



Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary

Nature Camp

SUMMER CAMP HANDBOOK 2023

WHERE KIDS CONNECT TO
NATURE, ART, AND SCIENCE.



About Mass Audubon Programs

Through field studies and classroom explorations, Mass Audubon programs provide hands-on, inquiry based experiences with science content and practices. Our educators enhance students' scientific understanding of species and habitats; ecological concepts such as food webs, cycles, systems, adaptation, and evolution; climate change; and interrelationships between people and nature.

Howdy Camp Families!

Welcome to the Moose Hill Camp family!

We are happy that you have selected our camp for your child. We take this honor seriously and will take care to make your experience a good one. If you have any questions after reading this handbook or just want to talk, please contact us.

CONTACT US

293 Moose Hill Parkway
Sharon, MA
moosehillcamp@massaudubon.org
massaudubon.org/moosehillcamp
781-784-5691 x 8102
Registrar, 781-821-8853 x8104

What we are all about

Our Philosophy

At Moose Hill Nature Camp, we believe it's important that children learn and grow through their interactions with nature as well as with each other. We provide opportunities for structured free play, during which campers of various ages and developmental stages interact, learn important social skills, and gain appreciation for nature.

Our Nature Pledge, which campers are encouraged to recite at Opening Circle, reflects these values:

I am a part of the web of life.

I care about the soil, air, and water that all life depends on.

I will respect the plants and animals of the world and give them space to grow.

Because, We are all a part of the same web.

We also believe in connecting people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities with nature to enhance quality of life and to spark an interest in preserving nature for future generations.

Our Credentials, License and Accreditation

Moose Hill Camp has more 70 years of experience in connecting children to nature through public, school, and camp programming. We are proud of our reputation of running a safe, organized educational program where each child matters.

We are licensed by the Sharon Board of Health and comply with the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. We are also accredited by the American Camp Association.

Camp Policy Requests

You may request a copy of our staff background check, healthcare, discipline, bullying, and grievance policies.



Camp at Our Wildlife Sanctuary

Leadership Team and Staff

Moose Hill Camp is successful because of its caring, well-prepared counselors who are actively engaged in teaching and playing with campers. Our leadership team provides counselors with training, educational objectives, and activity ideas, and each staff member provides the enthusiasm for outdoor exploration, the desire to educate, and a caring heart for children. Together we bring fun and learning to campers.

Staff Selection Criteria

Camp staff members are carefully selected for their maturity and their caring attitude towards children. All staff must pass background checks and receive training in safety, child development, and nature study. Instructor-counselors are certified in first aid and CPR; most are in college and majoring in science, education, or psychology. Assistant counselors are at least 16 years of age and are partnered with and directly supervised by a counselor.

Communication

Best means of contact:

The Nature Center phones are manned from 8 am–5pm at 781-784-5691. Leave any messages for the Camp Office at extension 8102.

Camp leadership staff are outside with the kids much of the time, but we check the camp e-mail by 10am. moosehillcamp@massaudubon.org

After Camp Program staff carry a cell phone, 720-597-1858.

Let us know if your child is staying home, will arrive after 10am, or will be picked-up early.

Any pick-ups prior to 3pm may involve you meeting the group on the trail. Every group leader carries a two-way radio.

Any changes to the health form, medications, and/or pick-up persons must be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

If you have a change in who can or will be picking up your camper(s), please email the camp office at moosehillcamp@massaudubon.org. You can also let the staff know at drop off.

If there is an emergency at camp you will be emailed with information and told who to contact. We will follow up with phone calls.

If your camper needs to be picked up early from camp, or we will use the numbers and emails in the emergency contact information you have provided.

If your camper(s) have a fever, are injured and we need to call EMS, or they receive an injury needing more than a band aid, ice, rest, or basic first aid, then we will use the numbers and emails you have provided



Camp Director

Moose Hill's camp director, Shawn Moriarty, grew up in Storrs, CT, and attended the University of Connecticut. He has worked with summer camps and outdoor education programs for 40 years around the country. Shawn has a BA in Asian American Relations and a MA in Environmental Education. Shawn is a firm believer that children need to spend time in nature as often as possible and that time at camp can play an incredibly important role in the development of a child



What to Expect on Your First Day

The Moose Hill Camp staff are happy that you are coming to camp. A lot happens on the first day of a session. Here is some information to help you and your camper(s) make the beginning of the week easier for you.

