

Pamlico Sea Base
Blackbeard **S**ailing **eX**pedition
(BSX)
Leader's Guide



Summer 2026

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Introduction

Summer 2025, Pamlico Sea Base will “set sail” once again, by launching its high adventure sailing program, rebranded the “Blackbeard Sailing Expedition”, or BSX for short.

Sailing has always been a core competency of the East Carolina Council’s Sea Base, because the council’s camp is ideally situated in Eastern NC and on some of the most pristine waterways of the Middle Atlantic Coast and inner banks. Pamlico Sea Base and its unique waterfront access offer exceptional scouting high adventure opportunities that are fun, educational, and designed to develop leadership skills while exploring the world renown rivers and coastal regions of North Carolina.

BSX is a six-day inner-banks sailing adventure featuring two cruising sailboats over thirty feet in length, as well as a variety of smaller boats. Crews will ply the same waterways that indigenous peoples lived, hunted, and fished for centuries and the infamous pirate Blackbeard took sanctuary in when he wasn’t out robbing and plundering on the high seas. The sail will take us back in time and allow all to take in the beauty and serenity of this special place on earth. Come sail with us. Aaarrgg!

Fees and Forms

BSX Camper Fees - \$575 per youth and adult. A \$100 registration fee holds the slot. The full \$575 fee is due by May 1, 2026.

Any cancellation after April 1st will be charged nonrefundable cancellation fees. NO exceptions.

Adult Fees - The Youth Protection Policies of the BSA always require 'two-deep' leadership. One adult must be 21 years old while the other may be 18 years old. An adult fee of \$575.00 will apply. PSB will supply a leader for each boat, and one leader for each boat will be required by the customer.

Refund Policy - All refund requests must be on the refund request form: Most of the camp fees are spent before your troop arrives at the camp. Requests received prior to March 1, 2026 - all fees minus \$50 will be refunded. Requests received after March 1, 2026 - all fees minus \$100.00 per camper will be returned.

Refer to the 2026 Camp Boddie Leader's Guide for additional administrative information about the camp and access to any necessary forms, including:

<https://scoutingecc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2025/09/Camp-Boddie-Resource-Guide.pdf>

- Swim Check
- Troop /crew registration form
- Payment and transmittal form
- Troop/crew roster
- Food allergies and dietary restrictions
- Request for refund form
- Scout early release form
- Medical Information Form



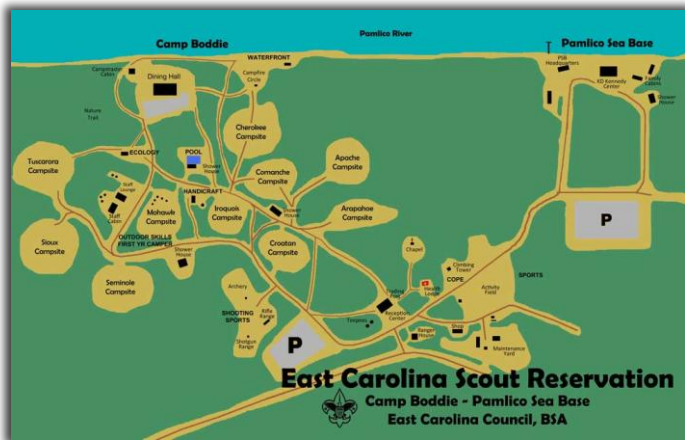
When you Arrive

Check in – Sunday - BSX Crews will check into camp on Sunday at 1:30 PM and complete in-processing at the Hodges Education Center on Camp Boddie. Bring all your required registration paperwork to check in.

Early Arrivals – Saturday If your crew needs to arrive the day before your check in time on Sunday afternoon, please notify the Camp Director beforehand ([Fred Small at Fred.Small@scouting.org](mailto:Fred.Small@scouting.org)). Please understand that staff may not be available, and no program related material will be issued for use. The dining facility will not serve food from Saturday after breakfast until Sunday evening dinner. Shower facilities will be available.

<https://www.scoutingecc.org/camping/pamlico-sea-base/>

Phone: 252.522.1521 Email: camp.director@pamlicoseabasenc.com



Sleeping Quarters Crews will quarter on the two larger boats, anchored off Sea Base, upon arrival to camp on Sunday, weather permitting. On rare occasions, scouts may need to sleep in a tent on shore. Tents will be provided.

