirit of the Staff

A staff is a basic tool for the outdoor traveller. For thousands of years, the walking stick has been symbol, weapon, record, and support for the tired feet and legs of the wanderer. Even today, on the trail or in camp, it has a hundred uses.

For centuries, labourers used the staff to support loads and defend themselves against man and beast. Egyptian hieroglyphics picture travellers with sticks in hand. The Bible is full of references to staffs. The ancient Druids, who believed each copse had its own living spirit, apologized to a tree before cutting it for a staff. Banned from owning conventional weapons, the poor of many countries traditionally turned to the staff for protection.

The staff is also a symbol of authority and power. Moses used his to part the sea and to get water from a rock. In Egypt, the staff and the shorter rod were the Pharaoh's symbols of office. Today, the mace, an ornate and stylized version of a staff, symbolizes the power of parliament. At the same time, the staff, especially a staff with a crook, has always represented the humble shepherd. Truly, this is a stick for all men.

In B.-P's day, the staff was considered an important part of a Scout's outdoor equipment. Today, a stylized figure with a staff marks trails in many modern parks and is often used to indicate the availability of hiking trails in recreation and wilderness areas. In many countries, the same symbol indicates a hostel - a place of rest for a weary walker.

As a weapon, a stick or cudgel was once a match for the sword, at least in legend. Sensei (master) Frank Lee of Martial Arts International says two major forms of the staff are used in modern oriental martial arts, but he also says that "unless a person is trained to know the spirit of the staff, it is just a stick."

Record keeping is one of the oldest uses for a staff. The ancient Norse used a notched stick called a skor to keep track of numerical information, and the word stuck around to become today's "score". Some native American peoples carried coup sticks decorated with carvings and feathers to commemorate victories in battle. My wife and I first encountered a modern version of this kind of record keeping in the Alps, where every town and tourist attraction sells little metal crests to tack onto a walking stick. We came away with dozens of tiny tin memories of the places we hiked. Now, you can buy the same kind of metal plaques in Canadian holiday areas such as Banff.

### On the Trail

People tend to personalize their walking sticks. Frequently, they are ornately carved. Many Scouts "keep skor" by carving a mark for every so-many kilometres hiked or inking in the names of trails covered. At the 1971 World Jamboree in Japan, for example, Scouts who climbed Mount Fuji were issued a staff at the bottom. At each checkpoint along the way, it was marked with Japanese characters.

Decorated or not, a staff belongs on the trail. "A hiking stick helps make the miles glide by," wrote Robert Birkby in Boys Life magazine. "It swings comfortably in your hand, offering balance and a rhythm to your gait."

In dense overgrowth, use the staff to push aside brush and cobwebs and to prevent branches from whipping into your face. If the trail is wide enough, slip it behind your hips and hoist your pack to give your back a break. You can lift up underbrush to search for berries or pry up logs and rocks to satisfy your curiosity about what's underneath. When it's time for a rest, put your pack on the ground and brace it with the staff for an on-the-spot easy chair.

On more adventurous terrain, the walking stick is even more useful. It is a handy balance aid when crossing log bridges. Used as a brace to lean on, it can be a life-and-sprained-ankle-saver on hills, rocky ground, and slippery-bottomed streams. Marked with a measuring scale (zero at the bottom), it is useful for measuring water depth and the size of specimens. And, it's much safer to poke into holes and behind rocks with a staff rather than your hand. A staff is handy in many emergency situations, as well. Two staves make a quick litter or stretcher. One can be a reaching aid for a comrade struggling in the water. It will support you if you fall through ice. You can use it as a crutch if necessary, or make it into a mast for a sail on a canoe. Whenever it saves you the time of having to find and cut a pole, you will appreciate having it handy.

In camp, especially above treeline, the staff can become a makeshift ridgepole or tentpole. It is instantly available for lifting hot pots off the fire or propping up a billy of tea. With a few staves, you can produce a flagpole or a camp gadget. Weighted with rocks, snow, or dirt, it becomes a "deadman" to replace those lost tent pegs.

A staff is fun to play with, too. In winter, slide it along the snow in a game of Snowsnakes. In summer, hurl it like a javelin or build it into a pioneering project. And for sheer relaxation on a rainy day or quiet evening, there is little more pleasant than sitting under a tree or tarp and carving a staff.

My favourite hiking stick was one I started with when I first left home. Carved on top with the head of a bearded woodsman, it recorded my climbs and hikes, went with me on my honeymoon, saw my move into the country, and was hurled into the air at the birth of my first son. Over the years, such a staff becomes very much a part of your life. When our pup chewed it half through, I was sorely tempted to use it on the mutt and, when it broke shortly after, I felt I had lost a friend. Perhaps Sensei Lee and those old Druids were right. A staff is more than just a piece of wood. There is a spirit to it.