You should dress for exploring outdoors and playing games. That also means wearing footwear that allows your camper to move on trails and should be closed toed. Please no sandals or flip-flops.

Put on sunscreen followed by insect repellent before coming to camp.

Be prepared for the weather—we will be outside for a part of any rainy day so rain gear and extra dry clothing may come in handy.

You can recognize the camp staff by what we wear—staff shirts and a blue lanyard with a nametag.

You will also meet some teenage helpers called Counselors-In-Training CITs.

Each group has a picnic table/ tent meeting area where you leave your backpack and meet your staff and the rest of your group.

They will give you a name tag and introduce you to other campers. Then you may join in any of the free choice-time activities in the camp yard or at your tent.

Remember to listen for the crow call that tells you to return to your tent and then head to opening circle.

At Opening Circle you will meet the staff, sing some songs, go over some of the camp rules, hear the schedule for the day, learn what to do in an emergency, and learn the Nature Pledge.

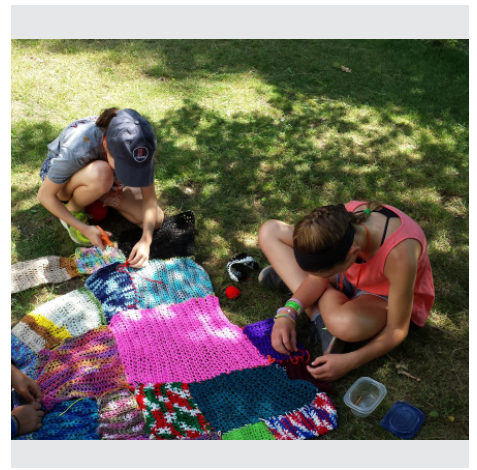
Each day we will have a question of the day along with a color of the day.

After Monday's opening circle, you will be introduced to all of the kids in your group, play some community games, and take a tour of the camp yard and nature center.

Your staff will show you where the bathrooms are and how to refill water bottles at the fountain.

Your group will also create a group agreement as to how you will all treat each other during the week.

You will also take a hike.



Check-in and Pick-up

Check-in

Campers may be checked in between 8:45–9:30 am daily to give families a flexible start to their day.

Please drive slowly and stay alert for kids, wildlife, and vehicles.

When you first enter the parking lot, stay to the right and turn right. The parking lot is one-way.

You will have 2 options at drop off:

- 1) You can stay in your vehicle and do drop off like many schools do where you stay in your car and drive around the loop into 1 of 3 lines where you will be greeted by a staff member who will check you into camp.
- 2) You can park in a space when you first arrive in the parking lot and not drive through. Then you can walk over to the camp yard gate and a staff member will check you in. If you park, you can walk your camper into the camp yard after checking in. We do ask that adults do not linger too long at drop off as it can make amplify homesickness.

If your camper may have difficulty separating from you, please let us know in advance. We have had lots of experience and have tips to make transitioning into camp easier for both you and your child.

Pick-up

Camper pick-up is from 3:55–4:15 pm in the parking lot in the same fashion to drop off.

If you park, and want to walk over and pick up your camper(s), please check in with a staff at the gate before entering the camp yard.

If you are driving through for pick up, please stay in your car. We ask that when you arrive for pick up that you have a sign that has your camper(s) name on a sheet of paper so we can read the name from outside the car.

Campers are released only to those people listed on the Release Form and a photo ID must be shown.

Please bring your ID every day as our sign out staff may vary! Guardians may modify the release list by providing a signed note.

Early Pick-up: Please notify your staff in advance of any schedule changes if possible.

Late Pick-up: Call us if you are going to be late. Please contact camp as soon as you know you will be late.

Camp Schedule and Things to Know.

A Question of the Day is posted on a board as you enter the camp yard. We hope that you discuss the question with family and friends during drop-off and choice time. The entire camp will discuss the answer at morning circle!

Name tags are given out each morning.

