



## Calvin Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens

### Wetlands & Woodlands Summer Camp

# 2019 Summer Camp Parent Guide



### Questions about Summer Camp?

Visit <https://calvin.edu/ecosystem-preserve/programs-events/summer-camp/> for basic info or feel free to connect with our staff directly. We love to hear from you. For immediate needs contact the camp director.

For registration, cancellation and payment questions contact:

- Julie Wilbourn, Department Assistant  
616-526-7602  
[jw47@calvin.edu](mailto:jw47@calvin.edu)

For programing questions and questions during the actual week of camp contact:

- Jeanette Henderson, Camp Director & Program Manager  
616-526-7601  
[jmh46@calvin.edu](mailto:jmh46@calvin.edu)

Summer is here and we are excited that your child will be joining us for Wetlands & Woodlands Summer Camp! Below is important information that will assist you and your child in your planning.

## Program Description & Daily Activities

Our camp philosophy is to create an environment with activities that incorporate authentic hands on experiences and self-discovery. We spend a lot of time wondering, observing, and using resources/tools to help us learn. We try to incorporate a variety of different types of learning experiences and activities to best meet the needs of each age group and the many ways that students learn. We also believe that learning is fun, and a sense of wonder and adventure guides each and every day of camp!

### *Daily Activities*

Each day brings a new topic such as Michigan turtles that supports the camp's theme. Daily activities include storytime/puppet show, exploration, observation activities, devotions, snack time, games, and art projects. Campers are grouped for the week by age in small groups.

## Camp Leadership Team & Camp Assistants

Our leadership team consists of a camp director, Calvin college students (who studying education, biology, recreation, or child development) and professional environmental educators. Additionally, teen volunteers called Camp Assistants play a valuable role in our camps. Our camper-to-staff ratio is 8:1. Most importantly, they all love working with children and connecting them with the wonders of Creation. You can find staff biographies on our camp webpage so you and your child can get to know our educators better.

## Sign-in and Sign-out Procedures & Location

You must come to the Bunker Interpretive Center to both sign in and sign out your child. Campers can be checked in 15 minutes prior to camp start time. Please plan to pick up your child promptly at your camp's end time.

Campers will only be allowed to leave with a parent or guardian. If you would like to have someone else pick up your child (such as a relative, neighbor, or babysitter), please fill out the Authorization to Release Child form found below and bring it with you on the first day of camp.

## WHAT TO BRING

### Paperwork

Signed forms to send with your child on the 1<sup>st</sup> day:

- Release and Waiver of Liability Form
- Medical Form
- Authorization to Release Child Form (optional)

### Helpful Items

Each day please have your child bring a backpack or bag filled with the following items:

- Water bottle marked with camper's name
- Extra change of clothes & shoes if they are prone to getting messy
- Light jacket or sweater for chilly mornings
- Sunglasses or sun hat (if your child wears these)
- Rain coat or poncho - no umbrellas (it could rain any day!)
- A sack lunch each day that does not need to be refrigerated or microwaved (Jr. Naturalist Camps Only)

Please label items with child's name

### Items to Leave at Home

- Electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, iPads, tablets, electronic games, etc.)
- New or expensive clothing
- Toys such as cards/trading games, cars, boats, dolls, stuffed animals, etc. We would be sad if they were lost.

## WHAT TO WEAR

Camp is active and often messy!

Campers should arrive wearing:

- Comfortable old summer clothes appropriate for that day's weather
- Sturdy shoes every day (no flip-flops).
- Insect spray
- Sunscreen

Note: Camp leaders will not provide or apply insect spray or sunscreen.

For Jr. Naturalist Camps, the schedule of events you receive on the first day of camp will highlight the recommended clothing for each of the following days.

## Late Arrivals/Absences

Unforeseen circumstances happen. If you know you are running late or a camper will miss a day due to illness please call or email our director at [jmh46@calvin.edu](mailto:jmh46@calvin.edu) or 616-526-7601.

In the case of early pickups or absences due to sports, appointments or other commitments please alert your child's small group leader during the sign in/out process.