## **Making a Staff**

You can make a walking stick from almost any type of wood. Green wood is not suitable and sound conservation practices mean never cutting a living tree. Hardwoods such as ash, oak, and maple are good choices if you can get them. Old Robin Hood would have preferred yew or sweet chestnut. Bamboo is light and strong and, in some areas, diamond willow and saskatoon are popular. Poplar, aspen and birch are okay, although I find them a bit heavy. Conifer saplings are usually straight, light, and strong. Use whatever you can find in your area.

Choose standing deadfall that is straight and free from checks (splits) with the bark firmly attached. When you are ready to strip off the dried bark, a draw stroke works best. It isn't

necessary to take off all the bark: simply smooth the stick at the handgrip.

The length of your walking stick is pretty much a matter of taste. Some like a short, light stick just above waist level. Others choose one about chin height. For balance and utility, I've always preferred a staff above the level of my eyes.

Your staff needs to be thick enough to be stong, thin enough to be light, and comfortable to carry. A pole three to four centimetres diameter at the base and four or five at the butt (thick end) is find for me (I'm on the small side). I carry the butt up because I find the balance better that way, but some prefer butt down and others whittle the butt so that the staff is of uniform diameter for its whole length.

When you smooth the handgrip or if you personalize the staff by carving spirals or rings, take care not to cut too deeply. I've seen many carved staffs break at a crucial time. It's best to keep the carving on the head only for safety around the top.

You can protect the lower end with a metal ferrule to reduce wear. A short piece of iron pipe works well. Carve the bottom of the staff until it is just barely too big to fit the pipe, then heat the ferrule with a torch or boiling water. Using a glove or cloth to handle the hot pipe, drive it firmly over the end of the staff. When it cools, it will grip tightly.

If your staff wasn't properly dried, the ferrule may loosen. Drive in a wedge or glue it on with epoxy cement. More simply, you can glue on a rubber cane or crutch tip. This is definitely preferred if you bring the staff into a hostel or hotel room.

Those who are not into rough and rustic can sand or plane the staff and add a finish of any outdoor varnish or occasionally apply a coat of stain or oil. But raw wood takes on a beautiful sheen from persperation, and you may achieve all the finish you want just by handling your staff kilometre after kilometre.

From the Leader Magazine. Copyright Greybeard, Leader Magazine, May 1989. Taken without permission. Copyright 1989 by Leader Magazine.



## AN EXCERPT FROM, "SCOUTING FOR BOYS."

### The Scout Staff.

The Scout staff is a useful addition to the kit of the Scout. Personally, I have found it an invaluable assistant when traversing mountains or boulder-strewn country and especially in night work in forest or bush. Also, by carving on it various signs recording his achievements, the staff gradually becomes a record as well as a treasured companion to the Scout.

The Scout staff is a strong stick about as high as your nose, marked in feet and inches for measuring.

The staff is useful for all sorts of things, such as making a stretcher, keeping back a crowd, jumping over a ditch, testing the depth of a river, keeping in touch with the rest of your Patrol in the dark. You can help another Scout over a high wall if you hold your staff horizontally between your hands and make a step for him; he can then give you a hand from above. Several staffs can be used for building a light bridge, a hut or a flag staff.

There are many other uses for the staff. In fact, you will soon find that if you don't have your staff with you, you will always be wanting it.

If you get the chance, cut your own staff. But remember to get permission first."

"The Scout staff is useful for a great number of out-door activities." "On steep hill sides the Scout staff will often come in handy for balancing yourself."

"When patrolling at night, Scouts keep closer together than by day, and in very dark places, such as in woods, they keep in touch with each other in single file by catching hold of the end of the next Scout's staff. When working singly in the dark, the Scout staff is most useful for feeling the way and pushing aside branches."

This excerpt, taken without permission, is from "Scouting for Boys," Scouts Edition, 1963.

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## AN EXCERPT FROM, "THE COMPLETE BOOK OF OUTDOOR LORE AND WOODCRAFT."

Clyde Ormond is a respected outdoorsman and writer. He is the author of several outdoors books, including, "Complete Book of Outdoor Lore and Woodcraft." An excerpt on the utility of hiking staffs in treacherous terrain written by Mr. Ormond appears below. Credits follow.

### Treacherous Terrain

"One of the best tools to help in crossing treacherous terrain is a staff about 4 to 6 feet long and 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Light, dry wood, such as a small jack pine cut to suitable length makes an adequate one. A staff becomes a third leg in uncertain footing and often prevents a nasty fall.

