

WELCOME TO SUMMER CAMP AT



Audubon | VERMONT

We are so excited to welcome you to the Green Mountain Audubon Center for summer camp! This Camp Guide contains information for participants and their caregivers at both Preschool Nature Camp (PNC) and Ecology Day Camp (EDC). Please read through the details below and include your camper where appropriate.



Mission first, people always

The birds Audubon pledges to protect differ in color, size, behavior, geographical preference, and countless other ways. We honor and celebrate the equally remarkable diversity of the campers we serve.

We ask that all who come to Audubon Vermont contribute to a safe and welcoming environment. We respect the individuality of each member of our community, and we are committed to a camp experience for kids and their adults free of any kind of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, national or ethnic origin, politics, or veteran status.

In addition to teaching about nature we teach kindness and respect. We expect all who come to our camps-- staff, volunteers, campers, and caregivers-- to help us build and maintain this safe and welcoming space for all.

In this packet, you will find:

- General Camp Information
- Daily Schedule & Routines
- Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures
- What to Bring & Wear and What to Leave at Home
- Staying Healthy at Camp
- Emergency Procedures and Communication
- Behavior Expectations Code of Conduct

WWW.VT.AUDUBON.ORG/CAMPS



General Camp Information

Camp Hours, Absence, & Phone Number

Camp Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 9:00AM - 4:00PM

FRIDAYS: 9:00AM - 3:30PM

Closing Circle, Families invited Fridays at 3pm

***Half-day PreK Camp:**
9:00AM- 12:00PM

Early drop-off available
\$10/day at 8:15AM

Our programs have a prompt start and end time each day.

Pre-Care starts at 8:15AM and registration is required. If you are registered for pre-care, please drop off as close to 8:15AM as you can or wait for regular drop-off at 8:45AM-- this gives our pre-care teachers a chance to get into something fun while other teachers can set up with minimal interruption.

Camp begins at 9:00 AM and ends at 4:00 PM every day but Friday. Fridays we end at 3:30 PM after our 3 PM closing circle.

All children must be signed in and out by an adult each day. Sorry, we cannot sign you in before 8:45 am unless you are registered for pre-care. If you would like to pick up your child before 3:45pm, you also need to coordinate that with us ahead of time.

If your camper is going to be absent, tardy, picked-up early, or you have other important information you need to relay to camp, please call our office at 802-434-3068. If it is before 8am or after 4:30pm, please leave a message.

Camp Locations (yes, plural!)

Ecology Day Camp: These campers meet on our "lower property" at the Clubhouse. Please park in the Sugarhouse Parking Lot on the Richmond/Huntington Road. [There is a map here.](#)

- For Google Maps: Search for Audubon Vermont Sugarhouse Parking Area or use address
368 Main Rd, Huntington, VT
- For Waze: Search for Audubon Vermont Sugarhouse Parking Area or use address
260 Main Road, Huntington, VT
- For Apple Maps: Our Sugarhouse Parking Area is not listed in Apple Maps.

- Please park tight as this parking lot gets very busy at drop off, with field trips, and on hot days with river visitors. Please do not park along Main Road.
- Please walk with your child towards our Sugarhouse, and up the stairs or around the trail to our Clubhouse. This is our home base! Children must be signed in and out by an authorized adult each day .



Preschool Nature Camp: These campers meet on our "upper property" at the Education Barn. The barn is across the lawn from our office at **255 Sherman Hollow Road**. [There is a map here.](#) There is a reserved handicap space closest to the ramp of the barn. The education barn has 3 connected small lots, again, please park tight and use all 3 so we can fit all staff and parents.



When you arrive

When you arrive, you will meet a staff person who will welcome you and show you where to put your gear. You will sign in with your instructor and have a chance to talk with them about any concerns and what the plan is for the day. This is a great time to let staff know things like how your camper is feeling or something they might need physically or emotionally. If we are planning a snack, staff will check in with you as well (ex. popsicles on a hot day, wild edible sumac lemonade, etc).

If you haven't already applied sun screen and bug spray, now you can do so with your camper, just step slightly aside from the rest of the group. Please do not spray bug spray or sunscreen inside the clubhouse or barn. You can then return it to your camper's backpack so we can help them reapply at lunch time.

Anxious to know who your camp instructors will be? [View our Camp Staff page!](#)

How long can I stick around at camp? Great question. Some kids might have a harder time at drop-off than others and a caregiver sticking around for 10-15 minutes to help them get situated and settled can help. However, longer than that can make it hard to start our day, especially with multiple parents still around. Plus, it can be difficult for a kid who is having a hard time and their parent is unable to stick around to see other kids together with their adult at camp. Feel free to go for a hike or visit the river so you are still close by but it feels like you left for your kiddo.

Also, if you give us a call, we are happy to give you updates about your camper and their day.