Choice Time. After checking in at their tent, campers can choose from a variety of activities including catching bugs, playing active games, making something, coloring at their table, building gnome homes, or visiting friends. There is another Choice Time after lunch.

Circle Times start and end each day. Listen for the Crow Call or Coyote Howl that signals that it is time to return to your tent. At Circle Time we sing songs together and may act silly. We ask that all campers try to participate. Please speak to the Camp Director if your child may need to sit out from these large group activities.

The Nature Pledge is done at morning circle.

Camp Patch is given out on Tuesday afternoons and placed in your backpack. One per camper per season.

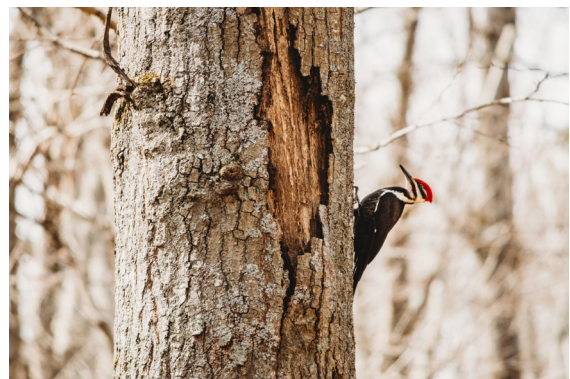
Camp T-Shirt our camp shirts will be given out during the week. Each camper will get 1 shirt regardless of how many weeks they come to camp. If you register after April 1st we may not have a shirt for your camper. We order shirts in March.

Water Games. On hot days we cool off by bringing out a sprinkle for campers to go in. Campers may be in a damp-to-wet condition as well as dirty at pickup time. Parents should inform the staff if you wish to limit how wet your child gets.

Camper Care Crew activities help campers to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility while working together. Examples of these activities are filling bird feeders, pulling grass from the walkway, and picking up around our group tents.

Think & Act Green is a goal for Moose Hill Camp and we hope that campers continue these actions at home. Examples are using only one paper towel to dry your hands, composting any fruits and vegetables, using less packaging, and recycling.

Fun Fridays include most of our all-camp events, freeze pops.



Camp Schedule

7:45-8:45 Before Camp program

8:45-9:30 Check-in and Choice Time

9:30-9:55 Opening Circle and Songs

9:55-12:00 Theme Intro and Snack

Activities/Explorations/Hikes

12:00-1:15 Lunch and Choice Time

1:15-3:40 Activities/Explorations/Crafts

Snack and Group Wrap-up

3:40-3:55 Closing Circle

3:55-4:30 Pick-up

4:00-6:00 After camp Program.



Before and After Camp Programs

Pre-registration is required for Before and After Camp options. Space is limited.

To add these options after your initial registration, you must call or e-mail moosehillcamp@massaudubon.org

Before Camp is held inside the Visitor Center. Doors open at 7:45 am. Every child must be escorted inside on Monday—on subsequent days you may choose to have your child walk in without you.

After Camp is held Visitor Center yard and may include games in the pine forest from 4:00pm-6pm.

If picking up before 5:30, you are responsible for going to their play area—a sign will be posted saying where the group is to be found. After 5:30 pm campers will be in or near the Visitor Center. Pick-up is expected before 6 pm.

And we know that traffic congestion happens. Please contact us if you are going to be late by text or calling 720-597-1858. We try and be flexible and accommodate changes in family schedules. If your plans change, even at the last minute, and you are going to be late, please call camp and let us know.



Nature Pledge and our place in Nature

The Nature Pledge is done at morning circle.

I am a part of the web of life.
I care about the soil, air and water that all life depends on.
I will respect the plants and animals of the world and give them space to grow.
Because, We are all a part of the same web.



We recite our Nature Pledge each morning during our Opening Circle. Campers do not have to recite the pledge with us. And we do use the pledge as the foundation of what we do here at camp.

We recognize that we are a PART of nature and that we do effect the natural world with our actions.

When we explore our property here at Moose Hill Nature Camp, we work to treat the natural world with respect in how we interact with the things we find.

Moose Hill Camp is located on the unceded land of the Massachusetts Tribe.