No refunds are given for attending only a portion of camp.

## Communications with Parents and Discovery Pages

The majority of our major communications sent to all parent and participants will be via email with the email you provide us during registration. If your email has changed recently, it is your responsibility to let us know.

During camp, educators will make every effort to verbally check-in with whomever is dropping off and picking up your camper each day. Please plan to spend a minute or two to talking with our camp staff when you arrive. Camp Staff will call a camper's family in the following cases:

- The camper is feeling sick or homesick.
- The camper needs care from a doctor or medical facility.
- A camper is lost and cannot be located.
- A behavior issue occurs and we need assistance to correct
- The camper has forgotten their lunch. (Jr Naturalist Camps)

### *Discovery Pages*

Additionally, at the end of each day of camp, your children's small group educator will provide you with a discovery page that highlights what we learn about today and fun at home activities for you to do together as a family. Over the years, parents had indicated the pages are very helpful for starting conversations with your children about their adventures.

## Family Nights & Award Ceremony

Please reserve time to join us for your camp's special award ceremony. Each camper will be honored with a paper plate award which recognizes him/her for the unique and special person he/she is. All members of your family are invited to attend. Following the ceremony, everyone is invited to explore the preserve, participate in fun family activities for the whole family and partake in a watermelon feast! More details about the event will be sent home with your child on the first day of camp.

*Sessions 1-5: Thursday nights during the session from 6:30 to 8:00 pm*

*Sessions 6 & 7: Friday afternoons from 2:30 to 3:00 pm*

## Field Trips (Jr Naturalist Camp Only)

For our Jr. Naturalist Camps, each week of camp includes an off-site adventure. Typically, field trips take place on Wednesdays. Campers will ride in large vans. Our leadership team have taken training courses and been certificated to drive these vans.

## Friend and Sibling Requests for Small Groups

Each day during camp, consist of both large and small group activities. One of our goals is to both deepen their friendships with those they already know and create new friendships. We provide many opportunities for everyone to do this. Small group teams are assigned before the first day of camp based on grade level entering, age, and special requests submitted during the registration process. Friends and siblings who wish to be in the same group must be within one grade level of each other. We try to honor requests but may not be able to accommodate them due to a variety of reasons.

## Health Forms & Other Release Forms

Your camper's safety is our top priority, and we work to make all of our activities as safe as possible. Please read and fill out the Release and Waiver of Liability Form and Medical Form. Parents are encouraged to be honest on the health forms about their camper's physical, mental, and emotional well-being so that staff are able to keep them safe and help them have a wonderful time. The camp director may contact you to discuss how we can adapt camp to provide a safe and successful environment for all of our campers.

These important forms need to be completed and mailed/emailed (preserve@calvin.edu)/delivered on the first day of camp. Your child will not be admitted on the first day of camp unless we receive these signed forms. Copies of these forms can also be downloaded from the Wetlands and Woodlands Summer Camp website.

## Emergency Policy

Summer Camp Educators and the Director have knowledge of basic first aid and/or certification in CPR/First Aid. Campus Safety staff are our first responders until emergency crews can arrive on campus and undergo extensive training. Staff are required to furnish a written account of major injury or illness.

## SNACKS & ALLERGIES

### Snack Time

Nutritious, kid -friendly snacks are provided for all camps. For 4-8 year old camps – snacks connect with our topic for the day and are another fun tool to learn more about our topic. For example for turtle day we offer favorite foods of wild turtles such as fish (goldfish crackers), strawberries, grapes etc.

Snacks usually consist of several choices of fruits and vegetables and items such as graham crackers, goldfish, popcorn, string cheese or pretzels for the children to choose from. We generally also have several gluten free items such as pretzels and graham crackers available for those children with gluten intolerances.

### Allergies & Intolerances

Your child's safety is important to us. However, the BIC is not a nut free zone. We make every effort to check food labels so that we can buy as many nut free foods as possible, and not to expose your child to cross-contamination during snack and activity times.