Daily Routine

Our camp week will be filled with games, hikes, crafts, stories, sit spots, and lots of exploration and play. Our daily schedule goes something like this, though it will shift from day to day:

8:15-8:45	Optional pre-care available. Registration required.
8:45-9:00	Sign-in and welcome activity
9:20	Opening circle and game
10:00	Snack
10:15	Morning activity block
Noon	Lunch with story and quiet activity option (Half-day preschoolers get picked up)
1:00	Afternoon activity block
2:00	(pause for a snack)
3:30	Back to Clubhouse for closing circle
4:00	Pick-up time

CHECK FOR TICKS AND SHOWER EVERY DAY AFTER CAMP!

Friday Early Release and Closing Circle

On Friday, we will host a closing circle beginning at 3:00 PM *NOTE: this is 30 mins earlier than previous years!* Caregivers are invited to come. This gives your camper(s) the opportunity to share their experience at camp with you, plus this is when they get their T-shirt (one shirt per camper per summer)! If you have children at both EDC and PNC, you can pick one child up early to go to the other camp's circle, just let camp staff know and we will make sure they get a t-shirt and recognition.

We also know that not everyone can leave work early. We will make sure camp staff sit with these campers so they feel the love too. Plus, you can also see what we have been up to all week on our [summer camp blog.](#)



What to Bring to Camp



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- Food, and lots of it. Two snacks, a lunch, and a drink (see note about water bottles below) each day. We ask campers to pack out what they packed in. A small bag to gather trash and compost may be helpful. * We will alert families should there be a camper with a food allergy that restricts what you can bring to camp.
- A school backpack to carry your belongings while hiking the trails
- A gear container (containers with a lid are the best because they are critter proof and easy to contain all of the things) big enough to hold the following items:
 - A complete change of clothing including socks and underwear.
 - Water shoes, rubber boots, or old sneakers that can get muddy and wet.
 - A sweater or sweatshirt.
 - Two FULL reusable water bottles (pre-filled at home each day).
 - Sunscreen
 - Insect repellent. [Check out this information from the EPA on an effective repellent for ticks and mosquitos.](#)
 - Waterproof raincoat or poncho, rubber boots, and a hat.
 - A beach towel that will be used to sit on throughout the week.
 - A nature journal notebook of your choice (optional but encouraged!)
 - Closed-toed shoes or secure sandals (flip flops discouraged; sandals with toe-bumpers are ok).
 - Some campers and camp staff may choose to bring and wear face masks while at camp. We support their right to do so.
 - Medications taken while at camp including Emergency Medications and your Action Plan (for Asthma and Allergies with Anaphylaxis). You will need to check these medications in with our staff.

**Campers
must wear
shoes at the
pond & river**

Please label the container, all contents, and everything you bring with your name

You are welcome to leave your gear container at camp each day and only take home the things you need to swap out.

You might need to pack more food for lunches/snacks than you do for a day of school!

What to wear to Camp

Clothing & shoes should be comfortable for a full day of hiking & playing. Our goal is to be outside for as much of the day as safely possible. Please dress for the full range of the day's weather. Check the weather and come prepared, including for rain or wet and muddy conditions as well as heat and sun. Children will come home dirty every day.

We do explore the stream and river but we DO NOT swim at camp! Children will get wet and are welcome to do so in their play clothes. We will provide a private space for them to change into dry clothes. A swimsuit is not necessary,

What to leave at home

- Electronics, including cell phones unless they are used to manage a medical condition like diabetes. Phones will be asked to be put away in a backpack. (we also don't have great service at the Center!)
- Toys and valuables- they are easily lost in the woods and quickly become dirty. (Preschool campers, especially those that struggle with drop off, often find it comforting to keep a stuffy in their cubby. Just beware of the above.)
- Negative Attitudes!
- Illness. If your child is not feeling well, they should stay home.



Staying Healthy At Camp



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Masking is optional in all Audubon Vermont buildings. We understand that some people - even those who are vaccinated, or those who have health concerns, or those who might just feel more comfortable - may choose to wear a mask. We wholeheartedly support their decision.

Please stay home if you or your camper are sick. Thank you for taking these steps, keeping our programs running and the children in our care healthy. If your child is not feeling well, including having any of these symptoms, they need to stay home, or will be sent home early:

- Any temperature of 100.4° F or warmer. Camper can return after being fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medications like Tylenol
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- COVID or other contagious illness
- Coughing that won't stop
- Trouble breathing
- Bad pain- pain that is more than mild and has not eased with medication

Action plans for emergency medications

If your camper requires emergency medication (ex: epi-pen, rescue inhaler) please check in with staff at drop off. In most instances, staff will hold onto medication throughout the day when we are away from the barn or clubhouse.