Medical Screening Every individual will receive a medical document screening from the Camp Health Officer upon his or her arrival. All documentation should be completed before you arrive. Any individual who is on medication will need

to notify the Health Officer at this time.



Swim Test Every individual must qualify as a swimmer to participate in a BSX Trek. You can speed up your Sunday to the benefit of everyone - by having your swim tests done at another location before you arrive at Sea Base. Please bring documentation. The swim test involves jumping into water over your head feet first, swimming 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl (no dogpaddle), 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke, and finish by treading water for one minute.

A BSA Lifeguard, Aquatics Director, American Red Cross Lifeguard, or an American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor can administer a swim test. A copy of this individual's certification card must be turned into Sea Base with their signature on the Unit Roster. If your group needs to be tested at Sea Base, every youth and adult participant will be given a swim test by a Camp Boddie aquatics staff member in the pool at Camp Boddie after your medical checks are complete. For more information on the BSA swim test requirements and administering the test, go to <https://scoutsmarts.com/bsa-swim-test-guide/>

BSA Safe Swim Defense To ensure a safe swim, you should follow Scouting's Safe Swim Defense plan which is aimed at creating a safe swimming environment. The plan has eight points intended to anticipate, prevent, mitigate, and respond to potential aquatic emergencies. It is recommended that all crews complete the safe swim defense course at <https://my.scouting.org/>

BSA Safety Afloat Swimming, kayaking, sailing, jet skiing, or any aquatic activity will have potential hazards, even for advanced participants. Lives can be saved with proper supervision and training; lives can be and have been lost by not following Safety Afloat practices. Safety Afloat training is designed for all authorized boating activities. Adult leaders supervising those activities must have completed their Safety Afloat training within the previous two years. Training can be completed at <https://my.scouting.org/>

Health and Medical Records

Each scout must bring an annual health and medical record (SA document 680-001 ABC) completed within the past twelve (12) months by his or her family doctor. Adult leaders need to collect and review each participant's medical record prior to arriving at camp to be familiar with any health restrictions.

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The medical records will be turned in at Sea Base and reviewed by the camp's doctor during check-in. A copy will be carried on the trek with the staff guide. Individuals with certain health restrictions such as severe allergic reactions, special dietary needs or any other issues that directly affect trek planning will be provided to the PSB staff. More at: [Annual Health and Medical Record | Scouting America](#)

Mental and Physical Preparedness

Mental Preparedness:

A typical day of sailing can range from fun and relaxing too physically and mentally demanding. While North Carolina typically has beautiful weather during the summer, and your guide will adjust routes to changing weather conditions, there are often hours or days that may see worsening weather. As we say in Eastern NC, *"If you don't like the weather now, just wait a few minutes."* Wind and weather conditions constantly change. Your guide will change route whenever possible to make your days more enjoyable but sometimes there is no other option. It is important that participants prepare themselves for the mental and physical strain that comes with sailing long days, exposed to the sun, salt and weather.

Physical Considerations:

Although sailing larger vessels does not require a lot of endurance, exposure and fatigue associated with long sailing days, tending your watch at the helm, and occasional stops to swim at local beaches can take a toll on the body. Getting on and off a sailboat; especially into a dingy while anchored; and lugging equipment to and from the shoreline can be taxing. Teamwork is the key to success. Crew members will be assigned tasks shared among the whole crew, including camp setup and teardown, cooking, and tasks required to safely sail the boat. *Heave-Ho mate!*

Route Planning

Discussing the Options with your Group:

When planning your trip, your group will discuss options so that you arrive at Pamlico Sea Base with the same goal. Most groups are looking for one of two experiences; either a relaxing experience with time to fish, swim and play on the beach, tour historic quaint villages, or a challenging hard pounding sailing adventure, covering lots of distance. If your group is looking for a challenge, it is important that you bring scouts or venturers that are physically and mentally mature. Does your group want a physically and mentally challenging sailing adventure or a relaxing week on the water?

- Does your group hope to receive the 50 Miler Award – requires less motoring, more sailing.
- What kinds of experiences are important to your group?
- What level of interest does your group have in the history or environment of the area?

