



North River Nature Camp 2025 Camp Handbook

Welcome to Mass Audubon's North River Nature Camp!

This handbook gives you an overview of our camp policies and contains essential information to help ensure your camper is ready for their first day of camp. Please take some time to read it over and discuss it with your camper.

If you have any questions, please contact the Camp Director, Jacqui Shuster, at (781) 837-9400 or email northrivercamp@massaudubon.org

We look forward to a successful camp season!



"This camp must comply with regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and be licensed by the local board of health."

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Camp Mission

We believe that camp is a place where children can grow, spend quality time outdoors and have fun summer experiences. Through hands on, inquiry-based activities, free play, games and nature discovery campers learn about their surroundings, themselves and others. Spending time learning and playing outdoors helps foster a deep, life-long connection to nature and inspires environmental stewardship.

North River & You: A Camp Partnership

North River Nature Camp strives to offer high quality, fun, and educational experiences to all our campers – experiences we hope they enjoy and remember for a long time. However, we cannot meet this goal without help from all our campers and their families, so we invite you to enter a partnership to ensure that every camper has the best possible learning adventure while attending our camp program.

We pledge to provide:

- A safe and healthy environment for your camper.
- Nature based programs that incorporate learning, social interaction, and free play.
- An environment where staff establish expectations and model appropriate behavior.
- Positive community spirit that helps every camper feel included and cared about.

In return, we expect the following from our guardians and campers:

- Cooperation with our written policies including our behavior guidelines.
- Detailed attention to the daily needs of your child to prepare them for camp.
- Willingness to act in collaboration with camp staff to maintain and restore appropriate behavior and participation.
- And commitment to the well-being of the entire camp community (such as keeping a sick or overtired camper at home).

If, at any time, you have a question or concern about our day camp program, please contact our Camp Director. No question or concern is too small for you to bring to our attention. You may request copies of our background checks, health care, discipline, and/or grievance policies at any time.

Our Staff:

Camp staff members are carefully selected for their maturity and their caring attitude towards campers. All staff must pass background checks and receive training in safety, camper development, and natural history. Camp staff are certified in First Aid and CPR. In addition, we have a Health Care Consultant on call to provide routine care if needed. Campers are never alone with staff; we always maintain a “rule of three” during camp; meaning that the minimum number of people must be three when doing or going anywhere on camp.

Our Credentials, License, and Accreditation:

North River Nature Camp is licensed by the Marshfield Board of Health and complies with the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. We are also accredited by the American Camp Association.

Camp Goals and Inclusion

Camp Goals

- Campers of all backgrounds, abilities and identities feel safe and supported physically, socially, and emotionally.
- Campers explore local ecosystems and develop confidence in nature.

- Campers learn about conservation and stewardship through age-appropriate hands-on activities.
- Campers connect with each other, create friendships, and grow through trying new experiences.

Our Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

Mass Audubon strives to create a safe, inclusive, and caring camp environment where each person is respected and supported in their learning and growth. We believe that diversity—both in nature and in our human communities—is essential to strength, resilience, and innovation, and we are committed to recognizing the unique contributions of each community member.

Staff Training

Camp staff receive training on how to build an inclusive camp group, lead age-appropriate conversations, and prevent and respond to bullying. It's difficult to predict what topics of conversation will arise in a camp group. If a sensitive developmental topic comes up or if discussions veer into arguments, staff are trained to respond with compassion, steer discussion toward camp-appropriate topics, and check in with campers to ensure they feel safe. The Camp Director and other leadership staff provide additional support if a sensitive topic arises or if staff have concerns about the group's behavior.

Camps will not tolerate bullying, harassment, or threats to any camper or staff, no matter their beliefs, values, or identity. Our aim is to build an inclusive and respectful camp experience for a diverse community of youth, families, and staff who care deeply about nature and its protection.

Creating an Inclusive Camp Community

During camp welcome circles, campers and staff discuss what it means to create and support an inclusive camp community. Staff cover safety, camp expectations, and establish norms for respectful and inclusive communication and interactions. Campers and staff are invited to introduce themselves and have the option to share pronouns if they would like to. No one is required to share pronouns, and we ask that all campers and staff respect and use the names and pronouns that correspond with how each person introduces themselves. Mass Audubon does not require staff or campers to disclose any details of their gender identity.

Accommodations for Campers

As an outdoor, nature-based program, it is important that families of children who have disabilities understand Mass Audubon's expectations, programs, and terrain prior to enrolling.

