



Atlantian Royal Forestry Guild Charter

Article I – Purpose

The Royal Forestry Guild is a camping and outdoor living guild within the Kingdom of Atlantia in the SCA which seeks to research, and educate others about no trace camping, protecting the green spaces, self-reliance, wood craft, camp craft, bush craft, overland travel, inland water travel, outdoor cooking, survival, and other outdoor and primitive skills all in period fashion. It is the purpose of guild to research, recreate, educate and demonstrate historical tools, methods, equipment and techniques for living, camping, traveling and cooking, in the outdoors or in wilderness locations.

Article II – Membership

As a guild within the SCA, membership is open to all who reside in the Kingdom of Atlantia and have a desire to learn the skills of the forest. Applications will be forwarded to the Warden of the Forests of Atlantia for processing. Once the application has been received, the new member will begin a 90 day probationary period during which the guild can observe the new members. Additionally, the new member will decide whether to continue pursuing membership in the guild.

Independent Foresters- After the probationary period applicants are given the option to swear the forester's oath. This is a promise to obey the laws of the Kingdom and the SCA, and to practice no trace camping and to help others to do the same. It is not required that members swear this oath however. Some members choose not to make this commitment and are known as "Independent Foresters". They are much the same as sworn members but do not involve themselves in the guild's business and are not interested in being promoted through the ranks.

Affiliates - Affiliate members are members who live outside the Kingdom of Atlantia. As Affiliate members cannot swear loyalty to the Crown of Atlantia, they cannot be promoted under the existing Charter but are considered valuable members who are welcomed as brothers and sisters. They have the right to attend campouts and events, share skills, be privy to online communications, and attend any classes or skill shares presented by the Atlantian Royal Forestry Guild. The Atlantian Royal Forestry Guild will also assist out of kingdom members to establish their own chartered groups under their respective crowns with the mutual goal of spreading the Royal Forestry Guilds society-wide.

Junior Foresters - Junior Foresters are members who are between the ages of 12-17. A parent or legal guardian must be a member of the guild as well and takes responsibility and oversight for the Junior Forester. Junior foresters are not subject to a probationary period as their parent or legal guardian is already a member of the guild. They are considered a “Royal Junior Forester” and will have the option to also take the Junior Foresters Promise. In some exceptions, the Junior Forester may be considered for promotion into Under Forester after their 16th but before their 18th birthday if they demonstrate advanced forestry skills and knowledge to the guild officers.

Novice- A new member who have passed the probationary period may swear the oath and become a “Royal Novice Forester”, ranked novice within the guild. This rank is not an indication of skill, just an indication of a new member within the guild. At this point, other guild members will observe the skills of the new member and recommend to the officers of the guild that the novice is ready for the next level. Members ranked novice and above are addressed as Brother/Sister <NAME> during guild activities

Under Forester- This is the apprentice level within the guild. Those considered for Underforester rank have completed the probationary period and made the decision to continue developing their forester knowledge. They must have an attempt at period forester garb for their time period. The skills needed to be considered for Underforester rank are:

- Proven service to the guild or wild spaces. Guild members seeking to fulfill this requirement are advised to communicate their plans with an officer to determine if the activity they have in mind is appropriate and what sort of documentation would be necessary. Examples of service include, but are not limited to:
 - Reporting on a demonstration at an event or writing an article presenting original research (citing at least 3 appropriate sources) for the guild newsletter, Hurst and Horn

- Teaching a class on a topic related to guild activities/interests
- Organizing unofficial gatherings of forester-folk (garb hikes, fire-making/cooking days, etc.)
- Organizing/participating in a litter clean-up effort
- Participating in organized/approved efforts to remove invasive species from public lands or remove invasive and/or plant native species on lands commonly used by the Guild, such as Elchenburgh Castle Farm (as service to the guild and the Kingdom as a whole).
- Demonstrated ability to light a fire using modern methods (matches or lighter)
- Agreement to begin research and study on a masterwork project to be submitted to the Guild at the point the member is considered for Master Forester rank. The exact nature of the work does not need to be decided at this point.

