Parent Guide to Nature Camp

Howard County Conservancy Day Camps 2020

June 22 — August 21, 2020

Mt. Pleasant & Belmont

Questions? More information?
camp@howardnature.org
www.howardnature.org/camp/

Mt. Pleasant
10520 Old Frederick Road
Woodstock, MD 21163
410-465-8877

Belmont
6553 Belmont Woods Road
Elkridge, MD 21075
410-465-8337
Dear Camp Families,

Welcome to Camp! We’re excited to share our land, animals, activities and love of nature with you this summer. We know that you have many options for summer camp and we are excited that you have chosen to spend part of your summer with The Conservancy, at one of our two great summer camp locations.

To help prepare you and your camper for your summer camp adventures with us, please read this Camp Guide and be sure to review and complete the medication forms on our website. We suggest that you also check the Frequently Asked Questions section of this guide or visit our FAQs online. If you still have any questions, please contact us via email at camp@howardnature.org.

Also, be sure to follow us on Facebook! We will be updating both our Facebook page and Camp Blog throughout the year, so check back often!

See you this summer!

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Mission of Summer Nature Camp

Our nature camps inspire children to connect to nature through investigations, hikes, arts and crafts, STEM challenges and more. This summer, we are exploring our wild wonderful world! Armed with boundless creativity and curiosity, our Campers will explore habitats, engineer devices to solve environmental challenges, and more. Our outdoor classrooms will encourage integration of technology and traditional outdoor skills. What will your child discover in our wild wonderful world?

Where is Camp?

The Conservancy offers nine weeks of full-day nature camps in one-week sessions at both of our nature Center locations for children ages 5 -12.

Mt. Pleasant

The Conservancy’s Mt. Pleasant location in Woodstock is just 15 minutes away from Columbia. Camps are held outdoors and in the Conservancy’s newly-expanded Environmental Education Center and outbuildings.

Belmont

The Belmont location in Elkridge is on the grounds of Belmont Manor and Historic Park, and nestled in the surrounding Patapsco State Park. Camps are held outdoors and in the renovated carriage house and cottage on site.

Hours of Camp

The Camp week is Monday—Friday, 9:00 am-3:30 pm, every week except the weeks of June 29-July 2, 2020 and August 17-21. Camp will be Closed for July 3rd. Aug 17-21 is a special session from 8:30-4:00 with no extended day available.

- Morning Drop off is open from 8:45-9:00am. We start the camp day at 9:05.
- The afternoon Pick Up window is from 3:30-3:45pm. Only those on the Pickup Authorization may pick up campers.
- There is a fee for late pickup.
Drop off and Pick up at Camp

Camper safety is our first priority.

- We require that all campers are signed in and out with a staff member daily on our attendance log.
- During Pick up, only the individual(s) designated on the registration form can pick up your child. We check these names with Photo ID’s. (The person that completed the health form is the only one who can add or delete individuals with pick-up authority.)

Locations to drop-off at each site:

Mt. Pleasant: drop off and pick up will be in the picnic area across from the parking lot. After Care pick up may move to the Nature Center.

Belmont: drop off and pick up will be in front of the Carriage House.
- In the event of inclement weather, pick up and drop off at both locations will be inside the nature center on site.

Late Pick Up: A charge of $10 for the first fifteen minutes and $15 for each additional fifteen minutes will be charged to parents for campers not picked up by scheduled time, payable on the following day at morning arrival or at pickup on Friday, whichever is first.

Before and After Care

Before and After Care options are available for an additional fee. Before Care is offered 8am to 9am ($30) and After Care 3:30pm to 5:30pm ($60), June 22-August 14, 2020. Before and After Care feature open play time and challenge by choice activities for campers. Nature videos may be shown during After Care. Personal electronic devices are not to be used for entertainment during camp or the extended day.

All pick up during After Care is in the Nature Center at both locations.
Rules at Camp

Our camp rules require respect for oneself, each other and the environment. Campers are expected to keep hands, feet, and objects to self; leave nature where it is; be kind and respectful to fellow campers and counselors, including their belongings; and help preserve our historic land by not defacing or destroying Conservancy property. Out of respect for our natural areas, we follow Leave No Trace ethics. This includes not climbing in trees, removing wild animals or destroying wetland habitats.

Behavior/ Camper Code of Conduct

Summer Nature Camps at the Howard County Conservancy are safe places for all campers. To accomplish this, our camp rules require respect for oneself, each other and the environment. Please read these guidelines with your camper to help them fully understand the expectations and behave appropriately at camp.