Due to the outdoor and exploratory nature of our camp programs, campers move on uneven terrain throughout the day. The terrain varies from hard-packed, gently sloped paths to steeper, uneven trails that may have exposed rocks, tree roots, and other obstacles. Weather could affect our trail conditions. We encourage all families to visit the camp's sanctuary prior to enrolling to understand its unique terrain.

If your child requires accommodation, please contact the camp's director as soon as possible; a delay in request could have the unintended consequence of disrupting your child's Mass Audubon camp experience.

One-to-one Aides

Mass Audubon camps do not provide one-to-one support; however, we do welcome one-to-one aides to support campers when they are provided by the family. Aides must follow Mass Audubon's Child Protection Standards, including obtaining a CORI/SORI and background check prior to their time participating within our programs.

More information and training may be required prior to the aide starting within the program. If your child requires an aide in school, please contact the camp's director as soon as possible to discuss how Mass Audubon can best support your child. Family members are not permitted to be aides.

CampDoc and Required Forms

After you register for camp, you will receive an email directly from CampDoc to update your camper's profile and to upload supporting documents. Please keep an eye out for this email. Please complete your camper's profile ASAP and no later than May 15.

CampDoc is a secure platform we use to collect required information about your camper, ranging from contact info, health history, vaccination records, authorized pick-up people, allergies, sliding scale verification, etc.

Uploading these documents is mandatory and will be needed to secure your camper's spot.

If you are submitting income verification, please redact/blackout any sensitive information from your forms. Social Security numbers, for example.

If you are new to North River:

You will receive an "Invitation" email from CampDoc.com.

- Click on the green "Accept Invite" link within the email to create a new CampDoc.com account and secure password.

If you are a returning camper:

You will receive a notification email from CampDoc.com to log in and update your camper's information.

Your camper's basic information is saved from last year and **all information must be reviewed**.

- If you forgot your password from last year, enter your email on the login page and click "Forgot Password" to reset your password.

Helpful CampDoc guidelines for all North River campers

- Once logged in, select your camper's name, and click on the health profile tab to complete your camper's information.
- Required questions will be marked with an * and outlined in red.
- If your child will be taking medication at camp, this needs to be included in the Health Care Provider Form and signed by a physician, as well as noted in the child's CampDoc record on the "Medications" tab.
- There are several sections in CampDoc, including Emergency Contacts, Activity Restrictions, Allergies, Diet & Nutrition information, Medications, Authorized Release/Pick-up People, Media Release, and other camp authorizations. This information will help us prepare and be able to provide the best experience for your camper!
- Any information you can provide to help us best support your camper is greatly appreciated! We want your camper to be successful here at North River Nature Camp.
- Upload the camper's complete immunization record-this is required. You can find a list of the required immunizations for your camper [here](#).
- If you need an immunization exemption, please contact the Camp Director to receive a waiver form.

If you need assistance at any time, please contact northrivercamp@massaudubon.org or (781) 837-9400.

Essential Campers' Checklist

- ☐ Check that the sessions and dates listed in the confirmation email are correct.
- ☐ Review this entire information packet.
- ☐ Camp sessions **paid-in-full** by **May 15th** - we offer payment plans!
- ☐ **Complete CampDoc profile** by **May 15th**
- ☐ **Receive "Registration Complete" email** from Program Registrar confirming you are ready for camp!
- ☐ GET EXCITED!!- Camp season is coming, and we are so excited to see you!

Camper Drop-Off & Pick-Up

North River Nature Camp Address: 2000 Main St. Marshfield, MA 02050

A Note on Parking:

When pulling into camp, please note that the parking lot is one-way. Follow the signage to the check-in area. Our drop-off plan will be sent out to guardians before the beginning of their camper's session.

Camp Hours:

Camp begins at 9:15 am and ends at 3:00 pm Monday through Friday (unless otherwise scheduled for specific camp sessions). An authorized adult (with ID) must sign campers in and out of camp every day. Registrants should use the CampDoc Emergency Contact/Pick-Up section to list adults authorized for drop-off/pick-up.

Camper Drop-Off

Please apply sunscreen (SPF 30 minimum) and bug repellent each morning at home before arriving at camp. No aerosols are allowed at camp.