What to Wear and Bring with you to Camp

Please label everything! Lost & Found items are put on a table near the camp gate and given away on September 15th.

Campers should wear:

- Socks and sneakers, hiking boots, or any closed toe shoes. No crocs or open-toed footwear.
- Sweatshirt or lightweight jacket since summer mornings and rainy days are chilly.
- Hats are a good idea.
- Clothing they will feel comfortable getting wet and/or dirty—play clothes.
- Insect repellent and Sunscreen with a minimum of SPF25

Campers should bring:

- » 2 snacks—a morning and an afternoon non-perishable snack. Water is drunk at snack time.
- » A nutritious, non-perishable lunch, including 1 drink
- » Backpack large enough to carry the lunch bag and water bottle.
- » Foam insulated lunch bag with a small ice pack
- » Water bottle (leak proof please)—wash and fill it daily. Do not freeze it.
- » Insect repellent
- » Rainy day gear—a light weight poncho or rain coat, sweatshirt, and extra socks.
- » Younger children should bring a spare set of clothes and shoes; that way, if an accident should occur, they'll be able to stay clean and dry. These should fit in a labeled Ziploc bag.

Food Notes:

Non-perishable foods or ice packs are required because we do not refrigerate. Some possible non-perishable food choices are sun butter, peanut butter, trail mix, jelly, fruit, or hard cheeses.

Due to food allergies, tables are kept peanut and tree nut-free. We provide an "allergy picnic cloth" for use on the ground and one table for campers who are eating foods containing peanuts or tree nuts, and other common food allergies.

Our carry in/carry out policy means that any trash and uneaten food that cannot go into our compost is repacked into the child's lunch box and returned home. This policy results in fewer yellow jackets in the camp area.

Freeze pops are given out to all campers on Fridays. These are Kosher. If your camper needs a special type of freeze pop, we can store a small number of them here at camp.

What not to bring to camp

Do not bring electronic devices, collectable cards, personal treasures, sports equipment and/or expensive items to camp.

Cell phones and other media players are not to be used during the camp day. We understand that in many families cell phones are a part of everyday life. And, at camp they can become a distraction. Please consider having your camper keep their phone at home.

Mass Audubon is not responsible for lost or damaged articles that have been brought to camp.

Pocketknives, matches, firearms/ammunition, or other potentially dangerous items are not allowed and are grounds for dismissal from the program. The possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and weapons are prohibited.

No animal is allowed in camp without prior permission from the Camp Director.



Moose Hill Nature Camp Goals and Outcomes

- The goal of Moose Hill Camp is to connect children with nature and let them have fun through a blend of outdoor explorations, focused learning activities, inclusive games, and creative crafts. Motivated instructor-counselors keep campers engaged and moving as they learn about life and science!
 - **Outcomes for programs:**
- Have Fun.
- Connect children with nature by providing many outdoor experiences.
- Older campers are given the opportunity to hike longer trails and explore different areas of the sanctuary (Hobb's Hill, The Poor Farm, Allen's Ledge).
- Give children positive experiences with the natural world and living things.
- Campers share their experiences and sightings with their group and maybe at closing circle.
- Help children to be mindful and careful of the natural world.
- Staff will role model and teach about the fragility of small creatures and interactions with humans can affect them—appropriate handling of red-backed salamanders for example.
- Staff will demonstrate and teach about appropriate trail use—trying not to widen the trails. Following the procedure when going off-trail.
- Help children to see interconnections between human choices and actions and their effects on the natural world.
- Campers recite the Nature Pledge each morning.
- Campers will put their trash away, take care not to litter and pick up after the group. Lunch trash is brought home.
- Support Social Awareness and Growth is important for all children and our programs are designed to support this growth.
- Staff will talk and listen to the child who does not participate and give guidance where needed.
- Camper groups vote on some activities.
- Receive support for overcoming fears and trying new things.
- Be given choices. Choice time is offered at the start of every camp day as well as after lunch. Campers are encouraged to visit with campers and staff from their groups, play games or make their own.
- Participate in age appropriate activities that encourage active participation.
- Noncompetitive games are played. By this we mean that the focus is on playing and working together rather than on who wins or loses.
- Have focused time on the theme of the week each day.
- Help teach children how to ask good questions to get information rather than just telling them an answer.
- We work to create an environment where all campers feel that they belong here at Moose Hill.