- Show respect to other participants and treat them with courtesy
- Show respect to staff and cooperate with their instructions
- Know and follow behavior guidelines and camp rules
- Use program equipment, natural areas and facilities properly
- Respect the property of others
- Work out disagreements in a non-violent manner with the help of staff
- Communicate appropriately, which means not using foul language or gestures, unwelcome teasing or harsh words
- Respect the health and safety of other campers and staff, understanding that pushing, kicking, hitting, bullying or fighting are not acceptable and will not be tolerated

Camp is a special place where we prioritize all campers' right to physical and emotional safety. All campers deserve to try new things, make new friends, explore and have fun in a safe environment. Conservancy staff will work with each camper individually to resolve minor behavior issues and will seek positive parental support when necessary. The Conservancy reserves the right to dismiss a camper who exhibits unsafe behavior or endangers other campers. No refunds are provided if a camper is dismissed due to behavioral problems.

Download a copy of the Code of Conduct
Be Prepared!

What to Wear:

✓ Comfortable clothing that can get dirty and wet
✓ Sneakers or boots and socks - open toed shoes and flip flops are NOT allowed
✓ Sunscreen
✓ Hat or bandana to keep ticks and sun off head

What to Bring:

✓ Extra set of clothing
✓ Water shoes, sport sandals or crocs with ankle straps
✓ Rain gear if the weather calls for it
✓ Sunscreen – we will remind campers to reapply after lunch
✓ Water bottle
✓ Lunch – send a hearty, non-perishable lunch with your camper each day; keep in mind that the Conservancy DOES NOT provide refrigeration. We encourage trash-free lunches to promote environmental stewardship. Recycling and composting are available.
✓ Snack for morning and After Care
✓ A backpack in which to store your campers’ items

What to Leave at Home:

✓ Anything breakable or valuable
✓ All electronics
✓ Gum or excessive candy (a piece or two in the lunch is fine; a bag becomes a problem)
✓ Animal habitats or carriers
✓ Cell phones are not permitted during camp hours for entertainment
Meals, Ticks and other tips

**Inclement Weather:** Camp is outdoors unless there is severe weather. On rainy days, please prepare your camper for outdoor exploration. Be sure to pack a rain jacket, towel, extra shoes and clothes. If there is thunder, high winds and/or lightning storms we will not be outside, and will have alternative indoor activities planned. On code red heat days campers will also spend time inside. Weather will be monitored by camp administration using emergency weather radios and local weather reports.

**Labeling:** All personal items need to be labeled including backpacks, water bottles, lunches and clothes. The Howard County Conservancy is not responsible for any lost/stolen personal items. The Lost and Found basket will be out during pick up. After one month in Lost and Found, items will be donated to a local charity.

**Waste-Free Lunches:** Much of the trash we generate comes from the packaging on the food we buy, and lunch foods are no exception. Our waste-free lunch program favors the use of reusable food containers, drink containers, utensils, and napkins. We discourage the use of disposable packaging, such as prepackaged foods, plastic bags, juice boxes and pouches, paper napkins, and disposable utensils. We provide recycling and composting. Our gift shop sells Snack Taxis, reusable cloth snack bags. For ideas for waste-free lunches, visit [http://www.globalstewards.org/waste-free-lunch.htm](http://www.globalstewards.org/waste-free-lunch.htm)

**Tick Checks:** The staff will remind campers and conduct tick checks 2-3 times a day. It is also very important that you check your camper at home thoroughly after each camp day. For more information on stopping ticks, please see the [CDC’s fact sheet](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/ticks/).

**Sunscreen:** We do not provide or apply sunscreen; however, we encourage that you apply sunscreen before camp. If you provide sunscreen we will remind campers to reapply at lunchtime or after getting wet. All sunscreen is FDA controlled and must be in its original container with your child’s name on the outside. Most of our activities are run in the shade or under shelter, and time spent in direct sunlight is limited.
**Tips, continued**

**Snacks:** The Howard County Conservancy does not provide a snack. You may provide a snack for your child that can be eaten during the day. Campers may have a snack time mid-morning and during After Care. If food *other than popsicles* is ever provided as a special treat or camp activity, a note will be sent home to all parents prior to the day with a list of ingredients. If your child has any allergies or aversions you can send an alternative.

**Wild berries, Children’s garden vegetables, etc.:** We do not encourage campers to pick and eat any wild berries or other wild edibles. However, many campers visit us who are already familiar with the plants that are fruiting on our grounds. Please let us know if your child has any allergies or dietary considerations. Campers may pick the vegetables growing in the Children’s Garden at Mt. Pleasant. Fruiting plants: blackberries, wineberries, raspberries, cherry tomatoes, bell peppers, mulberries. Herbaceous plants: chives, spearmint, peppermint, lavender, thyme, basil, rosemary, lemon balm, honeysuckle.

**Popsicles:** At the end of hot weeks, we may give popsicles to the campers. Please let us know of any allergies or dietary considerations on your child’s registration. You are welcome to send an alternative if you prefer.