Locations and Activities The adjacent map shows the locations of potential campsites and stops that are achievable in five days on the water. The section of the inner- and outer banks where you sail, and camp are the same waters that the notorious Blackbeard (Edward Teach); an English pirate; operated around the eastern coast of Britain's North American colonies (including NC) in the early 1700s. He ran *Queen Anne's Revenge* aground on a sandbar near Beaufort inlet, North Carolina. He settled for a brief time in Bath, North Carolina, also known as Bath Town, where

he accepted a royal pardon. However, he was soon back at committing terror on the high seas. The Governor arranged for a party of soldiers and sailors to capture him. On 22 November 1718 following a ferocious battle, Blackbeard and several of his crew were killed by a small force of sailors. A favorite destination is the NC Maritime Museum in Beaufort, where they tell the Blackbeard story.

<https://ncmaritimemuseumbeaufort.com/>

While the coastlines we sail along and camp on are along remote stretches of shoreline; much of it uninhabited; there are a variety of activities to entertain your crew once you arrive at your campsite each day. The shallow waters of the rivers and sounds provide areas in which to go

swimming and fishing. A deck of cards will entertain your group should we encounter severe weather.



Bath, NC



Cape Lookout - Excurion



Small Boat Sailing - PSB

The Planning Process Due to the constantly changing conditions of the weather, your trip plan will not be finalized until you arrive and adjusted under way based on conditions. Your guide will sit down with your group to discuss the weather forecast for the week. The weather will be the major controlling factor during your trek. The guide will design your trip based on your group's interests and the weather. The physical safety of your group is paramount. Your group must be prepared for weather conditions that eliminate certain destinations.

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Staying Flexible

Out on the water, we are at the mercy of nature. Your guide will design a route for your group when you arrive based on what is important to your group and the weather forecast for the week. You may not be able to visit certain locations and may see others you had not planned to. Please know that your itinerary may change mid-trip due to changing weather conditions. Staying flexible, adapting to adversity, and staying positive will help your group deal with trip changes in more constructive ways. An easy, predictable trip would not be an adventure.

Some favorite stops include:

1. "Little Washington" – Located at the mouth of the Pamlico-Tar, this county seat is choke-full of shops and restaurants. Dropping anchors in their harbors afford some popular gunk-hole swimming, dingy rides to the waterfront, ice cream, and a visit to the NC Estuarian.

2. Goose Creek State Park – Located on the Pamlico River across from Sea Base, Goose Creek State Park offers a broad range of coastal experiences, from wetlands along the Pamlico River to a cypress swamp viewed from a long boardwalk. Remnants of boat piers, a trackless railroad bed, and burnt remains of tar kilns provide a glimpse of the heyday of the lumber industry that was once the center of life in the area.

3. Historic Bath – Bath is often counted as North Carolina's first capital, as it was designated in 1712. Bath was one of the towns impacted by the Tuscarora War in 1711-15 and later served as one of many bases for notorious pirate Blackbeard.

4. Belhaven - This historic waterfront town located on the north shore of the Pungo River has a few shops and excellent overnight docks for ideal visits. This is a possible overnight stop on the trek.

5. Cambell Creek - This remote creek is where local legend has it that Blackbeard the pirate would lay up his ship to perform maintenance... "*Scrape ye barnacles Matie*". Cambell's Creek is an ideal location to enjoy an evening campfire, do some fishing or cast netting.

6. Aurora – Located on the South Creek as you sail past Indian Island on the Pamlico River, Aurora was incorporated in 1872 and is the home of the Fossil Museum. The site was originally called "Betty Town" and was founded on the location of an Pomouik Indian village. This is a possible overnight location on the trek, as the waters provide better protection from storms.

8. Oriental – The "Sailing Capital of North Carolina". This tiny harbor is located on the Neuse River and welcomes cruisers wending their way around the Inner Banks of North Carolina, those transiting the Intracoastal Waterway, and some who have voyaged here from all over the world. The town offers great



seafood dining, small gift shops, and plenty of ice cream for weary crews who may be suffering from scurvy.

Route Basics - Wind Direction:

The wind is usually from the Southwest in the summer. Due to the volatile atmosphere during the summer, thunderstorms form in the early to midafternoon during the hottest part of the day. To avoid being on the water during storms, we get on the water early so that we arrive at our destination by early afternoon to afford the crew an opportunity to prepare for dinner and explore the surrounding area.

