



*Nature camp exists to educate a community of interested individuals and to inspire a commitment to conserve and sustain the environment and its natural resources as responsible stewards of the Earth.*

# NATURE CAMP

## THOSE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND

Each summer Nature Camp offers four, two-week sessions by age group for students from 5th grade through high school. It is intended for those with a genuine interest in conservation, the out-of-doors and the natural world. Campers attend class daily and are expected to complete all class assignments. Those seeking a solely recreational experience will not be happy here. Campers must be willing and able to hike and be comfortable in outdoor settings. Although most campers live in Virginia, applicants from any state are welcome.



*I have attended Nature Camp for [six] years and have never had a more rewarding experience. Nature Camp has taught me what one person who cares can do to make a difference.... I have made friendships at Nature Camp that promise to last a lifetime.*

Lucy A. • Ruckersville, VA

For more information, session dates,  
and an application for enrollment, please visit  
[www.naturecamp.net](http://www.naturecamp.net)

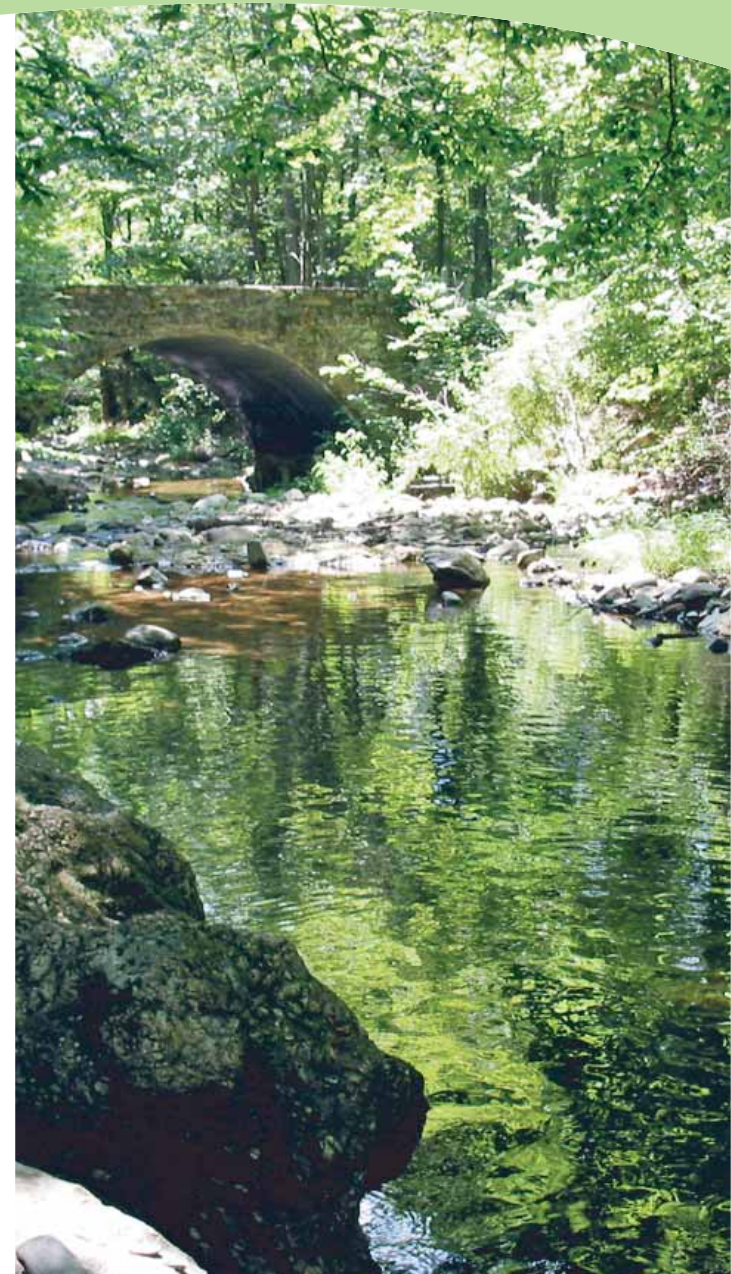
or contact the camp director:

Philip P. Coulling  
835 Sugar Creek Rd.  
Lexington, VA 24450

540-460-7897

[director@naturecamp.net](mailto:director@naturecamp.net)

There is even an annual five-day session for adults of all ages. Details are available from the website above by following the link for Adult Session.