Behavioral Guidance and Expectations Policy



Being involved in a group or community of people you are not familiar with can be a challenge. We do our best to create a place where campers can feel comfortable and welcomed.

Due to the outdoor and exploratory nature of our camp program, campers should be able to move about on uneven terrain to the best of their ability.

We know that some days are better than others for campers. And we can make some adjustments to an activity for campers who need a break.

Campers are expected to participate meaningfully in age-appropriate activities, including nature study.

All campers must follow stated behavior expectations and safety rules. If you have any questions regarding your child's ability to participate fully in our camp program, please contact the camp director.

The Camp Director reserves the right to dismiss a camper when in the camper's behavioral choices interferes with the rights of others, the functioning of the group or activity, or violates the camp's behavior policy. In such cases no refunds will be given.

Our behavior expectations and safety rules have been developed to ensure the safety of campers and to show respect for self, others, and the environment. Campers will be made aware of these rules on the first day of the session.

There will be no hurting of each other either verbally, emotionally, or physically.

Safety Rules As a Moose Hill camper:

1. Be kind and courteous to all.
2. Stay with your group.

Ask permission to leave the group and if your staff agrees, you always take a buddy.

If called, stop and answer. If you hear 3 whistle blasts, stop and return to your group.

3. Follow the behavior expectations given by your leader. Example: Sticks and rocks remain on the ground.

Behavioral Guidance Policy

Infringements of the behavior expectations and/or safety rules bring fair and obvious consequences.

Staff will follow a series of steps:

- One-on-one discussion.
- Breaks from activities,
- Time with the Camp Director.

If a child acts in an unsafe manner that is physically harmful to self or others, staff will remove the child from the danger and bring them to the Camp Director.

Staff will not use or threaten to use any physical contact or restraint unless the child presents a clear and present danger to themselves or to others.

In the case of serious and/or constant issues, the guardian will be called and a behavior agreement will be developed.

Those who cannot meet these expectations may be dismissed from the camp program without monetary recourse. As mandated by the state, corporal punishment will not be used; no camper will be subjected to cruel or severe punishment; humiliation or verbal abuse; no camper will be denied food as punishment, and no camper will be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

A complete copy of how we approach Behavioral Guidance is available upon request.



Health and Wellness at Camp

Healthcare Personnel

Moose Hill's off-site healthcare consultant is Joseph Horan, M.D. who practises in Foxborough. The Camp Director is the on-site healthcare supervisor. A staff person certified in first aid, infection control procedures, and CPR is always on site during camp hours and a staff person with these qualifications will be present on hikes beyond 15 minutes of the visitor center. Many staff are trained in EpiPen use. Emergency care is provided by EMTs of the Sharon Fire Department. A complete copy of our healthcare policy is available upon request.

Responsibilities of Parent/Guardian

Do not send a sick child to camp. Symptoms of illness are a temperature above 100 degrees F, throwing up (or has done so in the night), earache, sore throat, conjunctivitis, skin eruptions, continuous cough, etc. Parents of sick children will be called and be requested to pick up the child. Staff may oversee a mildly ill camper in the camp office.

People with an infectious or communicable disease may not return to camp until the recommended time determined by our healthcare consultant has passed. Participants infected with lice will be sent home and may resume camp once treated and nit free. If an outbreak of communicable disease occurs, any participant who is not fully immunized (due to religious or health risk reasons) will remain at home for the time recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Refunds are not given due to missed time at camp.

If your child has a foot or leg injury, you must speak to the Camp Director who will determine if accommodations can be made and when the camper can return to camp.

Guardians need to be aware of the potential health hazards ticks represent and take an active role in protecting their child.

You are responsible for checking the child each

evening for ticks by feeling the skin for bumps, removal of ticks, and monitoring for illness. More information is provided below.

