

SUMMER CAMP

At Cayuga Nature Center



Voted Best
Summer Camp

2024 PROGRAMS

JULY 1 – AUGUST 30, 2024



CAYUGA NATURE CENTER

Where nature is your teacher,
and Earth is your classroom.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Families of Campers,

A healthy connection with nature starting at a young age is paramount to the development of young minds. We all here at CNC are proud to nurture the future leaders through programs, relationships, games, observation, unguided exploration and full immersion in all aspects of nature.

Since my start as a preschool naturalist counselor, my goal as an educator has always stayed the same: Have all the kids go home tired, dirty and have learned one thing that day. I hope to continue this tradition. Yes, as caregivers, we might get frustrated by the amount of acorns we find in the bottom of the washer machine, or get lost on how to get chalk paint out of hair. But these are memories that campers will remember and we all are glad to be a part of.

I have been with CNC for 10 years now and have seen so many children come and go.

Watching them grow into themselves and to be a part of that, is one the greatest privileges in my line of work. Summer after summer, I thoroughly enjoy seeing who has lost a tooth, or grew 4 inches since the previous summer! I look forward to seeing all the campers both returning and meeting the ones new to us. "Let the wild rumpus begin!"

Sincerely,
Katelin Nelson





ABOUT OUR CAMP

Our summer day camp has been a staple of our educational outreach to the community since its establishment in 1986. Our curriculum approaches learning by integrating hands-on exploration, active game playing, and facilitating conditions for self-discovery of the many wonderful things to be found in our natural world.

The Cayuga Nature Center, a public education venue of the Paleontological Research Institution, provides a wealth of opportunities for nature enthusiasts of all ages to learn about environmental and outdoor education in a fun and engaging way, including through the camps we offer for young people during the year.

Our grounds include 100 acres of diverse habitats for campers to explore on our hiking trails including open fields of native wildflowers, ponds rich with amphibian life, forested gorges with streams and a picturesque waterfall, and educational gardens highlighting themes from pollinator friendly plants to the soil science of organic gardening. Camper favorites include our six-story treehouse and our extensive live animal collection.

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Ages 3–5

PRESCHOOL NATURALISTS

Our preschool naturalists program is offered this year as a full and half-day program. This program utilizes our early-learner room within our lodge and is supervised by staff with experience in the education and care of preschool-aged children.

Please note: all participants in our preschool program must be fully potty-trained.

FULL & HALF DAY PROGRAMS

3 HALF DAY SPOTS

9 FULL DAY SPOTS

FULL DAY 9 am–4 pm

Drop off as early as 8:30 am, pick up between 3:45–4:30 pm

Registration fees (per week):
\$375 members / \$400 non-members

For campers who have not yet completed kindergarten, our full-day experience includes an afternoon rest time, and the opportunity to dive deeper into the day's adventures.

HALF DAY 9 am–12 pm

Drop off as early as 8:30 am, pick up between 12–12:30 pm

Registration fees (per week):
\$200 members / \$212 non-members

Campers enjoy extra exploratory time outdoors and additional games and sensory crafts to expand upon the days theme for a more detailed look into the outdoors. A great option for your budding biologist!



"Our child attended for several weeks. The great counselors and variety of activities, even when it rained a lot, were impressive. He really liked his counselors. Their attentiveness, enthusiasm, and creativity made him excited to go to camp every day. In second place, the visits with the live animals were a big hit."

-Camp Parent

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

SUPER SPROUTS

WEEK 1: JULY 1–5

Have fun among native flowers and trees and all things green.

WILD ABOUT WILDLIFE

WEEK 2: JULY 8–12

Learn all about the wonders of wildlife as we investigate types of animals around us with the help from our animal ambassadors.

POWERFUL POLLINATORS

WEEK 3: JULY 15–19

Examine the powerful relationships between plants and their pollinator allies through garden walks and interactive games.

A FOREST OF FUN

WEEK 4: JULY 22–26

Get wild in the woods and immerse yourself in the forest for fun and games that explore the many layers of life from the soil to the canopy.

UNDERWATER WORLDS

WEEK 5: JULY 29– AUG. 2

Get your feet wet as we wade around our stream and ponds seeking out aquatic critters while exploring the water cycle.

AWESOME ARTHROPODS

WEEK 5: AUG 5 – 9

Explore the world of all kinds of bugs from wiggly worms to hungry caterpillars to dragonflies.

DELIGHTFUL DECOMPOSERS

WEEK 7: AUG. 12– 16

Discover how dirt is made and the importance of things like roly polly bugs, fungus and worms.

