

NEARBY NATURE SUMMER DAYCAMPS FAQs

(updated 5-12-20)



1. THE BASICS

Who runs your camps and what is your philosophy? Our camps are hosted by the staff and volunteers of Nearby Nature, a non-profit education organization founded in 1992 and based in Eugene's Alton Baker Park. We believe people of all ages and backgrounds, from the tiniest tots to the wisest elders, thrive when they connect personally with nature nearby. We believe time outside in nature is especially important for children, and contributes significantly to their well-being. Last year, campers in our programs spent 16,000+ healthy and happy hours outside!

Where are your camps located? Almost all of our camps are held in Eugene's Alton Baker Park and based in Nearby Nature's amazing Learnscape Garden and Outdoor Classroom (next to the City's Community Garden). Campers spend all of their time outside, both in the Learnscape and out in the park. We also have one camp based at the Cascades Raptor Center, four at Mount Pisgah Arboretum, and several camps with special field trips that have alternative drop-off and/or pick up locations. See individual camp descriptions for details.

What are your camp hours? Camps run between 9 am and 4 pm. Some are half day (9 am-noon or 1-4 pm) and some are full day (9 am-4 pm). Camps for kids aged five and younger are all half day, but on some weeks we have both morning and afternoon sessions for 4-5 year olds, which allows for all day attendance.

Do you have pre-camp, lunch, or after-camp care? New as of mid-May, due to COVID-19 precautions, all children must remain with their camp cohort of 10 or fewer children throughout the week. As a result, drop-in childcare and mixed groups of kids from different camps (before or after camps) are **not** allowed. We will, however, be providing pre-camp, lunchtime, and after-camp care options for your child's camp cohort for most camps.

If you would like to drop off your child up to 30 minutes before camp starts or pick up your child up to 30 minutes after camp ends, please choose the appropriate *Flexible Arrival and Pick-Up* option for a flat rate of \$35/week when you register.

You may sign up and use this option every day or just on days that you need extra time. **Drop in care is not available.**

Lunch care is free on weeks when kids are signed up for both a morning and an afternoon half day camp. If you registered for care before May 13th, we will contact you to explain how your registration has been adjusted as needed.

Note: Flexible Arrival and Pick-Up care are not available for Raptors and the Ridgeline and only pre-camp care is available at Mount Pisgah Arboretum camps.

What ages do you serve? We have camps for kids ages 3-13: Minnows (ages 3-4), Dragonflies (ages 4-5), Tree Frogs (ages 6-8), Blue Herons (ages 8-11), and Owls (ages 9-13). Note: As of May 13th, kids ages 9-10 are now also permitted to join Owls camps (formerly only 11-13) if they meet the required biking pre-requisites. Children in Minnows camps must be potty-trained.

How many children and instructors are in a group? Due to state guidance as of May 13th, we are limiting our camp groups to 10 participants. Each group has a paid lead instructor plus at least one (and sometimes two) trained assistants.

Note: As of May 13th, we are still seeking clarification regarding whether or not we can host teen Outdoor Leaders this summer.

Who are your camp instructors and volunteers? Each Nearby Nature lead instructor is an experienced outdoor educator. All lead instructors are certified in First Aid and CPR and have passed background checks. Short biographies are posted on our website at nearbynature.org/about-us/staff. Our volunteers are trained assistants from all walks of life. Many of our volunteers also work with our school programs and some of our teen assistants were once campers themselves!

2. COSTS and SCHOLARSHIPS

What do your camps cost? Half day camps cost \$120-\$130/week for members and \$140-\$150/week for non-members. Full day camps cost \$240-\$255/ week for members and \$280-\$295/ week for non-members. Camps with slightly higher fees include special locations, activities, visitors, or field trips.

How do I become a member and get camp discounts? You can sign up for a \$55/year membership online when you register for camps. This membership will qualify you for camp discounts as well as free entry into lots of programs throughout the year.

Do you have scholarships and how do I apply? Nearby Nature believes all children should have access to affordable outdoor adventures in nature nearby. Camp scholarship assistance is available thanks to the Nearby Nature's Youth Scholarship Fund. To apply, fill out the Scholarship section in your registration form online.

Can I make a donation to the Youth Scholarship Fund? Yes! If your family has the means to help us make our camps accessible to all children, we will happily accept your donation. You can make your donation online when you register for camps.

What is your cancellation policy? Cancellation before 6 pm on Monday two weeks before your camp starts qualifies you for a full refund minus the non-refundable \$35 deposit (\$10 for scholarship recipients). Cancellation by 6 pm on Monday one week before your camp starts qualifies you for a 50% refund of camp tuition. No refunds can be made for cancellations after 6 pm on Monday one week before camp starts. Cancellation by us may happen if there is insufficient enrollment seven days prior to a camp. You will be notified promptly and your full payment refunded.

Note: In case of a local, state, or nationally mandated COVID-19 cancellation of all camp activities, we will revise our policies as needed.

3. REGISTRATION QUESTIONS

How do I register? Register on-line at campscui.active.com/orgs/NearbyNature. For Spanish language assistance with registration, email programs@nearbynature.org or call 541-687-9699.

What should I do if I think my child would do better in an age group other than their own?

Our policy is to keep children together with their age level peers, however, we are willing to consider your request. Please contact our Summer Daycamps Coordinator at programs@nearbynature.org or 541-687-9699 to discuss your child's situation. Exceptions to this policy are made on a case by case basis.

What if my child wants to attend camp with a friend? As long as the campers are in the same age group, this is fine. Please note the friend's name on your child's registration form and we will be sure to keep the kids together.