*Pop-Ice/Va**r•Ice Ingredients:* Water, High Fructose Corn Syrup, Fruit Juice (Contains One Or More Of The Following: Apple, Grape Or Pear Juice From Concentrate); Contains Less Than 2% Of The Following: Citric Acid and/or Fumaric Acid, Natural And Artificial Flavors, Sodium Benzoate And Potassium Sorbate, Red #40, Yellow #5, Yellow #6, Blue #1.

**Camp t-shirts:** Campers receive 1 t-shirt each summer, free with registration. Please note: Designs may change prior to the start of camp.

**Shirt crafts:** During your Camper’s first session of the summer, they will receive a Summer Camp t-shirt. Some units provide an opportunity for Campers to decorate their camp shirts, which may include the following:

- Paint/print shirts with animal tracks, leaves and other natural items
- Mud and natural item dye
- Traditional tie dye
- Ice tie dye
- Fabric marker designs

Washing instructions will be relayed by your camper’s staff members.
Day to Day

Make new friends, play among the trees, learn survival skills and more. This summer, we are exploring our wild wonderful world! Armed with boundless creativity and curiosity, our campers will explore habitats, engineer devices to solve environmental challenges, and connect to nature through immersive games, hikes, crafts, and STEM challenges. Our outdoor classrooms will encourage integration of technology and traditional outdoor skills. What will your child discover in our wild wonderful world?

Each week, Campers will work together to solve a STEAM challenge (traditional STEM programs that creatively integrate the arts.) Read more about the STEM Mission of the Week for each session of Camp on our STEM@Camp page.

All campers hike and explore the landscape on a daily basis. We will spend the majority of our time outside if weather allows, rain or shine. Campers are expected to participate meaningfully in nature games, activities and study. Every week, campers will take part in age appropriate activities, stories, games and crafts with their units, camp-wide games for all campers, and activities in which they have elected to take part. Counselors will send their plans for the session at the beginning of each week, but the schedule may change based on weather and camper interest.

WILD, WONDERFUL WORLD, SUMMER OF 2020

Standard activities: Some activities will already be planned for the campers, including programs run by special guests, All-Camp Challenges, in which all campers take part at the same time, and educational programs and lessons pertaining to the theme of the week.

Camper-planned camps: At the beginning of the week, campers will discuss their goals and interests with their counselors and other campers. Together, they will decide on the activities that may take the whole week to complete, like group engineering challenges, scientific studies, or conservation and stewardship activities.

Electives: Campers will independently choose from a variety of offered activities. These activities are hobbies and special skills of our staff and thus will be different each session.

STEM Mission of the Week (MotW): Engage your imagination in a summer nature STEAM challenge each session. These missions will require you to work together with teammates, create and execute a plan, and discover something along the way. We integrate Art in our Science, Technology, Engineering and Math activities, to inspire and challenge all of our Campers! Read more about the STEM Mission of the Week for each session of Camp on our STEM@Camp page.
FAQ’S (Frequently Asked Questions) - 2020

How much is a session of summer camp?

-June 22-Aug 14, 2020: Each 5-day session of camp is $270. We will not hold camp on July 3 and the week of June 29 - July 2 will be $210 at Mt. Pleasant. Belmont campers will be going on a field trip during the week, and the June 29 - July 2 session will cost $270.

-Our final session of Camp is a special session, with special animal visitors scheduled throughout the week. The Camp session of August 17-21 is $300. No Extended Day options are available for this session.

How much and when is Before and After Care?

-Before Care starts at 8:00am and is $30 for the week. After Care starts at 3:30 and is available until 5:30pm for $60 for the week. Before and After Care is not pro-rated.

What are the hours of camp?

-Camp runs from 9:00 - 3:30 daily. Morning drop off is from 8:45 – 9:00. Afternoon pickup is from 3:30-3:45. If your camper is arriving late or being picked up early, please inform our staff so that we can meet you.

Can my camper be in a unit with his/her friend?

-Sure! Please tell us prior to the camp. You may include this information in “Health History and Grouping Information” on the application or email the camp director. This information needs to be given to administrative staff at least a week prior to the start of the camp session. We will try to accommodate requests within reason but will likely not be able to group more than four campers.

How do you break up units at camp?

-We will differentiate our activities by age and ability. Generally, we will have a unit for campers ages 5-7, a second unit for campers ages 7-9, and a third unit for 9-12 year old campers. The age breakdown is determined by the age of registrants and may change depending on the session.

If I need to cancel, can I get a refund?