Sailing Orientation

We recommend crew members work to be awarded the BSA Sailing merit badge prior to arrival for the BSX Trek. http://pamlicoseabasenc.com/library/merit_badges/Small-BoatSailing.pdf



On Sunday and Monday, the crew members will have an opportunity to perfect their sailing skills on the Pamlico River on our fleet of smaller sail craft. PSB staff members will assist with the orientation and instruction. This more intense “hands-on-time” prepares the scouts for the most leisurely “shared responsibilities” reality of crewing the larger boats.

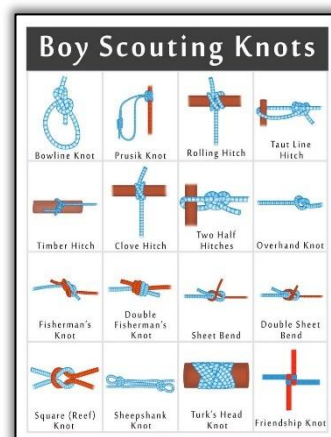
To know or Knot to know?

Knot - noun

- a fastening made by tying a piece of string, rope, or something similar.

There are seven important sailing knots you need to know or learn. If you are not comfortable with knots, practice as a troop or ship prior to arriving at camp. BSX crews will routinely practice these knots on the Cruise.

1. **Bowline** – Perhaps the single most important knot you will ever use. It puts a strong loop at the end of a line. It can be used for anything with a little creativity.
2. **Cleat Hitch** – how we tie boats to the dock using a cleat.
3. **Clove Hitch** – how we tie a boat to the dock using a piling.
4. **Figure Eight** – used to tie a ‘stopper’ in the end of a line.
5. **Two Half Hitches** – also used to tie a boat at the dock, or a fender to the boat.
6. **Square Knot (reef knot)** – for joining two lines of the same diameter.
7. **Sheet Bend** – for joining two lines of a different diameter.



About our Boats - “Virginia Lee” & “Bounty”

Our first Trek sailboat is a council-owned Morgan sloop-rigged sailing vessel that is crewed and cared for year-round by the crew of Sea Scout Ship 1117. She is approximately 34' long, built in 1966 and draws 5-



foot, 5-inches of water with her centerboard down. Her beam is 9-feet, 9-inches, a roomy boat for her length. She features a shallow, full keel with a swinging centerboard that reduces draft to 3-feet, 6-inches, permitting access to some prime gunkholing waters on the inner- and outer bank coasts.

Our other sailboat is an Ingrid 38 ketch, the “Bounty”, on loan for the BSX program. Designed from Norwegian rescue boats, this is a more conservative sailboat. With 38' on-deck length, and an 11' beam, she provides her crew with plenty of living space. Her ketch rig allows for many adjustments for differing wind conditions. During the summer evenings, sleeping on the deck is a special treat as the temperatures can be described as almost chilly. Bring your sleeping pads, but with luck, you'll be able to sleep on the 5" thick cushions available from below. When anchoring for the night the two boats are preferable to raft up. This allows for better meal preparation and a platform for good times. The rafting up process is also a great opportunity to utilize seamanship skills. The next morning, the captains like to see the crews trade boats so that everyone gets experience on the two different boats.



Bounty Under Way



Virginia Lee Under Way

Other Sailboat Inventory

Pamlico Sea Base maintains a fleet of over thirty smaller sailboats, ideal for learning the basics of small boats and crew sailing before departing on the Trek. Our inventory includes:

- 1 - O'Day 222 - Cabin Boat
- 1 - Laguna 16' - Cabin Boat
- 4 – Flying J 420 Sailing Dingy
- 25 – Sunfish/Aquafin Day Sailer
- 1 – Hobie

Life on Board

Crew Quarters:

Crew members will be staying on their assigned vessels throughout the Cruise. Equipment and personal belongings will be stowed in the ship cabins. Sleeping arrangements, finalized upon arrival, will involve



sleeping in the ship cabins - as well as on deck (where it is often cooler in July). Therefore, a sleeping pad is highly recommended. Female adults and female youth will be assigned to appropriate quarters. YPT guidelines will be followed. There are two or more adult Scouters assigned to each boat. Remember, cruising on boats of this size can be very “cozy,” especially for

sleeping and during rainy weather. You are in ‘close quarters’ with everyone - like tent camping, except you are inside the “tent” all day and night on a boat. It is especially important that all crew members be comfortable living near others for extended periods of time, and practice courtesy and patience with crewmates. If you have claustrophobia, you should strongly reconsider being on a smaller vessel packed with people, equipment, and supplies for 5 days.