4. CAMP LOGISTICS

Where should I drop off my child for camp? Our goal this summer will be minimize check-in lines and the mixing of families from different camps at drop off and pick up times in order to support physical distancing measures. The week before your camp, you will receive a pre-camp logistics letter that will let you know where you should park when you arrive for camp and where specifically you should drop off your child for camp. For camps in Alton Baker Park, you will generally park in front of the Community Gardens next to the Park Host House and Learnscope. For Google maps, our street address is 622 Day Island Road, Eugene, OR 97401. (*Note: This is NOT our mailing address. Our mailing address is PO Box 3678, Eugene, OR 97403.*) For detailed directions, see nearbynature.org/about-us/directions. For offsite camps, directions will be provided in the pre-camp logistics letter.

If we are biking to camp, is there a safe place for my child and/or me to lock up a bike?

There is a covered bike rack just outside of our Yurt (on the road to the left of the blue Park Host House on our site). Be sure to bring a secure lock.

What should my child bring to camp? Whatever your child brings should fit in a youth-sized backpack. **Please DO NOT send toys or electronics.** If your child brings a cell phone for photos or communication, your child must take full responsibility for the phone and should not use it unless it is needed for a special activity. You may send sunscreen with your kids if they are allowed to apply it themselves. Otherwise, please apply it at home before camp. For half day camps, send a water bottle and a substantial snack. If your child is staying until 12:30, please send a lunch or a second snack. If your child is arriving at 12:30 pm for a 1 pm camp, feel free to send lunch or a snack. For full day camps, send two snacks plus a lunch. We will provide guidance in the future if additional supplies, such as masks or personal hand sanitizer, are needed.

What should my child wear to camp? Campers should generally wear close-toed shoes and dress in layers. Send a hat, jacket, and extra clothing as needed. Your instructor will let you know in advance if water play is part of the plan for the week, and will alert you if extra clothes or water shoes are needed.

May I visit my child at camp? Due to COVID-19 concerns, and our efforts to maintain a consistent small cohort of camp participants throughout the week, parental visits to camp will be limited. Please let our Summer Daycamps Coordinator know if you have a concern that necessitates a visit to your child's camp and we will try to come up with a solution that works for everyone.

What if we need to arrive late or leave early? Please try to limit late arrivals and early departures. Our campers frequently hike out into the park, so changes in your schedule may get in the way of fun planned activities. If an alternative drop off or pick up time is critical, be sure to let your child's instructor know in advance and we will do our best to accommodate you.

What if I'm late picking up my child? Your child's safety is a priority and we will never leave a camper unattended. Please arrive on time, however, because our instructors work hard and need their breaks. If you are more than 10 minutes late and we haven't been able to contact you, we will call the alternative and/or emergency contacts on your registration form to make arrangements with one of them to pick up your child. If you are 10+ minutes late more than once, we reserve the right to charge a late fee to help pay for the additional staffing required to supervise your child. Remember ~~also~~ that you can enroll in our Flexible Arrival and Pick-Up program (which gives you a 30 minute drop-off and pick up window) for most camps.

What is your behavior policy? In our experience, when kids are outside, and engaged in activities that allow them to move their bodies, use their voices, and exercise their minds, behavior challenges often disappear. We also believe that inappropriate behavior can be minimized with clear expectations. We have a few simple but firm behavior guidelines that we discuss with the kids on their first day of camp, as well as a clear set of consequences for not following these guidelines. You will be asked to review these policies with your child when you register for a camp. If your child has identified behavior challenges, please alert us so that we are prepared to address them appropriately and know how to best support your child and/or call on you for additional support as needed.

If I need to get in touch with someone at Nearby Nature during camp, what number should I call? Please call the office at 541-687-9699. If our staff is outside, and no one answers, please leave a message for our Summer Daycamps Coordinator. We will check for messages periodically during the day. If you have an emergency and need to speak with someone immediately, call the Coordinator's cell, which will be included in your pre-camp details letter.

5. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

What happens if my child gets sick or injured at camp? Depending on the level of illness or injury, we will contact you (or your emergency contact if you cannot be reached). In the event of a serious injury we'll call emergency services and then contact you. Our instructors all have First Aid and CPR certification and are trained to evaluate illness and injury. See also our Communicable Disease Management Plan and our Illness and Sanitation Policies (currently being developed).

What are you doing to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 at your camps? Please see our Communicable Disease Management Plan and our Illness and Sanitation Policies (currently being developed) for details on how we plan keep our students and staff safe at summer camps this year.

Do you provide food for my child? We do not provide snacks or lunches for our campers. We also have a “no food sharing” policy due to allergies, diet preferences, and COVID-19 concerns. We do, however, occasionally provide food for special camp activities like solar cooking, bike smoothies, or ice cream making. If we provide such food, it will be handled only by instructors who will follow our Communicable Disease Management and Illness and Sanitation Policies (currently being developed). We also allow staff and students to harvest fruits and vegetables in our Learnscape Garden. For the summer of 2020, children will eat only food they have collected and processed/washed themselves. If there is *anything* your child cannot eat for any reason, please let us know on your registration form.

What happens in case of bad weather or poor air quality? While we plan to go out rain or shine, our covered Discovery Lab and Star Stage, handy pop-up tents, and Yurt can provide shelter if it ever gets really wet. In extremely hot weather we spend lots of time in shady places, wading in the river, or playing in our Learnscape sprinklers. In case of poor air quality, we may have access to indoor space at the Park Maintenance Facility next to our site in Alton Baker Park for games, art, and storytelling activities. Access to this space, however, may be limited in 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns. You are always welcome to keep your child at home if the weather is inclement or the air quality is poor, but refunds will not be made for circumstances beyond our control.

6 OTHER QUESTIONS?

Please let us know if you have additional questions we haven't answered in this document. You can reach our Summer Daycamps Coordinator at 541-687-9699 or programs@nearbynature.org.

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