With such a staff, you can poke firmly into a stream bottom and, by moving either one leg or the staff at a time (never both together), always have two "legs" to give you balance. You can probe for holes, big rocks, or soft spots in the bottom of muddy streams. If you are with a partner, you can hold the staff between you and support each other.

In crossing the glacial creeks of the Far North, a staff of driftwood or scraggly timber found on the spot often represents the difference between crossing or staying on the same side. Such creeks, even in midsummer, have their source only a few miles away in the high glacial fields above. When you ford them in early morning, the creeks are low and clear, the flow reduced by the cold of the night. After a warm day, they are roaring, muddy demons, three times as deep, and vicious enough to roll rocks of glacial wash the size of buckets down in a seething boil that can often be heard for miles.

A good rule for crossing creeks and streams is to ford them either at the slow end of a deep pool or just before a long stretch of placid water breaks into a riffle. At these two places the water will be shallower and the current slower. Usually this is the widest parts of the stream.

A hiking staff is also useful in desert areas. In some desert country, like portions of Arizona, there is a saying of the oldtimers that "everything that grows either sticks or bites you." This isn't literally true, but poisonous snakes and insects, and the various forms of cacti, keep the hiker constantly on his guard. He must continuously wind in and out among the sharp-tined cacti plants, some of which would penetrate the tough hide of a horse's leg, and be on the watch for harmful reptiles. A staff is useful for breaking an occasional spine out of the way or for defending yourself against desert rattlers... ."

P.P. 4-5, taken without permission, are excerpted from "Complete Book of Outdoor Lore and Woodcraft," by Clyde Ormond. An Outdoor Life Books publication of Harper and Row publishers, New York. Copyright 1964, 1970, 1981 by Clyde Ormond.

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## AN EXCERPT FROM, "THE BACKPACKER'S HANDBOOK."

Many backpackers never consider a walking stick or staff, yet for me this is as essential as a sleeping bag or a pair of boots. It was not always so; I backpacked for a decade and more without using a staff. Then I started using Nordic skis in winter and spring, and I discovered that when I had to carry the skis on my pack, using the poles improved my balance. Initially I began picking up stout sticks to help me climb steep inclines and ford streams. I realized that having a staff with me all the time could be useful when, on a week-long, early summer walk in Iceland, I couldn't find a stick to pick up-Iceland is virtually treeless. Shifting, slippery pebble and gravel beds mixed with large areas of soft, thawing snow and deep rivers made for a difficult walk, which a staff would have eased. Without one, I was constantly off balance, slipping and stumbling along.

The main reason to use a staff is for balance on rough terrain and river crossings. Staff in hand I can negotiate steep scree slopes, boulder fields, and tussocky moorland with confidence, even with the heaviest load. But a staff has even more uses. On level ground and good trails it helps maintain a walking rhythm. When crossing boggy ground or snow, it can probe for hidden rocks and deep spots as well as provide support. It can hold back bushes, barbed wire, stinging plants, and other trail obstructions. Perhaps most useful of all, it saves energy. I am convinced it takes some weight off my feet, particularly when I lean heavily on it as I climb steep slopes. The German mountaineering equipment company, Edelrid, quotes "mountain doctor" Gottfried Neureuther as saying that "each place ski pole takes between 5 and 8 kilograms weight off the lower part of the body, which is equivalent to a total of 13 tons during a one-hour walk on flat ground and an amazing 34 tons total load reduction when walking downhill... ."

My staff also has other, less medical, uses. During trail stops, it turns my pack into a backrest. In camp it acts as a pole that can turn a flysheet into an awning or support a washline or tarp. It can also help retrieve bear-bagged food.

My efforts to convert others to using a staff have been largely unsuccessful. Most people interpret my using one as a sign of aging. On a two-week trek in the Pyrenees, undertaken while this book was being written, I managed to persuade a companion to borrow my staff after he wrenched his shoulder and found walking painful. I pointed out that with the staff in the hand opposite his sore shoulder, he would lower that shoulder and take some of the weight off it... . Mark was impressed enough with the result to buy a cheap ashwood staff when we reached Gavarnie a couple of days later. Because the staff so highly, my other companion, Alain, bought one as well. Both ended the walk convinced of a staff's value... .

P.P. 47-48, taken with permission, are excerpted from "The Backpacker's Handbook," by Chris Townsend. A Ragged mountain Press publication of McGraw-Hill Inc., Camden, ME. Copyright 1993.

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## AN ARTICLE FROM, "THE REGIONAL NEWS."

### "Attack Back When Cougars Cross Your Path."

Those people who survive cougar attacks are often the ones who fight back rather than run.

by **Andrew Duffy.**

*Weekend Edition Staff, Saanich News, Victoria, B.C..*

There's no room for passivity when confronted by a cougar in the woods. Don't run, don't lie down, and don't back down, says Ray Demarchi chief of wildlife conservation for the [British Columbia] provincial government.