These skills will be demonstrated to officers of the guild and, if successful, the officer will notify the Warden. The Warden will give the member the option at the next Guild meeting/gathering to accept promotion to Underforester. All members of the guild ranked Under Forester or above are allowed to vote on guild business

Forester- The mid-rank of the Guild is the Forester. Requirements for attaining Forester rank are:

- Possess a complete set of Forester clothing consisting of a green tunic/cote, hood **or** cloak; remaining clothing appropriate to their persona in woodland colors (shades of green, brown, or gray); proper period footwear; additional accoutrements for a Forester of their time and place. Fabrics for your foresters set must be natural (cotton, leather, linen, wool, etc.). Winter garb in shades of greys, browns and whites is encouraged as well but not mandatory.
- Demonstrate the ability to start a fire without the use of modern means
- Cook a meal for a group (minimum of 4 people) over a campfire
- Demonstrate knowledge of forest law and the role of foresters in period

Once the requirements are demonstrated to an officer of the guild, the member will be considered for promotion to Forester. Foresters are expected to continue to improve their own outdoor skills as well as teach others. They are expected to mentor newer members and coach others in the outdoor skills, proper no trace camping, and woodland safety. Most officers of the guild are expected to be of Forester rank.

Master Forester- Master Foresters have proven their service to the guild and will have been an active member of the guild for 5 years. In addition to a history of service to the SCA and the Guild, candidates for Master Forester will have to:

- Own and maintain a highly accurate set of period Forester clothing and gear
- Have a thorough understanding about forest law and the roles and responsibilities of medieval foresters and other officers of the forest court.
- Demonstrate a high level of proficiency in a wide array of outdoor skills such as, but not limited to: shelter building, fire starting, foraging, survival, wilderness navigation, campfire cooking, hunting, leatherwork, tracking and evasion, land and water travel, flora and fauna, map-less orienteering, cordage, knots, plant dying, container making or weaving (examples include a gourd or leather water carrier or a woven basket), bone or stone tool making, felting, tanning, bow and arrow making, etc. This list is by no means exhaustive and merely serves to give examples of forestry related skills. Nor must a Master Forester demonstrate every skill on this list, but they must display a wide range.
- Teach a minimum of one class a year in an outdoor skill
- Complete a masterwork; a detailed arts and sciences project on one or more aspects of the forester skills and roles. The masterwork is a long term project the member has been working on and when a member feels that their Masterwork is completed they may inform the guild officers and present it to them.

Master Foresters are expected to continue their service to the SCA and the guild, setting the example for others in and out of the guild to follow. They are expected to mentor junior members and offer advice to officers when needed. If they are not holding the office, they will be the wise advisor. They will continue to improve their skills and dedicate themselves to the education of others.

Houses or The High orders of Merit

Within the Kingdom of Atlantia Royal Forestry Guild are three houses that only accept members from within the guild. They are therefore extremely exclusive. Acceptance is not guaranteed, but for those that work hard, and have a great enthusiasm for the guild, one of the three may be attractive. They are only houses for SCA purposes however, and so do not have specific colours, heraldry or structure. You may wonder why a guild needs such houses. Well it does not, but it is hoped that they provide a goal for those that strive for excellence to work towards and assist members with all interests in showcasing their talents as a guild member. The Houses are really orders of high merit for guild members. As the Kingdom of Atlantia rules concerning guilds allow for the giving of awards not sanctioned by the Kingdom of Atlantia college of Heralds the “Orders” are similar to general SCA awards in general, with the exception that they may be applied for by the individual. Because the patron saints of foresters, forest workers, and hunting were selected to be the order namesakes for three distinct groups, the three groups are called; The Woodwards, The Regarders, and The Rangers respectively.

While these groups are bound by the guild constitution they may run largely as they see fit, electing their own leadership, and developing their own customs. The leaders of the groups are called; *Chief Ranger*; *Lady/Lord Regarder*, and *Master/Mistress Woodward* respectively. Selection of new members is done annually through an application process in all cases. Selection of new members is done annually through an application process in all cases. Applicants may apply after achieving the rank of Forester or higher.