Galley Plan:

All on-board food items will be ordered through and provided by the Camp Boddie dining facility. Each boat crew will be given provisions and be responsible for the preparation of their meals. Breakfast and lunch will be likely be eaten underway several days. The provisions will include plenty of snacks for hungry Scouts – you do not need to bring any food. A menu will be provided prior to the cruise.

Be sure to notify us of any food allergies on the appropriate forms. Bowls, cups, eating utensils and cooking equipment are provided on each boat. All crew will share in the cooking and cleaning duties on



their respective boats. It is recommended each crew member brings somewhere between \$50-100 of 'pocket money' (cash, debit, or credit card) for other expenses. Note that ATM machines can be extremely hard to find in the remote areas where we cruise. We plan to eat at least one meal as a group at a restaurant. Depending on how the weather affects our route, this pocket money can be used for onshore restaurant meals, ice cream shops, and any souvenirs you purchase in ports-of-call. Scouts like to buy a couple of souvenirs at the interesting places we visit.

Meal Planning:

After you submit your application, we will gather allergy information and dietary restrictions from each participant to ensure our grub options are suited to everyone on the voyage. Each meal on board will be provided, meaning no scouts will be responsible for bringing their own food. There will be one, possibly two, meals at local restaurants – one of the reasons you need to bring some spending money. Please see the information below to get an overview of our food provisions. Note that what we can prepare for meals is often influenced by the weather. VBOs are constantly adjusting our cruise to maximize the fun ... while maintaining a safe environment for the crew. Therefore, for some meals, cooking while underway may be suspended due to weather. We have a large stock of tasty items that do not require cooking. Each crew manages their food supply and prepares their meals as a crew, rotating cooking, and cleanup responsibilities throughout the cruise. A well-fed crew is a happy crew! Breakfast: A typical breakfast underway may include sausage, eggs, cheese, English muffins, pancakes with syrup, Jelly on Toast, Bagels, and oatmeal in rotation. Lunch: Lunch is often eaten while underway and may include things like Wraps with Deli meat, Chips, Jerky, Pepperoni, Crackers, Cheese, Nutrition Bars, PB&J sandwiches, Fruit, etc. Simple but nutritious and easy while under way. Dinner: This is where scouts get creative. Our grub may include meals like: • Meat, Veggies, and Noodles - a good staple for any hungry crew • Taco Casserole - chicken or beef with chips, guacamole, salsa, etc. • Chicken Fried Rice with vegetable stir fry • Colonial Burgers - what every settler loves • Quarterdeck Quesadillas with chicken or beef, and all the fixings. Be sure to note any food allergies or dietary restrictions on the Health Forms.

Gear advice from BSX Captains!

Our gear list has been refined over the years to include equipment that will keep you as comfortable as possible during your trip. The gear list you will find on the following page is the long version- containing not just what you need but why you need it and wish you had it if you do not bring it.

Below are some general points to keep in mind as you pack. The faster your clothing dries, the happier you will be. North Carolina is a tropical zone during the summer. Daily temperatures can reach one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. You will be traveling over open water with elevated levels of glare from the sun. Nights are typically in the 70's and humid. Your body will be exposed to harsh elements including salt, sand, wind, and elevated levels of UV.

Due to the nature of sailing in this environment, you will be somewhere between damp, and soaking wet every day. Smaller and Lighter are better. Although the sailboat can hold heavier and bulkier items than a backpack, it does not mean you should pack it that way. You will pack and unpack your personal gear at least twice a day, sometimes more. Additionally, remember that your personal gear needs to fit in with the provided dry bags. Any items you bring that do not fit in those bags might get wet.

Avoid being a fashionista. We know- long sleeves, quick dry, button up shirts look like what your grandparents wear. We know you want to look cool. You will wish you had that long sleeve button up

we coached you about. Choose clothing that is comfortable- pants you can sit in for extended periods of time, shirts that are loose and give you freedom to move. Follow our guidelines as closely as possible.

A bag of bags - Dry bags are waterproof but sometimes water still gets in- especially if the dingy capsizes or a bag gets dropped in the drink. Bring zip-lock bags in a variety of sizes. They will help you organize your stuff within the dry bags and help keep water out. Baby powder is magic!!! Keep reading to find out why.

Group and Personal Equipment / Gear:

Like backpacking, space is at a premium. Whenever possible bring small, packable items.

