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Caleb Biddulph wears his achievements — all 137 of them — with pride.

The Frisco teen is among a select group who has earned every merit badge available from the Boy Scouts of America. He has merit badges for first aid, cooking and communication. Others cover hiking, swimming, sailing and camping. There's also fingerprinting, shotgun shooting, truck transportation, archery, archaeology, chemistry, plumbing and wood carving.

Name a badge, and he has it. Scout's honor.

His first? Electricity. His last? American business. Among the most difficult? Fly fishing — separate, of course, from the fishing merit badge.

"I had to catch a fish," said the teen, who believes it took two years and many attempts before he found success this past summer while vacationing in Washington.

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Caleb Biddulph of Frisco has earned all available merit badges offered through the Boy Scouts of America. (Nathan Hunsinger/Staff Photographer)

The Boy Scouts currently offer 136 merit badges. Caleb earned the computer merit badge before it was discontinued in 2014. He then earned its replacement, the digital technology badge, giving him an extra one.

A Scouting tradition

Joining the Boy Scouts was a given for Caleb, who comes from a family of Scouts. Both his grandfathers were Eagle Scouts. So was his dad. All six uncles, too.

Ted Biddulph earned 44 merit badges in his Boy Scout days — about a third as many as Caleb did. "I've been encouraging him the whole way," the proud dad said.

Caleb started out in Cub Scouts. He became a Boy Scout with Troop 216 in Frisco during a camp out when he was 10.

By age 12, he earned his Eagle Scout rank, the highest advancement rank in Scouting. Eagle Scouts must have at least 21 merit badges and complete a service project. Caleb's project involved designing and constructing boxes, ramps and stairs for the cat room at the nonprofit SPCA of Texas clinic in McKinney.



In 2013, Caleb became an Eagle Scout after completing a project in the cat room at the SPCA of Texas in McKinney.

According to Irving-based Boy Scouts of America, more than 2.3 million of its members have become Eagle Scouts since the award was first presented in 1912. The organization doesn't track Boy Scouts who earn all its merit badges, though.

A private website called meritbadgeknot.com estimates fewer than 18 Scouts per year complete all available merit badges. The site, launched by an Eagle Scout who also earned all available badges, has confirmed 321 Scouts who have achieved that honor. Several are from North Texas.

Caleb completed his final merit badge just after turning 16 this month and will receive his last two badges at a ceremony in January.



"It is certainly an extremely rare achievement, and we congratulate this young man on this amazing accomplishment in Scouting," the national group said by email.

'Quite a commitment'

Caleb said he initially set out to earn 100 — a nice, round number. But once he completed the requirements for those badges, there weren't many left, so he decided to go for it.

"It's quite a commitment," the sophomore at Frisco's Reedy High School said.

Each badge comes with a story. There was the time he took care of his friend's pet lizard and had to feed it live crickets as part of the reptile and amphibian study badge. The time he and his dad hit the course together to complete his golf badge.

The avid cellist in his school orchestra learned to play the bugle for one badge. He also joined his school's cross country and track team for another.

He even became certified in scuba diving.

"It was kind of fun and a little scary because you're under 20 feet of water," he said.

The goal, according to the national group, is to give Scouts experiences that they can't get anywhere else and help them grow into good, strong citizens.

Scott Riegler of Frisco, the Scoutmaster for Troop 216, has watched Caleb grow over the years. While all Scouts put in a lot of work to earn their badges, Caleb was extremely driven, he said.

"He gets in there, and he goes and he goes and he goes," said Riegler, adding that Caleb is the only Scout he's ever known to complete every merit badge. "He's a great kid, and he's going to go far in life."

Although Caleb's Scouting days are winding down, he expects he'll still go on camp outs. And he hopes one day to continue the family tradition with a son of his own in Boy Scouts and also become a Scout leader.

"It's pretty rewarding," Caleb said of Scouting. "The values that it teaches are good, too."



Caleb earned a certification in scuba diving for one of his merit badges. (Biddulph family)



Fly fishing was one of the most difficult merit badges to earn, according to Caleb, who caught this fish while on summer vacation in Washington. (Biddulph family)



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