"Those people who have survived a cougar attack have usually beaten off the attacker," he says. If that means barring your own teeth or threatening the animal--so be it.

"Pick up something firm, a walking staff, a baseball bat, or a rake handle, something with some weight," he says, adding bear or pepper spray can also be effective.

Demarchi also suggests hiking, walking or doing any outdoor activity with a buddy.

"Unless you feel totally confident then I would suggest you hike with someone or in a group. That allows you to help each other if you get into trouble," he says. "It just makes sense."

That kind of advice may have averted a tragic incident in Port Alberni last weekend. Lloyd William Dayton, a 32-year-old mentally-handicapped man, was found dead, the apparent victim of a cougar attack.

The victim is believed to have been riding his mountain bike in an area favored by local hikers, cyclists, and those walking their dogs. His body was found 100 meters from his bike, leading investigators to conclude he was chased or left the bike before the attack.

Searchers have as yet been unable to track the cougar. It is expected that any cougar found in the area will be the one responsible for the attack, as the animal is very territorial, and will defend its space from other cougars. An autopsy will be performed on the man's body, which will also help determine the animal responsible.

If the cougar attack is confirmed, it will be the first mauling death on the Island since 1992... .

P.8., taken without permission, is excerpted from "The Regional News," an article which appeared Friday, July 14, 1995. Copyright 1995 by the Regional News.

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## "The Scout's Staff," by Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell.

"I have noticed a slackness in one or two centres lately in the matter of Scouts being allowed to parade without their staffs, which for several reasons is regrettable.

The Scout's staff is a distinctive feature about his equipment, and it has moral as well as its practical uses.

The essential point is that this should be realised and appreciated by the Scoutmaster and Commissioner.

I remember when, in pre-war days, I was attending a review of the German cavalry, the Emperor asked me what I thought of their lances. I ventured to express the opinion that they were too long to be effective in war, and that a shorter lance, such as we use for pigsticking in India, would be more practical. He smiled and explained, "That is true---but in peace time we are breeding the spirit in our men. I find that with every inch that you put on to a man's lance, you give him an extra foot of self-esteem."

Well, although the idea is "made in Germany," there is something in it. The Scout's staff had, as a matter of fact, been in the hands of the Scouts before that conversation, and I had already realised its value in the direction of giving smartness to a body of Scouts and a completeness to the individual which distinguished him from other boys and gave him the esprit de corps which is so effective a step to efficiency.

There are historical associations connected with it which give the staff a sentimental value if we look back to the first British Boy Scouts of a Culhulain armed with staffs, the pilgrims or "good turn trampers," with their cockleshells and staffs, the 'prentice bands of London with their cloth yards and their staffs, the merry men of Robin Hood with bows and quarter staffs, down to the present-day mountaineers, war-scouts, and explorers; these all afford a precedent which should have its romance and meaning to the boy if properly applied.

The ceremony of enrolment of the Scout can and should be made a moment of impressive feeling for the boy when he is invested with the hat and staff that mark the Scout, and which equip him for his pilgrimage on that path where he "turns up right and keeps straight on." The officer who fails to use such opportunity is missing one of the most important chances in the Scout life of his boy.

He should expect of the boy a reverence and affection for his staff---such as the swordsman has for his sword, or the hunter for his rifle. Let the Scout individualize his own staff, even to decorate it in his own way if he likes, but let him keep to his staff. To jumble all staffs into a bundle and put them away in a corner after parade, or, worse, to let them get lost and thus excuse their appearance on parade, is to neglect a valuable help to the moral training of the lad.

All this, of course, is quite apart from the actual practical uses of the staff... ."

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## HOW TO OBTAIN A W.W.S.E.B. BROCHURE.

1. To obtain a 4 page Wilderness Walking Staff document, click [here](#) to start your download.
2. Save the file, "wwsebdoc.zip" onto your hard disk.
3. Then use Pkzip to open the file. If you have PkZip installed, type, "pkunzip wwsebdoc.zip" without the quotes at the DOS prompt. (If you don't know how to use Pkzip, click [here](#) and then return to this page.
4. On your hard disk, you now have a copy of wwsebv20.doc. It is a Microsoft Word 7.0 document. You'll need that application or MS Word 6.0 to view the document. If you don't have that program, Microsoft does make available the MS Word Viewer, which you can download from [Winfiles.com](http://Winfiles.com).
5. If you need extra copies for your Scoutmaster, Scout Troop, or local Boy Scout Office, print out as many copies as you need.
6. If you need any help with downloading or obtaining brochures, please do not hesitate to contact the author. Click [wwseb@shaw.ca](mailto:wwseb@shaw.ca) to send e-mail.

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