Members may belong to more than one Foresters “house”, though it requires immense time and dedication on their part. Members cannot request that their Masterwork or Trials count towards more than one house. House Brothers and Sisters still look to the High Warden of the Forests of Atlantia for leadership, as she or he ultimately commands the houses of the guild. The Houses are considered to be equal in status within the guild and report their activities to the High Warden of the Forests of Atlantia quarterly. The leadership of the three houses collectively is referred to unofficially as the “Triumvirate” but they do not wield any power, they simply report the houses various activities to the Warden.

The Rangers - The Order of St. Hubert is for those more interested in the Arts and Sciences of the outdoors and living in it, than in courts and business meetings. The Rangers are the elite members of the Royal Forestry Guild but are not considered to be a separate rank. They are instead members who enjoy medieval camping, primitive skills and outdoor activities, outside of the usual SCA camping events and who organize trips and expeditions other than SCA camping events. Would be Rangers are tested in a special Ranger Trial where they must be able to conduct themselves upon a journey over land or by inland waterway in period fashion without use of modern items and will face several trials by fire, flood and foes. If successful they are given the opportunity to be accepted as Royal Rangers after a lengthy time of reflection. Rangers wear a badge of arrows bound by a belt and have demanding garb and gear standards always dressing as and identifying as a Forester. Their garb and gear is often not pretty but it is tested, and works. They operate as a closely knit house under SCA rules and swear a separate oath. Rangers stubbornly resist all attempts at further organization and often adapt as required to the situation.

The Regarders - The Order of St. Eustace or the Regarders are members who chiefly identify their persona as a forester and regularly practice the SCA martial arts while dressed as and portraying a forester. Regarders wear a crown badge to identify themselves and must always dress as a forester and have impeccably high standards as such. They must have a developed Forester persona and maintain it. Also they must be skilled at, and excel in traditional SCA martial activities, but need not be officially recognized at it. If all Royal Forestry Guild conditions are met, and the member is an enthusiastic supporter of the guild on the field at archery, armoured combat, fencing, or thrown weapons, then they are eligible to apply for membership by the Regarders. Unofficially, anyone that achieves squire status or a silver or gold ranking in a martial pursuit who is first and foremost a Forester will be eligible to apply for membership, but this is not a rule. All Regarders undergo a martial challenge in their discipline

where they are tested in a special Regarder Trial where they face adversity, inclemency and vicissitude.

The Woodwards - The Order of St. John Gaulbert or the Woodwards are members who chiefly identify as a forester and dress as such with impeccable standards for both garb and persona. Above all else Woodwards excel at service and traditional arts and sciences. They are enthusiastic promoters of the guild through their work and are instrumental in teaching and assisting others. Woodwards enjoy more relaxed house rules being non-martial and are typically the artisans and organizers that keep the guild running. Woodwards apply to be members after years of excellent service or the quality of guild members individual Masterwork. Woodwards wear a Fede Broach to identify themselves. Typically a member will apply for membership as a Woodward about the time they present their Masterwork to the guild. A member may also apply after organizing a regional guild chapter or after a number of official SCA Forester events are autocrated by them. The Woodward Trial is often more individual than the other orders and less formally structured. All Woodward applicants however face the trials of helping, aiding and assisting their guild brothers and sisters.

Article III – Officers

There are several officers which work on the managing and administration of the guild. Offices will be held by sworn members (Royal Foresters), most of the time those of Under Forester rank. Offices requiring the rank of Forester or Master Forester may be held by an Under Forester if no Forester or Master Forester is available. During the time an Under Forester holds an office requiring Foresters rank they will be considered to be equal in rank to Foresters, though will not wear the Forester badge of rank. Officers serve for a period of two years and may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Officers may not hold more than one position simultaneously at any given level (High or Regional Court), though may hold a single position in the High and Regional Court if necessary, though it is strongly discouraged.

The High Court of the Forest of Atlantia

High Warden of the Forests of Atlantia: This is the primary officer of the guild. The Warden is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the guild and all reporting to the Kingdom on guild activities. The Warden is responsible for the promotion of members of the guild, which may be done at any meeting the Warden is attending. The Warden will be selected from members of the guild ranked Forester or above. The Warden of the Forest of Atlantia is referred to as Honorable Warden in formal situations.

