What better way to learn and promote environmental stewardship than holding a butterfly net in one hand or wading knee-deep in a mountain stream?

For over 75 years, Nature Camp has taught youth summer campers to conserve and protect the environment, becoming wise stewards of earth’s natural resources.

Nestled in an idyllic valley in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, about halfway between Staunton and Lexington, our setting provides us an extensive outdoor classroom of several thousand acres of pristine forested mountains and streams.

Eligibility

With a capacity of about 90 campers per session, Nature Camp offers four two-week sessions by age group for students from 5th grade through high school, from mid-June through mid-August. Youth attend classes daily, engage in self-directed learning, and must be able to hike and be comfortable in outdoor settings.

For more information, session dates, and an application for enrollment, please visit www.naturecamp.net

or contact the Camp Director:
Philip P. Coulling
PO Box 366  |  Lexington, VA 24450
540-460-7897  |  director@naturecamp.net

We also offer 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 the real deal, a hotbed of budding ornithologists...”
– Dr. Dan Cristol, Chancellor Professor of Biology, College of William & Mary
Through its mission to foster within youth campers a deep and abiding connection to the natural world and a lifelong love of learning, Nature Camp offers an academic program that takes full advantage of our unique setting in the George Washington National Forest. We encourage a hands-on, field-based, experiential approach enabling our campers to learn in a variety of settings focused on being in the great outdoors.

We offer 11 core subjects in the fields of natural history and environmental studies, including botany, ecology, entomology, and geology. Campers self-direct their learning by selecting one ‘major’ subject for in-depth focus while also engaging in all other course topics.

We’re a sleepaway camp and our days are full! From 7:30am to 10pm, our campers enjoy abundant free time that offers numerous opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, strengthen friendships, and participate in a wide variety of activities. When not studying, our co-ed campers can play sports, swim in our pool or Big Mary’s Creek, or go mountain hiking. Evening programs feature presentations from counselors or outside speakers, talent shows, campfires, and nature films.

I have attended Nature Camp for six years and have never had a more rewarding experience! ... I’ve made friendships that promise to last a lifetime.”

– Lucy A., Ruckersville, VA

Camp Life

Our Staff

Camp summer staff members are selected based on their passion for teaching, knowledge of natural history and environmental subjects, and their ability to engage and supervise campers. We achieve a camper/staff ratio of about four to one. The staff receives intensive training at the beginning of the summer, including certification in First Aid and CPR, and all staff must submit to a criminal background check.