- This year drop-off will be rolling from 8:55-9:15 am. When entering the Sanctuary, please drive slowly and stay alert for pedestrians, wildlife, and other vehicles.
 - *Early Arrival: please wait with your camper in your car in the drop-off line until camp staff arrives. Staff cannot be responsible for campers before 8:55 am.*
- Check-in on the first day will take longer as we greet camp families, and make sure we have everything needed for the week. We appreciate your patience.
- A parent/guardian must be present on the first day of camp to verify health and authorized pick-up information. Under NO circumstances may you drop off your camper without signing them in with a staff member.
- **Authorized Pick-up:** We will verify adults authorized for camper pick-up during the first day check-in. Adults must have identification at time of pick-up.
- After you check-in with the Camp Director, your camper will be escorted to their designated group area.
- **Late Arrivals:** Please email and call the office at (781) 837-9400 if your camper will be arriving late. When you arrive, please park in the parking lot, and call the office; a staff member will come and retrieve your camper.

Camper Pick-Up

Adults picking up campers must be authorized via campers' CampDoc Emergency Contact/Pick-Up section and have identification at time of pick-up.

Please call immediately if there is an emergency that will make you late.

- This year pick-up will be rolling from 3:00-3:15 pm
- Please be prepared to show identification to camp staff. Staff will remain with campers until an authorized adult has picked up each camper.

- Pick-up adults must be authorized via campers' Emergency Contact/ Pick-Up section on CampDoc. We will not release campers to anyone who is not listed on the release form or has not been authorized by you. There are no exceptions.
- **Early Pick-Up:** Please notify the Camp Director as soon as possible if your camper will need to be picked up from camp early. This will let our counselors ensure your camper is ready on time. Please Note: Your camper's group may be up to 30 minutes away from the Nature Center at any time.
- **Emergency Pick-Up:** If you need to unexpectedly pick up your camper, please call our office as soon as possible at (781) 837-9400 and ask for our Camp Director, Jacqui Shuster. Only authorized adults with identification will be able to pick up campers.

Absence From Camp

For scheduled absences, please email northrivercamp@massaudubon.org ; absences during camp sessions must be in writing. No refunds or transfer of funds will be given for dismissal or incomplete attendance (including sick days). See the Health & Safety section for more information on our sick camper policy.

Dogs & Pets: We love animals; however, **domestic animals are not allowed at North River Wildlife Sanctuary.** Please leave your pets at home or in the car during drop-off and pick-up times and please **do not** walk your pets in the parking areas.

First Day of Camp & What to Expect

Before your camper comes to camp:

Please take some time to prepare your camper for their participation in our camp program.

- Each group will have a designated area to meet and space to place their things. On the first morning of each session, counselors will provide an orientation to the camp area, boundaries, location of bathrooms, etc.
- Each camper will be expected to be courteous and respectful to others, and to follow instructions. We will address this with each camp group on the first day of each session.
- **Please apply each morning at home before arriving at camp:**
 - **Sunscreen:** For camper safety, please show your camper how to apply their own sunscreen. We will reapply at lunch each day and may help campers with your permission.
 - **Bug Repellent:** Bug repellent is recommended; mosquitoes and ticks share the habitat at North River. We will reapply at lunch each day and may help campers with your permission.
 - **Aerosol sprays are not permitted at camp.**
- **TICK CHECKS:** During the camp day, we do **regular tick checks** at lunch and other times as needed. Every night at bath time or just before bed, please take a few minutes to **check your camper for ticks.**
- Encourage your camper to go to bed early the night before, and during their camp week – a good night's rest is essential to having a good day at camp!

What to Wear & What to Pack

What to Wear:

- **Clothing:** We recommend that campers wear comfortable, light-weight clothing. Long sleeve shirts, tall socks and long trousers can be helpful to avoid mosquito bites and ticks.
- **Footwear:** We recommend comfortable walking shoes that can get wet and muddy and are secure. *Due to the nature of our camp, flip-flops are not allowed.*

Please LABEL, LABEL, all your campers' belongings.