Warden of the North/South: These officers assist the Warden in the administration of the guild within their respective regions. These officers are the points of contact for members of the guild in their region to the High Court. The authority to promote guild members may be delegated to these Wardens by the Warden of the Forest. The Warden of the North is responsible for Virginia, Maryland and DC while the Warden of the South is responsible for North and South Carolina. The Wardens will be selected from the members of the guild ranked Forester or above. Wardens of the North/South will be referred to as Honorable Warden in formal situations.

High Constable: The High Constable serves as the guild's treasurer and maintains any guild finances, filing reports as required by Kingdom law.

High Chronicler: The High Chronicler is the secretary and historian responsible for maintaining the records of the guild including membership lists, promotions, activities, and the minutes of meetings. Send all correspondence to atlantiaforesters@gmail.com

High Steward: The High Steward is responsible for identifying camping space, feast seating, and crash space as necessary for foresters at SCA and guild events. The High Steward also expected to assist event stewards/autocrats and are the liaison between the guild and event staff.

High Sheriff: The High Sheriff is the master of ceremonies at all guild courts/meetings and directs people to the Warden as required.

Regional/Local Forest Courts

Keeper of the Forest: Regional Forest Courts at the Barony or local group level will be headed up by a Keeper of the Forest. This officer is the Warden of the Forest's direct representative at the regional and local level. They are responsible for observing new members during their probationary period and swearing in these members once the period has elapsed. The Keeper is referred to as Honorable Keeper.

The Keeper is assisted by a Constable, Chronicler, Steward and Sheriff. These officers have the same duties as their counterparts in the High Court but are only responsible for their regional/local group activities.

Article IV – Meetings

Meetings of the full guild will be difficult due to the Kingdom-wide nature of the guild. There will be an annual meeting of the guild at **War of the Wings** in October for the discussion of and voting on issues which impact the guild as a whole. Any issues requiring a vote will need the presence of at least 51% of the registered members of Under Forester rank or higher. In order for a vote to be successful, there will need to be a 2/3 majority in favor of the action. Any

action or changes voted on during the meeting at **War of the Wings** will take effect on January 1st of the following year, to allow time for the information to be published to the members. If the required numbers of members are not available at this annual meeting, any business requiring a vote of the members will be conducted online through an electronic polling method. This electronic polling will still require at least 51% of the membership to respond and must have a 2/3 majority to pass.

Additional meetings are recommended to be held at least at regional level quarterly with all results to be reported to High Warden of the Forest and the High Chronicler. Regional meetings will not involve guild wide issues other than the swearing in of new members and the recognition of promotions of the members to Novice level.

Article V – Events and Activities

The guild will strive to advance the outdoor arts and sciences through research, teaching and demonstration. Foresters will be expected to do conduct demonstrations and classes when possible. Foresters should make their presence known at as many SCA events and activities as possible.

In addition to scheduled SCA events, local and regional groups are expected to schedule a minimum of one Foresters specific event annually for the advancement of skills of foresters and others. These events should be open to any who are interested and may be held either in or out of period forester's clothing, though the focus should be on improving outdoor living skills.

Article VI – Requirements for Establishing a Local Group

Semi-independent regional courts of guild members may be formed when sufficient numbers of members are present in a local or regional area (Barony, Shire, Canton, etc.). They may operate under a letter temporary written by the Warden during their formation but will receive a distinct charter from the High Court of the Forest when their formation is complete. While Regional Forest Courts may act largely independent they are bound by the rules, regulations and charter of the Atlantian Royal Forestry Guild. Failure to uphold the laws of the guild will lead to revocation of the regional charter.

The first requirement for starting a Forest Court is the request for a Letter Temporary. A minimum of 5 persons is required but they do not need to be ranked or sworn members. The only requirement is that they have a current application submitted to the guild. A letter to the Warden must be written, outlining what the regional group wishes to achieve with their group and what

they propose to do for their area and what events they would like to host or be part of. The letter must be signed by all the proposed members of the regional group and it will be delivered to the Warden. An electronic scan in .jpg or .pdf format is acceptable. The letter should include the proposed name of the regional group and if the group is formed in a province or Barony it should include the names of other sub groups within such as cantons. Once the letter is received the Warden will consult the membership and decide if a letter temporary is to be drafted or not. A letter giving support from the local Baron and Baroness may accompany the request in the event the group is formed in a barony however it is not mandatory.