Equipment Provided by Pamlico Sea Base

- ☐ Dry Bags
- ☐ Personal Flotation Device w/safety whistle and light beacon
- ☐ Stoves
- ☐ Cooking equipment, utensils, coolers
- ☐ Group water storage containers
- ☐ Sun/Rain tarp
- ☐ Cast nets and limited fishing poles
- ☐ First Aid Kits
- ☐ Maps, compass, and GPS
- ☐ Safety equipment – whistle, -throw line, signaling mirror, signaling-devices, tow line.
- ☐ Communications - VHF radio, Cell phone

Fun Stuff

- ☐ Your group must have North Carolina fishing licenses to fish or collect clams.
- ☐ Boogie Board, Skim Board, Bocci Ball, games

Personal gear to bring

- ☐ **Medical and release forms, medications-** Forms and medications will be maintained by an adult leader during the TREK.
- ☐ **Cell Phones-** Although encouraged to have for safety purposes, the adult leaders and SPL will determine the policy to secure and limit the amount of use the scouts will have to their electronic device during the TREK. Each cell phone should be in a waterproof container or bag.
- ☐ **Water shoes or sandals** - Your feet will be wet most of the day. Shoes will protect your feet from razor sharp oyster shells. Your shoes should be comfortable and not give you blisters. CROCS are NOT good water shoes but may substitute for landlubber wear.

___ **Pair of shoes to stay dry** - You will wear these if you go exploring in the villages. Sometimes it is also nice to have a pair of dry shoes to put on.

___ **Full brimmed hat** - You will be exposed to the sun on open water with little sun protection. A hat with a full wide brim protects your eyes and face from the sun. It should float and have a strap to go under your chin.

___ **Rain Jacket** - Sometimes it rains or storms. It can get chilly when it does. Keep in mind you may not be able to access it when the rain starts, or you may already be wet from the spray.

___ **3 Pairs Underwear** - Whatever you bring, it should dry quickly and not bind. It is also nice to bring a pair to keep dry and clean to wear in your tent at night.

___ **Bandana** - Bandanas keep sweat out of your eyes, and when wet it provides relief from heat. Over the mouth and nose, they keep out swarming bugs.

___ **Lightweight sleeping bag** - Nights below 70 degrees are rare. Your bag should be rated for summer and packed down small. Many people bring a military poncho liner or other lightweight blankets.

___ **Sleeping pad** – if you sleep topside, you will still want a pad to sleep on.

___ **Small Pillow** - SMALL. It should be less than half the size of your sleeping bag. Storage is a premium.

___ **High SPF Sunscreen** - Waterproof, sweat-proof with zinc. Tear free so you can put it on your forehead, and it will not sting your eyes. Consider consolidating requirements for the troop to avoid bringing too much for the TREK.

___ **Polarized sunglasses with chord** - You will be on water with elevated levels of glare for substantial portions of the day. A cord will keep them on your head while you sail.

___ **Headlamp** - not a flashlight. You may need it to scurry around the ship at, hands free.

___ **Insect Repellant** - Sometimes bugs are not bad, sometimes they are.

___ **2 Large drinking bottles** - 1 liter each. They should have wide mouths and sturdy lids. You will drink around a gallon of water every day. If you only have one water bottle, or two small bottles, you will get dehydrated. A cheap alternative is liter-size Gatorade bottles. Mark them with your name.

___ **Lip Balm with SPF** - Sunburned lips are just as miserable as sunburned skin. Burned lips swell, crack, and bleed.

___ ***BABY POWDER*** Baby powder is MAGIC. Bring a travel-size bottle. It will get all the salt and sand off your skin and leave you feeling cool and refreshed. You bathe in it at the end of the day. You will use it when you get in your tent to get the sand off your feet and body.

___ **Gold Bond** - This one is for the guys. You will want to bring Gold Bond and baby powder. Bathing in Gold Bond isn't pleasant, and baby powder just does not cut it when you have chaffing problems.



___ **A&D ointment/Diaper Rash Cream** - Your skin will be damp or wet during the day. Baby powder and Gold Bond do not work on wet skin.

___ **Small Knife**- Knives are always useful on the water. You may need yours to slice food or to cut rope.

___ **Toothbrush + Toothpaste**- Hygiene is important, especially on under sail.

___ **Small Towel**- You may find a towel useful when you reach the campsite or after a shower at a public facility. Make sure it is very compact and dries quickly.