EXPLORING EVOLUTION

WEEK 8: AUG. 19–23

We'll explore animals through time and what adaptations they had to survive. This week will include a trip to The Museum of the Earth, our sister organization.

GREATEST HITS

WEEK 9: AUG. 26–30

Join us as we revisit all the favorite games, activities and spots at the Nature Center.



Ages 6–13

EXPLORER CAMP

9 am–4 pm

Drop off as early as 8:30 am,
pick up between 3:45–4:30 pm

Our Explorer Camp program features a different theme each week to act as a lens through which we examine the environment and our place within it. Programs and activities are set in the “living classroom” of the outdoors, with emphasis on engaged learning through game play, hands-on activity, and nature study. Campers in this program are grouped by age, and are guided by a team of environmental educators as well as guest speakers from our community. While a wide range of activities is offered daily, individual group schedules are kept flexible to allow campers to contribute ideas and explore preferred topics.

Note: We are excited to bring back field trips to Taughannock on the TCA. Each camp group will go 2 days a week, on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday after lunch and spend the day swimming in the lake and playing on the playground. (Preschool does not attend)

**48 SPOTS
AVAILABLE**

REGISTRATION FEES (per week):
\$350 members / \$375 non-members



AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

SURVIVING CAYUGA-LAND

WEEK 1: JULY 1–5

No summer has been complete without this week for the past 30 years! Always a hit with campers, we work on building outdoor confidence and cultivating valuable woodcraft skills. Campers study age-appropriate and engaging skills including compass building, campfire tips and tricks, cordage crafting, and more, all while immersed in the great outdoors.

WILD ABOUT WILDLIFE

WEEK 2: JULY 8–12

Explore the secretive lives of our local wildlife. Programs and activities will look at the biology and behavior of these animals, and how they interact within their environment. We will comb our woods and fields in a quest for animal signs for clues about diet and movement, and engage in games to explore the factors that control populations, and take a look at our skull collection to better understand the physical differences between predator and prey anatomy.



AVAILABLE PROGRAMS (cont.)

GNARLY NATURE

WEEK 3: JULY 15–19

Come track down all the creepy crawly creatures hiding amongst us. Touch and squish every slimy and gross thing we can find...worms, slime mold, spotted salamanders, and jelly fungus is just the start to the list of the gnarly things nature has to offer.

POWER OF PLANTS

WEEK 4: JULY 22–26

From the trees over our head to the weeds under our feet, this week we explore the massive kingdom of plants. The focus is on the life cycle of a plant, from seed propagation to the decomposition of a log, to cultivate a broader understanding of how energy moves through a forest. In addition, campers will meet and learn about some of our notable native trees and plants, and experiment with ways in which humans have harnessed the power of plants.

HABITATS ARE HOMES

WEEK 5: JULY 29–AUG. 2

Enjoy a guided immersion into a different habitat each day on our 100 acre property. The focus is on the communities of life within land and aquatic settings, with a discussion how each can provide for the needs of its inhabitants. By viewing the habitat as a home, campers learn that, despite the many differences in each, all exhibit fundamental characteristics necessary for the survival of the life they support.

AWESOME ARTHROPODS

WEEK 6: AUG 5 - 9

Discover the most diverse group of animals on the planet; arthropods! We will explore the varied and vital roles they play within our ecosystems—from pollinators to predators. Unlock the complexity of social bug life by taking a journey into a hive, catch-and-release insects in our fields for closer observations, and craft cozy shelters for our beneficial bugs.



UNDERWATER WORLDS

WEEK 7: AUG. 12–16

From the familiar shores of Cayuga Lake, to the deepest depths of the oceans, we'll dive into one of the Earth's most important elements this week; water. Campers will learn about the fantastic fish and aquatic life of our lake and its tributaries, join in on a guided wading walk to learn about the Nature Center's own gorge and waterfall, and discover the native and introduced aquatic species of our area in our twin 650-gallon aquariums.

EXPLORING EVOLUTION

WEEK 8: AUG. 19–23

This week will focus on the evolution of animals from prehistoric times to today. We'll look at animals from dinosaurs, to large extinct mammals and birds, to modern day animals and how their adaptations helped them survive! This week will include a trip to the Museum of the Earth, our sister museum.

GREATEST HITS

WEEK 9: AUG. 26–30

Join us as we revisit all the favorite games, activities and spots at the Nature Center. Though there will be no swimming at Taughannock this week, we'll make up for that with epic water games, races and picnics.