Medications

Medications may be dispensed only during summer camp and only if:

- 1) we have written permission from the legal guardian
 - 2) the medication is in its original labeled container
 - 3) prescribed medications have the pharmacy label
 - 4) the medication has not expired
 - 5) our off-site healthcare consultant has approved in writing the administering of this type of medication.
- Every medication must be checked into camp by our healthcare supervisor/ Camp Director

Sun & Bugs

Campers may be exposed to sun and insects. The state encourages the use of wide-brimmed hats, long-sleeve shirts and long pants when exposed to sun. Please note that Moose Hill is very shady and there is a slight breeze on most days. Parents are to apply sunscreen (SPF 25 or greater) and insect repellent (DEET 20–25% is suggested) to their child daily, prior to arrival. Apply sunscreen first and then the repellent. At the end of the day, you should remind your child to wash any treated skin with soap and water!

Act Green: Do not spray any repellent inside our buildings or in the camp play area.

Health and Wellness at Camp Continued

Staff will apply or supervise the application of insect repellent after lunch each day. Moose Hill will use insect repellent containing 20–25% DEET unless you tell us otherwise. Sunscreen will be reapplied if afternoon activities will be in full sun.

Visual checks for ticks on campers' arms, legs, and clothing is a regular part of our camp routine. The guardian is responsible for checking the child each evening for ticks by feeling the skin for bumps. Overnight campers will be instructed how to perform a full-body check and instructed to do so prior to bedtime.

Insect Repellent Information: Studies show that it is acceptable to use DEET of up to 30% concentration on children over 2 years of age and that the concentration of DEET in the product is related to the length of protection. DEET may be applied to skin or clothes, but not under clothing. Treated skin should be washed with soap and water upon completion of your outdoor activity. Ask your pediatrician about DEET. 24% DEET provides 5 hours of protection. 6.65% DEET provides 2 hours of protection.

Tick-borne Illness Facts and Prevention

Not all ticks are infected and studies have shown that an infected tick normally cannot begin passing the Lyme Disease bacteria until it has been attached to its host for 24 hours. Finding and careful removal of the tick is the best preventative.

Prevention suggestions

1. Wear enclosed shoes and light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily. Keep long hair tied back. Tuck shirts into your pants and long pants into socks. Wear a hat.
2. Use repellents that contain 24% DEET on exposed skin or treat your shoes and clothing with permethrin.
3. Scan clothes and any exposed skin frequently for ticks

4. Do a full-body tick-check at the end of the day by feeling the skin for bumps. Be aware that ticks climb upwards in search of skin so check hidden areas of the neck, ears, head, genitals and bellybutton.
5. Spin clothes in the dryer for 20 minutes to kill any ticks. Look for ticks on your gear/backpack.
6. Know the symptoms of Lyme Disease (see below) and other tick-borne illnesses.

To remove a tick

1. Use a pair of tweezers to grasp the tick by the head where it enters the skin. Do Not grasp the body.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. (Do Not twist the tick, apply petroleum jelly, a hot match, alcohol or any other irritant in an attempt to have the tick back out.) If mouth-parts break off try to remove them, but if not possible, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. Clean the bite area with an antiseptic. Redness or a rash at the bite site for a number of days is normal.

Symptoms of Lyme Disease

Contact your physician if any of the following symptoms appear three (3) or more days after the bite. Lyme symptoms vary and may include recurrent headache, exhaustion, muscle aches, rash, or joint pain. Early treatment with antibiotics almost always results in a full cure.





Mass Audubon protects 36,500 acres of land throughout Massachusetts, saving birds and other wildlife, and making nature accessible to all. As Massachusetts' largest nature conservation nonprofit, we welcome more than a half million visitors a year to our wildlife sanctuaries and 20 nature centers. From inspiring hilltop views to breathtaking coastal landscapes, serene woods, and working farms, we believe in protecting our state's natural treasures for wildlife and for all people—a vision shared in 1896 by our founders, two extraordinary Boston women. Today, Mass Audubon is a nationally recognized environmental

education leader, offering thousands of camp, school, and adult programs that get over 225,000 kids and adults outdoors every year. With more than 125,000 members and supporters, we advocate on Beacon Hill and beyond, and conduct conservation research to preserve the natural heritage of our beautiful state for today's and future generations. We welcome you to explore a nearby sanctuary, find inspiration, and get involved. Learn how at massaudubon.org.