- If your camper has severe allergies please upload in CampDoc or bring an allergy action plan. Your child likely has something similar for school that should suffice. [They often look like this.](#)
- For asthma, please upload in CampDoc or bring an asthma action plan ([here is one you can download if you don't have one from your doctor.](#))

Medication at Camp

We do our best to accommodate allergens, but we are not a nut or seed free camp. If we have many campers with severe allergies on a particular camp, we will send notice to everyone with a list of allergens to avoid and suggested alternatives. If we are planning a snack or treat at camp, we will try our best to avoid allergens and provide the packaging in advance for families to read, although this is not always possible. Staff are made aware of allergens before camp starts.

If your camper needs to take medication during camp, we need the medication in its prescription bottle with doctor's information and detailed instructions. It must be checked in to camp staff each morning.

Check for ticks and shower within a few hours of being outside.

The best way to prevent tickborne diseases is to prevent tick bites. In Vermont, tickborne illnesses are most often transmitted between early spring and late fall since ticks are most active during warm months. Take action to decrease your risk of infection. Wearing a repellent and checking your body daily for ticks are strategies recommended by the Department of Health. [Learn more from the Department of Health.](#)

[It is also recommended to remove ticks as soon as you can.](#) We will contact parents if we find an embedded tick on a camper and will not attempt to remove it without your permission. Tick removal information from the NY Dept of Health: <https://youtu.be/oGrK4ZKUfhQ>

Severe Weather and Poor Air Quality

In the event of unsafe environmental conditions that require campers to stay indoors, such as poor air quality or thunderstorms, we will seek shelter at our respective camps. We plan our lessons to be able to pivot to indoors if needed. In the rare circumstance that we watch a movie at camp, it will be a video from BBC Earth Kids <https://www.youtube.com/@BBCEarthKids>

Audubon's facilities are not air conditioned and rely on outdoor ventilation and fans for cooling. On excessive heat days we stay in the shade, limit our physical exertion, and seek relief at the stream, river, or other water play. We do not swim at camp and children will never be unattended while near the water, including kiddie pools.

Similarly, we will monitor air quality guidance from the EPA for schools. We will limit the intensity of activities and increase the number of breaks on days when the AQI is over 150. Parents of campers with asthma should follow their asthma action plans and please check in with camp staff at drop-off or by calling our office. View <https://www.airnow.gov/> for air quality information.



Emergency Procedures and Communication with Caregivers

We take safety seriously and have plans in place to respond to emergencies quickly and effectively. Our staff are trained in CPR and First Aid and select staff are also mandated reporters with the state. If a camper is injured, we will provide care within our training to do so. If a child requires medical attention beyond basic first aid, we will call emergency services and contact you immediately.

Communication

In the event of an emergency, we will contact parents as quickly as possible using the phone numbers provided during registration. If we are unable to contact guardians, we will move to your list of emergency contacts.

If there is a camp-wide emergency that requires early pick-up, cancellation of camp, or other information, we will message everyone through a CampDoc email. Please be sure to update the email address in CampDoc to one you check regularly and your spam filters. If we are able, Audubon staff will also send an email from an audubon.org address.

We will always let adults know at pick-up (or by phone call if necessary) if a child has been injured. We will ask you to sign an incident report acknowledging that you have been told about your child's injury for anything that needed a band-aid or more.

Please contact us at any time with questions or concerns at 802-434-3068.



Code of Conduct & Eligibility Criteria

We ask that families read together the camper code of conduct for Audubon Camps. We will hold all people coming to our programs to this standard, including staff, volunteers, campers, caregivers, & adults doing drop off or sign in. Camp staff will remind campers of this agreement during morning meetings and throughout the week.

At Audubon, we practice the Three Respects:

Respect Ourselves

Respect Others

Respect this Place

We will be taking a restorative justice approach to conflict at summer camp. The goal is to step away from punitive behavior management of consequences that come down from adults to campers. Instead, we will be facilitating an approach to conflict resolution that allows for camper's voices to be heard, reduces future harm, and helps kids find a better path forward. Staff will always be part of these conversations and we will loop parents. We will still encourage kids to take a break when they need it or ask them to sit out and take a break with a teacher before rejoining the group.

Bullying is not ever tolerated and Audubon will contact caregivers of all involved parties to inform them of the incident.

If a camper has a particularly rough day, we will ask families to review this code of conduct and the "5 finger Contract" (next page) with their camper and bring a signed copy with them to camp the next day. We start the next day fresh, as there are unwanted behaviors, but not unwanted kids.

A note about pronouns

One way we show each other respect is by inviting campers to share their pronouns if they would like. We introduce pronouns with an example and emphasize that we will respect each other's wishes on how we want to be referred. We simply want to reduce the harm caused by misnaming/misidentifying one another.