Ages 10–13

BACKWOODS BASE CAMP

9 am–4 pm

Drop off as early as 8:30 am,
pick up between 3:45–4:30 pm

Let's set up camp! We'll hike to our basecamp everyday and spend the day crafting and honing skills to help build the most awesome camping spot. Let's build forts, learn to use knives and tools to build and create. Join us and watch the progress throughout the weeks. We also will be swimming at Taughannock and participating in educational programs about the world around us, knowledge is power!

AVAILABLE:

WEEK 1: JULY 1– 5

WEEK 2: JULY 8–12

WEEK 3: JULY 15–19

WEEK 4: JULY 29– AUGUST 2

**12 SPOTS
AVAILABLE**

REGISTRATION FEES (per week):
\$350 members / \$375 non-members





YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

COUNSELOR IN TRAINING PROGRAM

AGES 14-16

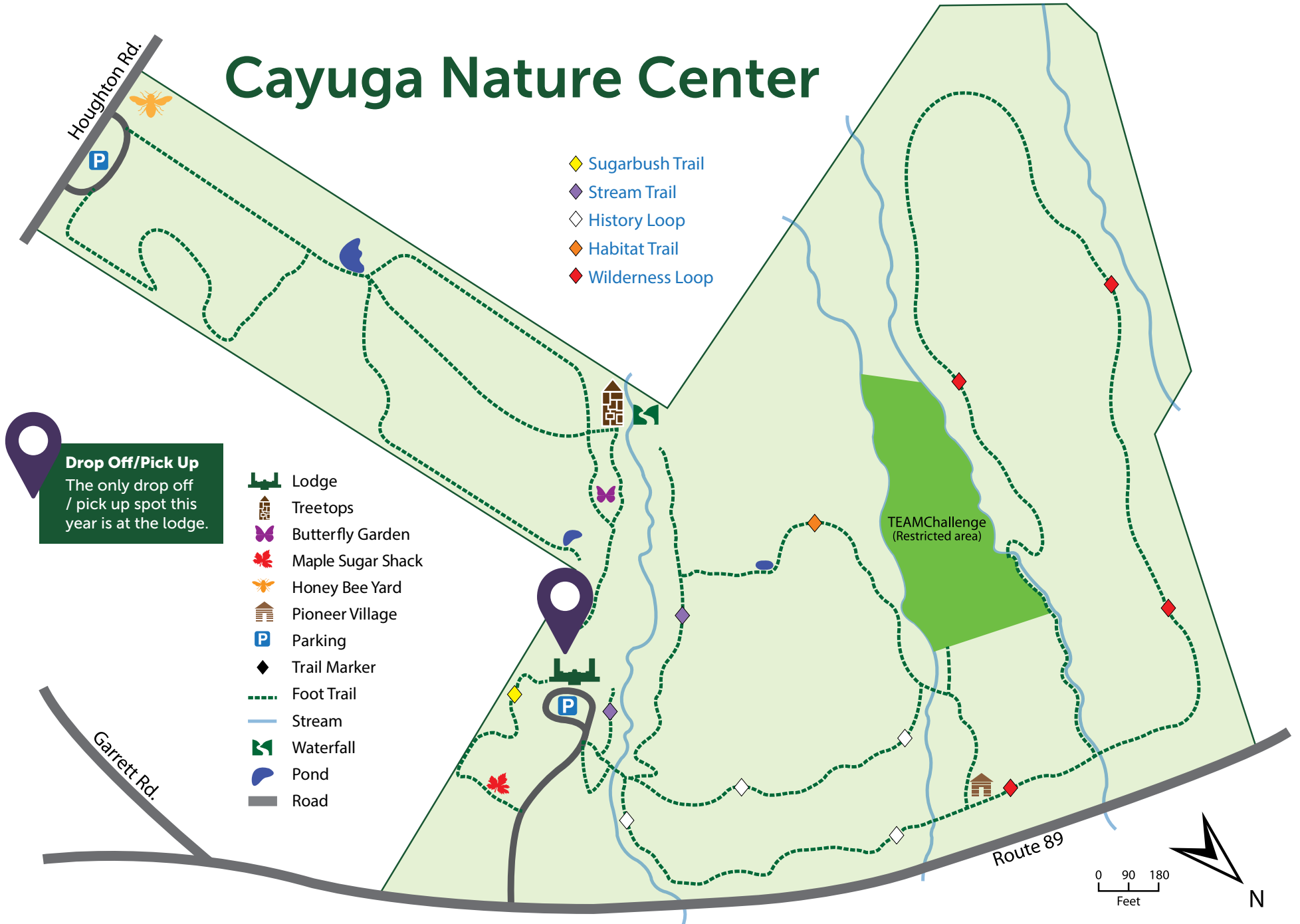
Joining the CIT program, youth will be able to set goals for growth and have a guided experience to build their skills. This will include training, shadowing a counselor, meetings with our administrative staff every week. Let us help your youth build their skills for better employment in their future!