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

What to Pack: A backpack containing the following:

- **Snack and Lunch:** Please see *Food & Snack* section.
- **Water Bottle:** A reusable water bottle or canteen; please *do not freeze the water bottle*, the ice will not melt fast enough to give your camper enough water to drink! We refill water bottles whenever needed.
- **Sunscreen - SPF 30+:** With your permission, we can help reapply. *Aerosol sprays are not permitted.*
- **Insect Repellent:** We share our habitat with mosquitoes and ticks. We recommend lotions, wipes, and pumps. With your permission, we can help reapply. *Aerosol sprays are not permitted.*
- **EXTRA set of clothes:** Adventure can get messy; a second set helps campers return clean and dry!
- **EXTRA pair of shoes and socks:** Comfortable walking shoes that can get wet and muddy.
- **Hat and/or Sunglasses**
- Rain jacket and rain pants (optional)
- Sweater or sweatshirt for cool days (optional)

What Not to Pack:

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

Your camper should not pack:

- Electronic devices, cell phones, portable gaming consoles, walkie-talkies, etc.
- Collectable cards, stuffed animals, and other personal toys.
- Personal sports equipment.
- Matches, firearms/ammunition, knives, or weapons of any kind (including toy weapons) – Grounds for immediate dismissal.
- Tobacco products, alcohol, illegal drugs. Possession and use are prohibited.
- Pets or any animals.

Any such items will be taken and held by the counselors in a secure spot to be returned to guardians at the end of the day. If there is an appropriate item that your camper would like to bring in, please contact our Camp Director in advance.

Food & Snack

Please pack a nutritious and filling, non-refrigerated (an icepack is recommended to keep food cool) snack and lunch that will produce as little trash as possible. Due to potential problems with food allergies, campers are not permitted to share food.

While we are not a nut-free facility, we **ask camp families to pack snacks and lunches that are nut-free**. If you have questions about nut-free products, please contact the Camp Director and be sure to read the ingredients on the packaging.

Carry-In/Carry-Out:

Please note we have a carry-in/carry-out policy for all non-compostable trash/waste; all lunch wrappers/containers will be packed home with campers. Think about your impact – try to pack to produce as little trash as possible.

Mass Department of Public Health & Early Care Information

COVID-19 Information

[Mass Department of Public Health Covid-19 information](#)

Meningococcal Disease and Camp Attendees

Campers are not considered to have increased risk of Meningococcal Disease, but the Department of Public Health requires us to provide you the information in the link below. Please read the document “Meningococcal Disease and Camp Attendees: Commonly Asked Questions.” You do not need to print or return a signed waiver to us.

[Meningitis info from mass.gov](#)

Mandated Reporting

Massachusetts law requires professionals who work with children to notify the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if they suspect that a child is being abused, neglected, or both.

Camper Expectations

Copies of the full policy are available upon request.

Please go over these expectations with your camper before the start of camp. We also discuss expectations with campers as part of our morning circle.

Campers are encouraged to participate in activities, including outdoor exploration, games, crafts, and nature investigations. Due to the outdoor and exploratory nature of our camp program, campers must be able to walk on uneven terrain and trails. To ensure a successful experience, please share any pertinent information in CampDoc that will help us best support your camper. We want to work with you to establish the best strategy for your camper!

All campers must follow our behavioral expectations and safety rules. The Camp Director reserves the right to dismiss a camper when the camper’s behavior interferes with the rights of others or the smooth functioning of the group or activity or violates the camp’s behavior policy. In such cases no refunds will be provided.

Camper Expectations

1. We treat all living things with respect and kindness.
2. We stay with our group.
3. We help take care of the materials used at camp.
4. We speak to others kindly and we respect their physical space.
5. We follow staff requests.

Behavior Guidance Policy

Our staff establishes expectations and offers guidance throughout each day. Mass Audubon sanctuaries are open to the public and camp groups may spend time in areas that have visitors, vehicles, varied terrain, water, and wild animals. In order for everyone to have a safe and positive experience, campers are expected to follow Mass Audubon’s Camper Code of Conduct with minimal support from staff.

All families and campers review and sign off on Mass Audubon’s Behavior Expectations and Camper Code of Conduct before attending camp. In addition, Mass Audubon’s camp goals and inclusion practices are on our website. [Learn more >](#)

Mass Audubon's Camper Code of Conduct

1. Respect Yourself. Examples include:
 - Take care of yourself and your body and ask for help.
 - Apply sunscreen and bug spray.
 - If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, talk with an adult.
2. Respect Nature. Examples include:
 - Carry in / carry out – take trash and recycling with you or put in an appropriate bin.
 - Leave animals, plants, and other parts of nature where you found them.
 - Observe wild animals from a distance – use your eyes not your hands, unless it is permitted by camp staff.
3. Respect Others. Examples include:
 - Listen and follow instructions given by camp staff.
 - Stay with your group at all times.
 - Use caring and kind language.
 - Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
 - Respect other people's physical space and objects.
 - Listen to all ideas and be inclusive – allow others to join/play with you.
 - Treat others the way they want to be treated and celebrate each other's individuality. Use pronouns and names people introduce themselves with.