We might discuss sex (female, male, etc) but only as it relates to wildlife in an educational setting (for example, differences in plumage or vocalizations in birds between the sexes). For conversations beyond this, we encourage kids to talk to their adults at home. Some families like to have a discussion on pronouns and gender and sex before camp. Here is a resource from Pride Center of Vermont:

<https://www.pridecentervt.org/education/#pronouns>

Review the Eligibility Criteria

We ask that families consider the eligibility criteria for camp. If we feel a camper is not well suited for our program based on these criteria, we will ask for a meeting with caregivers before the camper is able to return. [Take another look at the eligibility criteria here.](#) If you no longer feel that your camper is suited for our programs, please call our office or ask to speak to the Camp Director. We are happy to discuss this with you.

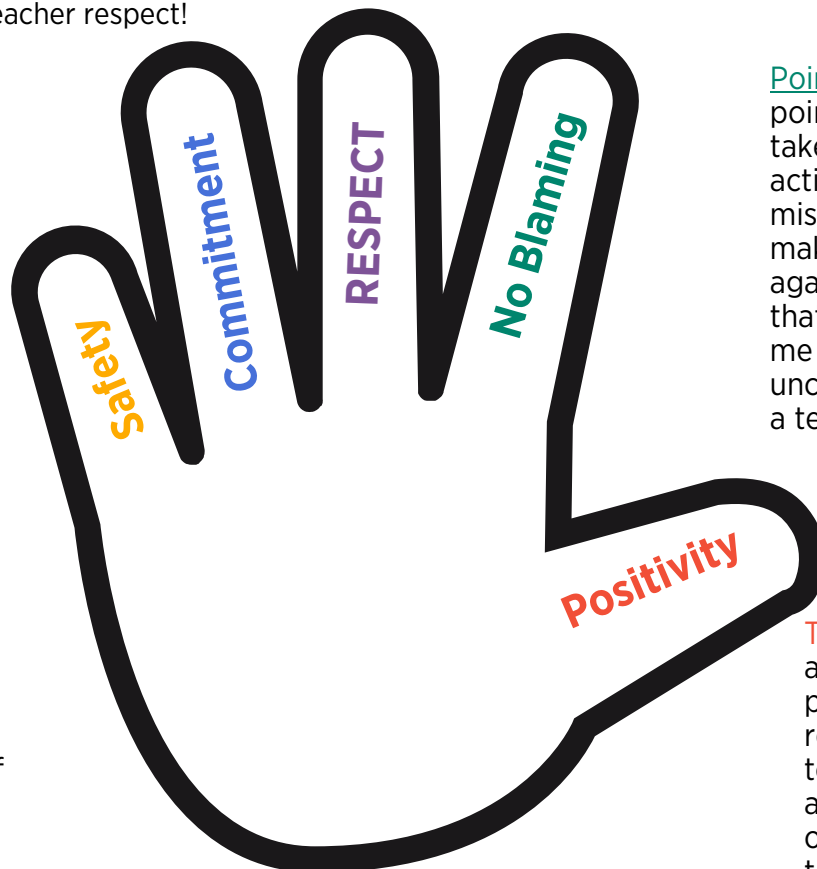
The 5 finger contract

Middle Finger- This is my reminder to be respectful. While at camp that means I will respect myself, other people, and the Audubon Center.

Ring Finger- This is your reminder to stay committed to your group! You will have a teacher who will help you throughout the day and lead you in games and activities. When you are playing games, try your hardest! If the group is doing a game that you don't like, give it a go before saying you don't like it.

- It is very important while at Audubon to stay with your group! You can never run off by yourself, not because we don't trust you, but because our job is to keep everyone safe, and with over 5 miles of trails and 250 acres of land with forest, rivers, and ponds it could be easy to get lost. By staying with your group, you are also showing your teacher respect!

- I can respect myself by coming to camp prepared, so that I have a successful day. If I forget something, I can ask a teacher if there is one I can borrow.
- I can respect myself by listening to my body. It is important to know that you can always tell an Audubon teacher if you are sick, or hurt, or if you need something.
- You can respect other people by washing your hands after using the bathroom.
- You can respect the Audubon staff by listening to rules and instructions.
- You can respect the Audubon Center by staying on the trails when hiking, drawing pictures of the beautiful flower you saw instead of picking it, and helping to clean up after activities.



Pointer finger- I will not point blame at others but take responsibility for my actions. If I make a mistake, it's ok!, I can make it right or try again. If I see something that is not ok, or makes me or another camper uncomfortable, I will tell a teacher.

The Pinky- This is our reminder to help the little guy. At Audubon camp we take care of each other! If someone needs help either tell an adult or help them if you can. For example, if someone's shoe is untied and you know how to tie shoes, that's taking care of one another!

Thumb- Thumbs-up is a way to show positivity! It is my reminder that I will try to have a good attitude, be kind to other campers and teachers, and try my best.