Training with the campers and staff will consist of being matched with a Counselor in a unit to provide assistance during program time, meals, and field trips. CIT's will have contact/meetings with Administrative staff, Camp Director and Head Counselors. This is a great way to get experience and training for future employment with us or else where!

Price: Free



Cayuga Nature Center





SAFETY PROTOCOLS

General Safety

- Masks are optional for all campers.
- All campers will need to be able to apply sunscreen, bug spray and masks by themselves.
- We are continuing to keep all individual groups smaller than required.
- Lunches and snacks will need to be brought by the campers. We are choosing to not serve snacks again this year to lower the risk of more than one person contacting the snack before the children receive it.
- We will have campers outside as much as possible and in case of inclement weather the building will be utilized.

Preschool Naturalist Program | Ages 3-5

- We will be offering full and half day enrollment. The drop off time is the same, pick up time for half day is at 12:30
- All 5 year olds will be in our Preschool Program, there will not be an Explorer Camp option offered for 5 year olds. Speak with the camp director if you have questions about this.
- Many younger kids might have hesitation with using the port-a-potties. To mitigate this, the preschool aged kids will only use the indoor bathroom.
- The kids will be allowed to play with certain toys in the Early Learner space, and they will be sanitized on a rotating schedule
- Nap time/Relaxation time will take place in the Early Learner space. All mats will be sanitized after each use.





REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To Register

Sign up online! Visit: www.priweb.org/summercamp for links to our registration system through the ACTIVE Network. With your account on ACTIVE, you can update camper information, view balances, make payments, submit medical records, and save time when registering for future seasons.

Payment Policy

A non-refundable deposit of \$100.00 per week enrolled is due at time of registration to hold your camper's space within the program. Your enrollment is not finalized and space within the program is not guaranteed until a deposit is received. Full payment is due 3 weeks prior to your campers first day of attendance. If payment is not received, your camper will be un-enrolled from the program and the deposit retained by the Cayuga Nature Center.

Participant Cancellation Policy

If you must cancel enrollment, our refund policy is as follows:

- If you cancel over 22 days prior to the start date of the week you are canceling enrollment for, you are entitled to a full refund.
- If you cancel 8-22 days prior to the start date of the week you are canceling enrollment for, the Nature Center will retain half the full payment for the program.
- If you cancel within 8 days of the start date of the week you are canceling enrollment for, or after the program has begun, there will be no refunds.
- If your child is sick or exposed to COVID-19 prior to camp, you are entitled to a full refund.
- If your child becomes sick or exposed to COVID-19 during camp and has to be sent home, there will be no refunds.
- If camp is canceled due to inclement weather, you will not receive a refund for the canceled day of camp.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Enrolling in a membership to our parent organization, the Paleontological Research Institution, at the Family level or above allows access to member pricing for all of our camps.

This pricing is equivalent to a \$25 discount for each week of camp that you purchase. In addition, our members enjoy:

- FREE admission for a year to the Museum of the Earth and Cayuga Nature Center for your entire household.
- FREE reciprocal admission to 350+ science centers and museums worldwide through the ASTC passport program.
- Discounts on education programs, lectures, field trips, and special events.
- Discounts on publications and gift shop merchandise.

You can purchase/renew a membership when you register using our camp software. You only need one membership per household to receive the discount.

For more information about memberships visit www.priweb.org/memberships

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

The Young Naturalist Access Program provides Tompkins County young people (under 17) facing difficult circumstances with a special free membership program that includes one week of summer camp at Cayuga Nature Center (for ages 3-13 only) and a one-year YNAP Youth Membership to PRI's public educational venues, the Cayuga Nature Center and the Museum of the Earth. YNAP provides young people and their families/caregivers all of the benefits of a regular PRI membership plus free access to all of our ticketed events, and local Fossil Field Trips, as well as one week of free camp, as space is available.

To apply, or to learn more about this program, visit www.priweb.org/ynap

For questions regarding membership or scholarship status, please contact our Membership Department at membership@priweb.org.



PACKING LIST

We recommend sending the following items with your camper packed in a sturdy backpack appropriate to your camper's physical size. (Please no roller-backpacks as they do not travel well on our trails.) We also recommend labeling all items with your campers first and last name so they can easily be returned if they are misplaced.