1. There is a $10 refund fee for each refunded transaction. Refund fees are non-refundable, non-transferable, and may not be applied to your balance.
   - A full refund minus refund fees is permitted until June 1, 2020, or up to 21 days prior to the start of the session.
   - Refunds requested up to 14 days prior to the start of the session will be refunded minus 30% and refund fees.
   - No refunds after 14 days prior to the start of camp session unless the camper suffers medical emergency, attested to by a physician, which keeps the child from attending. Refunds are not given for absence, sick days or if a camper is dismissed due to behavioral problems.

2. Partial payments will be refunded based on the information above for the total session cost and subject to applicable Refund Fees.

3. The refund and cancellation policy also applies towards tuition paid for Before Care, After Care, and the Junior Staff Program.

4. Cancellation requests must be submitted in writing to camp@howardnature.org or belmont@howardnature.org.

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<th>Start of camp</th>
<th>*Refund available until</th>
<th>*Refund Less 30% until</th>
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<tr>
<td>6/22/2020</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>June 8</td>
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<td>6/29/2020</td>
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<td>July 13</td>
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<td>July 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/17/2020</td>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>August 3</td>
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*Cancellation for the summer: less registration fee
F.A.Q.'S (Frequently Asked Questions) 2020 con’t.

**Do you serve food at camp?**

-No. Campers should bring a filling, waste-free lunch. (Hints on waste-free methods.) There is no refrigeration for lunches; include a freezer pack if needed. If your child is staying for After Care, please pack a snack as well. We may offer small treats or activities involving food (an example is making an edible fire to show how to build a fire circle and cooking fire), but we will send a specific letter home to parents beforehand with a list of ingredients. Where possible, we will use items made in a peanut-free facility. Parents may supply alternatives for campers.

**What do I need to pack for my child?**

-Please pack the following: water bottle; sunscreen; waste-free, filling lunch; sturdy closed-toe shoes for running around; towel; water shoes; change of clothes; rain gear if the weather calls for it; a backpack in which to store your campers’ items.

**Can the Conservancy staff administer medications?**

-No. Children who need to take medications while at camp must be able to take their own medications under supervision of Conservancy staff. To do this, we must have parent authorization for over-the-counter medicines and a physician’s authorization for prescription medications. A Medication Form must be filled out for each medication the camper is taking while at camp, including regular prescriptions and emergency medications. The Medication Form may be found on our Camp Parents webpage.

**My child is young. Will you put sunscreen on them?**

-No. Sunscreen is considered to be a topical medication by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and we are not allowed to help apply it. We will remind and encourage campers to apply sunscreen and will stay in the shade through most of the day.

**Can my child be a Junior Counselor?**

-Children ages 13 and over may apply to be members of our Junior Staff. There is a fee for staff members ages 13-15. A limited amount of spaces are available. The fee is waived for Assistant Counselors ages 16-18. Please fill out the application form available on the website. If your child is accepted to the Junior Counselor position, you will be requested to register them.

**My child has special needs. Can they attend camp?**

-If your child is able to participate in normal daily camp activities, they are welcome to join us. However, we are unable to provide one-on-one assistance for camps. Please give us as much information as possible to allow camp staff to most appropriately assist your camper. Contact the Director for details.

-Something came up! I need someone to pick up my camper who is not on the authorization list. What do I do?

-Email the director (camp@howardnature.org or belmont@howardnature.org). You should call as well to let us know about the changes, but we need to see the name in writing so we can check it against the driver’s license.

**How can I contact you during the day?**

For important issues while camp is in session, please use the following methods to contact us:

- Camp Phone (during Before and After Care): (number assigned in June)
- Mt. Pleasant Office Phone (during business hours) 410-465-8877
- Belmont Office Phone (during business hours) 410-465-8337
- Our Camp Directors may not be at their desks while camp is in session. Please allow 24 hours for an email reply or call our office for assistance.
Fast Facts

Howard County Conservancy- Summer Nature Camps

2020 Dates

Week 1: June 22 to 26
Week 2: June 29 to July 2
Week 3: July 6 to 10
Week 4: July 13 to 17
Week 5: July 20 to 24
Week 6: July 27 to 31
Week 7: August 3 to 7
Week 8: August 10 to 14
Week 9: August 17 to 21

Times

Camp Day: 9:00 am—3:30 pm
Morning Drop Off: 8:45—9:00 am
Afternoon Pick Up: 3:30—3:45 pm
Before Care: 8:00—8:45 am
After Care: 3:45—5:30 pm

Mt. Pleasant

Camp location: 10520 Old Frederick Rd, Woodstock, MD 21163
Phone: 410.465.8877 / Fax: 410.379.1924
Camp Cell phone during Extended Day programs: (number assigned in June)
Email: camp@howardnature.org

Belmont

Camp location: 6553 Belmont Woods Rd, Elkridge, MD 21075
Phone: 410.465.8337 / Fax: 410.379.1924
Email: belmont@howardnature.org

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