The Warden will draft or cause to be written a letter in the form of a temporary charter allowing the regional group to form and conduct limited business. Under a letter temporary the members of a regional group officially become foresters but are not yet a forest court. This distinction is similar to an incipency period. Under the letter temporary the regional group may not hold funds or conduct forest court but may hold informal meetings to form and assist in the creation of the group. Likewise, they are encouraged to create and attend events and activities. If the word "Foresters" is to be attached to an event, especially a public one or one announced on social media, the Warden must be consulted and permission granted.

Under the letter temporary the group will be allowed to function unofficially until such time as a leader emerges and is promoted to the rank of Forester. When a ranked Forester and at least (4) sworn members exist, the Warden may appoint the leader to be the Keeper or deputy Warden of the regional group. At this time the group becomes semi-official. The Keeper may conduct meetings and forest courts within the region to deal with business and any SCA matters that arise. The Keeper, like all other officers, is appointed for two years. The new group is advised to consider creating or acquiring some regalia for the region during this time. A minimum would be a hunting horn slung on a baldric. This regalia is needed for the next part in the formation of the group.

As the Royal Forestry Guild of Atlantia is chartered by the King and Queen of Atlantia, so too the regional group will be chartered by the guild. When a regional group has proven itself stable and active it may apply to the Warden for its own charter. Again a minimum of (5) persons is required but they must all be sworn members ranked Under Forester and above. At least (1) Forester is required. The petition is delivered in writing or in person to the Warden who will consult with the officers of the High Court and decide whether to accept or reject the petition. If accepted the charter will be signed by the Warden and High Chronicler of the Royal Foresters. In the event that the charter is issued to a group for an established Barony, the Baron and Baroness will also be asked by the Warden to give their consent and sign the charter. This is not a guarantee. When this is done the Keeper appointed to be in charge will be presented with the charter. At this point the regional group is styled the Forest of <GROUP NAME> (or Royal Forest of <BARONY> if formed at the Baronial level with Baron/Baroness support) and may freely use the badges and symbols of the guild.

Article VII – Communication

Primary communication to the guild as a whole will be through electronic means. General information will be disseminated through the use of a guild Facebook page or website. A quarterly electronic newsletter will be published to the members with the results of any events, forest courts, or articles of interest to the guild membership. All members are welcome to submit articles and reports to the High Chronicler for inclusion in the newsletter or publication on the guild page.

Article VIII – Amendment Procedures

Amendments to this charter will be advanced to the officers of the High Court at least three months prior to the annual meeting. This allows the proposal to be reviewed and published to the members for discussion through electronic means. At the annual meeting, the members will conduct the final discussions of the proposal. Voting will be conducted at the annual meeting if sufficient registered members are in attendance. Should there be an insufficient number of members, the voting will be handled through electronic means. If approved, the amendment will be published to the members and will take effect on January 1st of the following year.

Amendments

2021 – The camping requirement for the rank of Underforester (“Proven ability to camp at an SCA or forester event using period or modern equipment for an entire weekend without having to retreat to other accommodations, and to practice ethical leave no trace camping.”) was replaced by: “Proven service to the guild or wild spaces. Guild members seeking to fulfill this requirement are advised to communicate their plans with an officer to determine if the activity they have in mind is appropriate and what sort of documentation would be necessary. Examples of service include, but are not limited to: Reporting on a demonstration at an event or writing an article presenting original research (citing at least 3 appropriate sources) for the guild newsletter, Hurst and Horn; Teaching a class on a topic related to guild activities/interests; Organizing unofficial gatherings of forester-folk (garb hikes, fire-making/cooking days, etc.); Organizing/participating in a litter clean-up effort; Participating in organized/approved efforts to remove invasive species from public lands or remove invasive and/or plant native species on lands commonly used by the Guild, such as Elchenburgh Castle Farm (as service to the guild and the Kingdom as a whole).”