Every Day (Monday – Friday)

- Water bottle
- Change of clothes (including socks)
- Rain jacket
- Hiking boots or athletic shoes that are ok to get dirty (please do not pack Crocs)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent spray (optional)
- Large lunch that does not require refrigeration or a microwave for preparation, and necessary eating utensils.
- Afternoon snack (note: we will not be providing campers snacks this year)
- 2 or 3 extra masks
- Swim wear (while we will not be swimming in the lake this year, we will be playing water games and going in the creek at times)

Please do not send with your campers hand-held gaming devices or cell phones. If you would prefer your camper to carry a cell phone for emergency purposes, please advise them before they attend camp that all phones must be stored in their backpack at all times during the camp day. Use of iPods or mp3 devices to listen to music during appropriate times at camp may be allowed on a case-by-case basis assuming it is not disruptive to the program or other participants.





DAILY SCHEDULE

Parents may drop off their camper as early as 8:30 am at the Cayuga Nature Center Lodge. Campers will be offered games and activities before the scheduled programs begin at 9 am.

Each day will feature a diverse range of educational outdoor games, guided hikes, and crafts based on the weekly theme and the age of your camper. Most activities are led by staff with additional support from guest speakers and educators from other community organizations.

Please pack your camper a nutritious lunch that does not require refrigeration or a microwave for preparation. Note that this year we will not be providing snacks for campers. All campers must provide their own food.

Since many of our activities take place outdoors, and are spread throughout the property, please notify our administrative staff if you need to arrange a pick-up before 3:45 pm for full day camp. Campers will be offered card games, craft activities, or the chance to relax during pick-up time. This service is offered until 4:30 pm. A late pick-up fee of \$15 for each additional 15-minute increment after 4:30 pm will be charged to cover supervision costs.

DROP-OFF & PICK UP INFO

The Cayuga Nature Center is located at 1420 Taughannock Blvd., Ithaca, New York. The Nature Center is just five miles north of the Hangar Theatre on Route 89, and three miles south of Taughannock Falls State Park.

Camper check-in is between 8:30-9:00 am. Please arrive no later than 8:55 am on Mondays as staff will need to check that the proper paperwork, including insurance and immunization information, are on file for your camper.

Pick-up is between 3:45-4:30 pm. Please notify our camp office to arrange early pick-ups for full day camp (any pick-up before 3:45 pm) so that we can assure your camper is ready and waiting at the time of your arrival. Pick-ups after 4:30 pm may incur a late pick-up fee.

TCAT BUS OPTION IS BACK!

Bus is first come first serve and there is a place on the registration to indicate interest. We will let you know if your child is on the list no later than one week before.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

“My camper is 5, and during the school year attended full-day programs. Which camp should he/she attend, the full-day preschool program or the explorer camp program?”

We currently only accepting 5-year-olds in our preschool program this year. But speak to the Camp Director, exceptions are made on a case by case basis.

Can my child take the bus to camp?

Yes! The TCAT Bus option is back again this year. Bus is first come first serve and there is a place on the registration to indicate interest. We will let you know if your child is on the list no later than one week before.

Can I request my camper to be grouped with another camper?

Campers are grouped by age and maturity level. Parents may request their child be placed in the same group with a maximum of two other campers during registration. We prefer that both campers request to be grouped together and are the same age. Our staff will do its best to accommodate these group requests, however, we cannot guarantee that all requests can be honored.

Will there be food served during the day?

Campers in all programs should pack a lunch every day. We will not be providing snacks to campers again this year.

What if my child has medical concerns or food allergies?

Our Health Director reviews all medical forms and notifies the appropriate staff of any concerns. Any daily medications must be taken at home, or self-administered by the camper under staff supervision. For nut allergies, we maintain a peanut free table in our common area and campers are not allowed to share food.

What if I need to change the week my camper is registered for?

For registration changes, please email your request to camp@cayuganaturecenter.org and we will be happy to modify your registration, provided that the week you wish to switch into is not



sold out.

What is the refund policy if I have to cancel?

If you must cancel enrollment, our refund policy is as follows:

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- If your child is sick or exposed to COVID-19 prior to camp, you are entitled to a full refund.
- If your child becomes sick or exposed to COVID-19 during camp and has to be sent home, there will be no refunds.

I can't log into my online user account.

Please note that since our registration software is hosted by the [ACTIVE Network](#), the Cayuga Nature staff cannot assist with user name or password retrieval for your account. For account help, please contact the ACTIVE Help & Support staff

SUMMER CAMP

1420 Taughannock Blvd
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 273-6260
www.priweb.org/summercamps



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