Please be sure you explain the severity of your child's allergy (does he/she react to ingestion, skin contact, and/or airborne oils) and if you will provide an epi pen on the medical release form We prefer to work with each parent and child separately so that we can develop a plan that works for both the child and the other campers.

You are encouraged to have your child bring their own snacks if you feel that is the best course of action or if they have unique dietary needs. Please let us know during registration on the 1st day of camp if you plan to provide your own snacks.

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Campers are expected to follow our 6 camp rules.

1. Treat others kindly
2. Listen to others
3. Help clean up
4. Take care of nature
5. Be curious
6. Have fun!

Educators are trained to utilize positive discipline techniques to promote growth and learning.

Staff will attempt to correct behavior by:

1. Issuing a verbal warning
2. Removing the camper from activities, plus a discussion with the Camp Director if needed
3. Notifying parents and having a discussion

Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior, campers may be dismissed from camp at the discretion of Camp Director.

Following are the steps taken in the event of an emergency:

### *Minor Injury*

Staff administers basic first aid for non-emergency situations including shallow cuts, scrapes, and insect stings. Staff is prohibited from administering any kind of oral or injected medication, even aspirin or Tylenol. Parent is alerted to the minor injury and first aid treatment when the child is picked up at the end of the day.

### *Major Illness/Injury*

Camp participants are stabilized by staff in the case of illness (headaches, fever, chills and/or heat-related illnesses) or injury (deep cuts, minor blood loss, fainting, allergic reactions, sprains, strains, respiratory distress, broken bone). If the situation is not life threatening, a parent will be notified immediately by phone to arrange for pick-up.

### *Threatened Life*

Calvin College Campus Safety, our onsite First aid responders, and 911 are called immediately for life threatening emergency situations that occur. Staff will administer/assist child with epi pens (provided by parent) if major allergic reaction is taking place. Parents are notified by phone immediately after calling for emergency care. Staff are prohibited from transporting any injured or sick participant to a hospital or other health care facility; medical personnel must do this.

## Discipline Policy

For the safety and protection of all campers, the following discipline policy is in place:

- a) Camp participants will obey all instructions given by camp staff in regards to their safety and well-being.
- b) Foul language and physically/verbally aggressive behavior towards other campers or staff will not be tolerated.
- c) No alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs will be permitted at any time on the Calvin College grounds and affiliated field sites.
- d) Swimming is prohibited on Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve grounds and affiliated field sites.

While we do not anticipate any problems, please know that Wetlands & Woodlands Summer camp operates under a "3 strikes and you're out" policy. Inappropriate participant behavior described above will receive warnings from camp staff in the following order:

1. A verbal warning to participant upon first infraction
2. A verbal warning to parent/guardian of participant behavior upon second infraction
3. A telephone call and written explanation to parent/guardian upon third infraction, and dismissal from camp effective the following day with no refund of camp fees.

## **Lost & Found Policy**

Please label all your child's items with their name. Items found will be placed in the camper's box during their camp week and at the end of the week in the lost and found bin on the coat rack in the alcove on the west side of the BIC. Items can be picked up during normal business hours Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm during the summer. At the end of the summer, all unclaimed items will be donated or tossed.

## **Evaluations**

After each camp week, families will be emailed a link to a summer camp evaluation survey. We ask that parents (with their campers when appropriate) complete the evaluation survey. Input from campers and their families is essential in helping us maintain our program quality and improve our camp logistics and policies.

## **Cancellation/Refund Policy**

In the event you, the parent or guardian, must cancel, a cancellation letter/email must be submitted in writing to Julie Wilbourn at [jw47@calvin.edu](mailto:jw47@calvin.edu). Your registration fee minus a processing fee of \$10 will be refunded up to two weeks before the start of the camp. No refunds are given after that date. No credits or prorated refunds will be issued for missed days of camp due to illness, partial attendance or behavioral issues. However, we reserve the right to grant exceptions in situations as needed. In the event there is insufficient enrollment or other unforeseen circumstances arise, Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve reserves the right to cancel or postpone any session of camp. If a session is canceled or postponed, we will refund the appropriate registration fees.