*Nature Camp is a private, residential, coeducational summer camp specializing in outdoor education in natural history and environmental studies for youth.*



One of the oldest camps of its kind in the country, Nature Camp has since 1942 sought to train a corps of interested and knowledgeable youth to conserve and protect the environment and to become wise stewards of the natural resources of the earth. We hope to foster an appreciation for and love of nature through direct experience and to inspire the young people of today to become environmentally responsible and conscientious citizens of tomorrow.

Nestled in an isolated and idyllic valley by the banks of Big Mary's Creek on the George Washington National Forest in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Rockbridge County, Virginia, Nature Camp operates under a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service. Several thousand acres of National Forest land provide us with an extensive outdoor classroom of forested mountains and streams.



*Nature Camp is the real deal, a hotbed of budding ornithologists...*

Dr. Dan Cristol • Associate Professor of Biology, College of William and Mary



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Nature Camp is first and foremost an academic camp that emphasizes hands-on, field-based, experiential learning. Campers learn in a variety of settings, including classrooms both inside and out, and spend much of their time behind the eyepieces of binoculars, knee-deep in a cold stream, running behind a butterfly net, and on their hands and knees with eyes peeled on the ground.

The daily schedule is organized around 90-minute classes in the morning and afternoon in various subjects in the life and physical sciences, conservation, and environmental awareness. A core set of courses offered nearly every summer includes botany, ecology, entomology, geology, herpetology, limnology, and ornithology. Eleven different courses are typically offered each session. Each camper chooses a subject to major in and receives at least fifteen hours of instruction in this subject. During other class periods, they take short courses in the ten remaining subjects. For each class campers complete a written class project which they compile into a notebook. Assignments are appropriate for each age group and are intended to be both engaging and educational.

## FACILITIES

Boy and girls are housed separately in large, screened and well-ventilated bunkhouses with resident counselors. Adjacent bath houses include hot showers. A central dining hall provides family-style dining and also serves as a meeting place for evening programs and talent shows. An infirmary houses an Emergency Medical Technician or nurse and facilities to treat minor complaints and illnesses. More serious problems are treated by a local physician or hospital in nearby Lexington. An educational building contains a lab, a small natural history museum and a library of several thousand volumes. A simple yet elegant stone chapel provides the setting for non-sectarian services led by the counselors.

## DAILY LIFE

Each day begins with Reveille at 7:30 a.m. and ends with Taps between 9:30 and 10:30 p.m. Campers enjoy abundant free time that offers numerous opportunities to work on class projects. They can also engage in informal nature study, chat with friends, and participate in many structured outdoor activities. A swimming pool is staffed by certified lifeguards, and Big Mary's Creek also provides welcome relief on hot days. A recreation field has courts for volleyball, basketball and tetherball, as well as open space for Frisbee, kickball and other games. With mountains on either side of Nature Camp, there are also countless possibilities for hiking, and several hikes are typically offered during recreation periods. Evening programs feature presentations from counselors or outside speakers, talent shows, campfires, and nature films.



## STAFF

The summer staff typically numbers 20-25, with 16-20 bunkhouse counselors. With a capacity of about 90 campers, Nature Camp achieves a ratio of four or five campers per counselor. Summer staff members, most of whom are college students or recent graduates, are selected based on their passion for teaching, knowledge of natural history and environmental subjects, ability to engage and supervise campers, and integrity, self-discipline, and professionalism. The staff receives intensive training at the beginning of the summer, including certification in First Aid and CPR.

*I do not know of anyone [who] has attended Nature Camp [who] has not been profoundly impacted by the experience. Among summer camps Nature Camp is . . . unique in its experience and ability to make lifelong changes to those so touched . . . [It] challenges us to get in touch with the beauty of our environment, provides a unique learning experience, and truly . . . touches deeply and indelibly into our souls.*

Mason Hearn • Richmond, VA—1970's camper and parent of current camper

