



Calvin Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens Wetlands & Woodlands Summer Camp 2021 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. For immediate needs and emergencies contact the camp director.

For registration, cancellation and payment questions contact:

- Julie Wilbourn, Department Assistant
616-526-7602
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

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

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!

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. During check in on Monday, you will receive our camp schedule for the week so you can see what they will be learning about each day.

Communications with Parents and Discovery Pages

Most of our major communications 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 talking with our camp staff when you arrive/depart.

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

If you have attended our camps before, you may notice family nights, are not being offered this season. Back in February 2021, we determined that this camp activity pose safety and staffing challenges due to the Covid- 19 Pandemic. This summer, paper plates will be awarded during small group sessions on Fridays during camp time. During this ceremony, each camper will be honored with a paper plate award which recognizes him/her for the unique and special person he/she is. At this time, parents are not invited to attend. We will let you know if this changes.

Field Trips (Jr Naturalist Camp Only)

Another popular camp activity that was cancelled this year was our offsite field trips for Jr. Naturalist Camps. For Jr. Naturalist camp, we are offering an extra topic for the week in place of the off-campus field trip.

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. Due to extra check in procedures this year, camp groups listed at check in are final and no accommodations will be on the first day of camp.

Camp Leadership Team & Camp Assistants

Our leadership team consists of a camp director, Calvin students (who are 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 before camp begins.

Procedures for Arrival and Departure from Camp

New this year, sign in and sign out procedure will take place in the BIC parking lot. Please follow the directional and informational signs in the parking lot. Campers can be checked in 15 minutes prior to camp start time.

Plan to pick up your child promptly at your camp's end time. If for some reason you foresee being more than 15 minutes late, contact the camp director.

Campers will only be allowed to leave with a parent, guardian or approved person. 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 in the attached Camp Forms document online and bring it with you on the first day of camp. **All adults picking up a camper will be asked to present a photo IDs to confirm their identity.**

Late Arrivals/ Early Pick Ups/ Absences

If you know you are running late, need to pick up early, or your child is sick or needs to be absence due to sports, appointments, or other commitments please call or email our director at jmh46@calvin.edu or 616-526-7601. New Covid Mitigation Procedure: If you do not connect with us we will connect with you because we need to note if the illness is Covid related.

What to Bring

Paperwork

Signed forms to send with your child on the 1st 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:

- Reusable 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)
- Lunch (Jr. Naturalist & Picturing Place Camps). We do not offer refrigeration or use of a microwave so plan accordingly.

Items to Leave at Home

- Electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, iPads, tablets, cameras, electronic games. etc.)
- New or expensive clothing and shoes
- Toys. 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, sandals must have a back strap (no flip-flops).
- Insect spray (Please apply before they come to camp)
- Sunscreen (Please apply before they come to camp)

Note: Educators will not provide or apply insect spray or sunscreen.

For Jr. Naturalist Camps, we recommend campers wear closed toed shoes and lightweight long pants especially for when we will hike thru areas with long grasses and poison ivy as well as these areas have a potential for ticks. Rain boots are suggested if your children have them because they can go over the pants providing a barrier and are easier to clean the poison ivy oils off of. Providing an extra change of clothes and shoes is also recommend for them to change into and be more comfortable in after our morning trail adventures.

Health & Safety

Health Forms & Other Release Forms

Your camper's safety is our top priority. 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. 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. You are also welcome to reach out to us via email or phone.

Once completed, emailed the forms to jmh46@calvin.edu or delivered them on the first day of camp at check in. 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.

Covid-19 Safety Changes and Protocols

In accordance with the current COVID-19 safety guidelines and consultation with Calvin's health and safety staff, we are making adjustments to our camp operations to give both our campers and staff a safe and enjoyable experience this coming summer. We reserve the right to adapt camp offerings as needed considering ever-changing protocols and policies. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Jeanette Henderson at jmh46@calvin or 616-526-7601.

Face Covering Policy & Physical Distancing

7/5/21 Per the CDC's newest updates for guidance for operating youth camps, staff and campers do not need to wear face coverings at camps (outdoors or indoors) and do not need to maintain physical distancing.

Please know we fully support the choice of parents, campers, and staff to wear a face covering both inside and outside.

When should a camper stay home?

The presence of any of the symptoms below generally suggests a child has an infectious illness and should not attend camp, regardless of whether the illness is COVID-19.

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Sore throat
- Cough (for campers with chronic cough due to allergies or asthma, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Difficulty breathing (for children with asthma, a change from their baseline breathing)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

Campers should also stay home if they:

- Are in quarantine due to exposure to an individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19

You are expected to notify the camp director if:

- Your child test positive for COVID-19 two weeks prior or post camp
- Your child is tested for COVID-19 due to illness.
- Your child is tested for COVID-19 due to close contact.
- If informed they have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

Emergency Policy

Summer Camp Educators and the Director have knowledge of basic first aid and/or certification in CPR/First Aid. Calvin University's 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.

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

Minor Injury

Camp 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 (the exception is EpiPens in emergencies), 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 University Campus Safety staff, our onsite First aid responders, and 911 are called immediately for life threatening emergency situations that occur. Staff will administer/assist child with EpiPens (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.

Snack Time & 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 (strawberries, apple slices, bananas, grapes etc.) and vegetables (carrot sticks, cucumber slices, celery sticks etc.) and items such as graham crackers, goldfish crackers, 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) on the medical release form. If your child has a known severe allergy you **must** provide an EpiPen to stay with the child while camp is in session. 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.

Preventing Tick-borne Illness

We are urging all campers and their families to be aware and take precautions regarding ticks. In previous seasons, tick densities at the Preserve have been very low. However, scientists and insect experts are predicting an extremely heavy tick season in West Michigan.

The best ways to protect yourselves from tick bites is through appropriate clothing choice and use of insect repellent. It is recommended campers wear light-colored long sleeve shirts, pants, and boots when temperatures allow and to tuck the pants in to the boots. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved repellents registered for deterring ticks include products containing: DEET, Picaridin, and Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Whenever using an insect repellent, always read and follow the label directions for proper application and safety concerns.

Best practice is to perform tick checks daily after you have spent time in woods and grassy fields. Ticks prefer warm moist places on the body so check armpits, behind the knees, groin, ankles and scalp. If you find a tick, to remove it use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Pull upwards with steady even pressure so the tick does not break and remain in the skin. After removal, thoroughly clean the bite and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water. Dispose of ticks by soaking in rubbing alcohol, or close in an air-tight bag and throw away. To learn more, visit the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website.

Behavior Expectations

Our staff works to ensure that every camper has a positive, safe, and fun experience at camp. The follow behavior expectations set the stage for a great camp experience.

Camp Rules

Campers will be introduced to these rules on the first day of camp and are expected to follow them:

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. If a child's behavior is disruptive, 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 to find a positive, appropriate solution
3. Notifying parents of the concerns and discussing additional positive appropriate solutions we can employ

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

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 regarding 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 University grounds and affiliated field sites.
- d) Swimming is prohibited on Calvin Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens 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.

Additional Camp Polices & Procedures

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.

Cancellation/Refund Policy

In the event you, the parent or guardian, must cancel, a cancellation email must be submitted in writing to Julie Wilbourn at 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 such as a Covid- 19 outbreak arise, Calvin Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens 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.

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.