



Audubon

Sharon
Audubon Center

Commonly Asked Questions about Sharon Audubon Center's Summer Nature Programs

Do you offer financial assistance? We have a limited amount of scholarships available for those in need of financial assistance. Applications can be found on our website www.sharon.audubon.org

Is there a sibling discount? At this time, we do not offer discounts for siblings attending camp.

Can my 2nd grader participate in the 3rd-6th grade camp with his sibling? Our camp sessions are designed for the age group and grade in which they are advertised. Because of this, we appreciate your understanding that we do not allow younger children to attend the older camp sessions and vice versa. It would also take up a space for a child in the correct age group who may want to participate in that session.

Can you watch my child for 10 minutes after camp until I can get there? We kindly ask that you pick your child up promptly at 3:00 unless they are scheduled for after-care. If you are running late, please call the Center to notify the staff, however, regular late pickups will be charged the after-care fee for the week.

Can parents stay with the group? Parents are welcome to join the group, however, we found that most students become more involved in group activities and participate better if the parent is not present and therefore we typically discourage parents from staying with the group.

What do I need to bring to camp? Each student should bring water every day, and wear cool, comfortable clothes and closed-toe shoes that are ok to get wet and/or dirty. Campers should also pack a lunch and a small snack. The camp counselors will let parents know in advance if there is something special you will need to bring (like a towel, change of clothes, etc.)

Are there ticks at the Audubon Center? Ticks are common at the Audubon Center. We will be exploring in several habitats where ticks hide during our summer sessions, so the best advice we can give is to do a thorough tick check of your child each and every night before he/she goes to bed.

Can you hold a spot for me? Registration is accepted on a first come, first served basis with full payment. Because our camps fill up so quickly, we are not able to honor hold requests.

Can I pay for camp with a credit card? Yes! Mastercard, Visa or American Express are all acceptable forms of payment. Check is preferred for mailed-in registrations, but we will also accept cash. A separate check for membership is also preferred. We strongly recommend registering and paying online.

What if the session I am interested in is already filled? Our sessions fill quickly. If your first pick is filled, your child can be added to the wait list. If a space becomes available, you will be notified right away. If that person decides not to participate in the program, the next person on the wait list will be notified and so on down the line. If you register online and the session is full, you will automatically be placed on a waitlist, but you will not be charged unless a space opens up.

How many students do you allow per session? Depending on the session, we usually top the number at 14 students. In some instances, with more popular programs, we've had as many as 16 students.

According to state camp regulations, we cannot exceed the ratio of one person age sixteen or older to each nine children under age six, and to each twelve children over six years. We like to keep our ratio even smaller than that so that each child can have more of a one on one experience.

Who are your summer camp counselors? Our head counselors are typically college students or recent college graduates who work at the Audubon Center as Environmental Education Interns, therefore we usually have different counselors each summer. They are knowledgeable about the outdoors and usually have had experience in environmental education and working with young children. Our Summer Camp Assistants are either high school or college students, and must be at least sixteen years old. All Audubon staff and volunteers over the age of 18 go through a thorough background check before being hired by National Audubon Society. Any extra counselors, assistants or counselors in training are typically high school students age 14 or older, college students or retired school teachers, and volunteer their time at Audubon.

Are you a CT State certified camp? Yes. We have been a state certified day camp since June 2003. We get a surprise inspection each summer by a Youth Camp Licensing Official from the CT Dept. of Public Health and have passed every year with flying colors!

Are your camps held rain or shine? Yes. We spend as much time as we can outdoors, and will even go out in light rain. However, in the event of heavy rain or thunderstorm, we have indoor activities such as crafts, lessons and live animal programs that take place either in the Explorer Hut or main Center building. Please have your child come to camp prepared to be outdoors!

My child has food allergies. Do you offer food at camp? We do not offer food on a daily basis, but on occasion, we may have an activity that involves food. The camp counselors will alert the parents the day before if we plan on giving food to the campers and you will be asked to sign a permission form for your child. We are very careful about allergies, so we do not allow children to trade lunches or snacks. If your child has a particular allergy, please be sure it is described on your child's health form and that you notify the Camp Director. Our Camp Director and Counselors like to be familiar with any allergies our students have during their time with us. Please address any allergy concerns to the Camp Director *prior to the first day* of camp. Although we do not have a nurse or other licensed medical personnel on staff, our Camp Director, Assistant Director, and Director of First Aid are trained and certified to administer **emergency medications only** (epi-pens, inhalers, etc.) with an *individual order from the prescriber*. If you must bring an emergency med to camp, it must be in the original packaging with the prescription order attached, within the expiration date, orders from the physician attached, and in a clear Ziploc bag labeled with the child's name.

My child is on antibiotics. Are you able to give medications during camp? If your child is taking any type of medications, please try to give those to your child before or after the camp session, if possible. Our Camp Director, Assistant Director, and Director of First Aid are trained and certified to administer **emergency medications only** (epi-pens, inhalers, etc.) with an *individual order from the prescriber*. We are not able to apply any other antibiotics or first aid creams, including oral and topical medications such as Tylenol, Bactine, Calamine lotion, sunscreen or insect repellent. Please be sure to list any current medications being taken on your child's health form and alert the Summer Camp Director of any medical concerns *prior to the first day of camp*.

How should I dress my child for camp? We spend most of our time outdoors, exploring the streams, ponds, forests and fields, and sometimes can get a little wet or dirty! Comfortable clothing that is ok to get dirty and closed toed shoes are a must! Dress appropriately for the weather; it can be chilly in the

morning and very hot by afternoon. Raincoats and rain boots are good for rainy days. Open-toed and slip-on shoes like sandals, flip flops and crocs are not allowed.

Will snacks and lunches be refrigerated? Yes, we have two refrigerators where lunches are kept to keep food cool until it's time to eat. Please be sure to provide a water bottle each day for your child. Because many times we eat our lunches at various places around the sanctuary, we don't have access to a garbage can, so please be prepared to have your child bring any leftover food and/or garbage home again. Please pack only a ***small*** healthy snack such as a piece of fruit or yogurt that can be eaten in a short period of time.

Can you apply sunscreen to my child? Unfortunately, we are not able to apply sunscreen to the campers, so we ask that you please apply plenty of sunscreen to your child when you arrive in the morning. Although there are times when we have activities that may be in the direct sun (such as pond dipping or games on the front lawn,) we try to keep the kids out of the sun as much as possible throughout the day to avoid sunburn. Children are welcome to re-apply sunscreen on their own after lunch.

Do you have a lost and found? Yes! We try to keep track of most belongings, but every summer we have a small handful of items left behind like water bottles, jackets, t-shirts and lunch bags. If you think your child may have left something behind, please contact the Center and we'll try to track it down for you!

Is an outdoor nature camp dangerous? Exploring the outdoors can be a lot of fun, but there are always possible dangers associated with the outdoor activities that we do, including but not limited to, insect stings, insect or tick bites and possible illness/disease associated with the bites, poison ivy, falling on uneven terrain or receiving scrapes, cuts, bruises, concussions, etc. Keeping our staff and campers safe is a top priority, so we always do our best to avoid situations that may cause injury.

Do you have any kind of presentation for the parents? Yes! Each Friday, the campers will do some sort of short presentation for family members on the front lawn ½ hour before the end of camp to show a little of what they did/liked/learned at camp that week. Watch for your personal invitation to come home sometime around mid-week!