Proactive Behavior Guidance Strategies

Before coming to camp, family members provide information about camper's needs to camp staff and/or the Camp Director. Camp staff may contact a family to discuss best strategies to meet camper's needs during their session. Any previously known behavior issues that may affect a camper's participation should be shared with the camp before the session begins. Failure to disclose information may result in grounds for termination.

Camp staff are trained to proactively manage behaviors within each group. Some strategies staff use include:

- Reinforce positive behavior through praise
- Provide ample warning to campers prior to transitions
- Clearly state behavior expectations through group agreements and visual tools
- Provide daily schedules through group check ins and visual tools

When campers struggle with the behavior expectations set for them in the Camper Code of Conduct, camp staff will follow one or more of the steps below, depending on the situation. Camp staff may try a step multiple times.

	Leader Response	Consequences for Camper
1st step	Reminders of the rule.*	Reminders of the rule, discussion of why behavior was inappropriate, and possible options.
2nd step	Reminders of the rule, plus short break. Take notes on a behavior incident report. Camp Director or designee may have a brief check-in with family in person or via a call.	Take a break for up to 15 minutes. Reminders of the rule, discussion of why behavior was inappropriate, and possible options.
3rd step	Discussion with the camper about the rules of camp. Update the Camp Director	Camper will take a longer break which may include an entire activity.

	or Assistant Director on the steps taken so far. Supervise camper during longer break. Add to incident report. Camp Director or designee updates family.	Reminders of the rule, discussion of why behavior was inappropriate, and possible options.
4th step	Camper will be brought to the Camp Director or Assistant Director for a discussion. The Camp Director or Assistant Director will speak with the family about behavior contract.	The camper will be asked to reflect on the discussions about behavior and begin a behavior contract.
5th step	The Camp Director and other Leadership staff (Director of Camps, Education Manager, Regional Director) will discuss possible dismissal of participant from the camp and speak with family.	The family will be called. Behavior contract is reviewed. Possible dismissal.

*If a camper intentionally hurts another person, themselves, or runs away from the group or staff member, they will immediately be brought to the Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director and/or Behavior Specialist.

After steps 1 through 4, if there is no mutually agreeable resolution of the behavior issues, the Camp Director may issue a written notice of termination. Refunds will not be provided for behavior-based dismissals.

Prohibitions when Managing Behavior

In accordance with the State of Massachusetts Minimum Standards for Recreational Camps for Children:

1. Corporal punishment, including spanking, is prohibited;
2. No camper shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse;
3. No camper shall be denied food, water or shelter; and
4. No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

Termination from Camp

Mass Audubon camps recognize the various needs of campers at different ages and stages of development, and that campers must be treated individually. The family will be notified of issues leading to a child's termination from a Mass Audubon camp.

Mass Audubon reserves the right to dismiss any camper whose actions or behaviors jeopardize the overall health and goals of the camp, including campers requiring routine, on-going one-on-one attention and direction related to behavioral issues. Mass Audubon also reserves the right to dismiss any enrolled participant whose actions interfere with the successful operation of the camp. Repeated failure to comply with camp rules and/or procedures will result in dismissal. No refunds will be given for behavior-based termination of participation.

Immediate Suspension

Any camper whose behavior seriously threatens the emotional or physical safety of themselves, or others may be suspended, for an initial period of up to 2 days. During the period of suspension, the Camp Director, camp staff, and the family will further evaluate to determine whether it is appropriate for the camper to return to the camp.

Examples of behavior that may warrant immediate suspension include:

- Physically attacking or threatening another child, themselves, or an adult.

- Documented harassment of another child, including the use of discriminatory language on the basis of “race, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.”
- Due to a child's dangerous behavior, an emergency physical restraint is used on the child to protect themselves or others from imminent serious physical harm.
- Leaving the camp site without permission of the staff (includes leaving the sanctuary grounds or leaving the immediate vicinity of an outdoor activity without permission of camp staff).

The camp reserves the right to allow provisional reentry into the camp or to proceed with the termination of the camper's enrollment. No refunds will be given for behavior-based termination of participation.

Health & Safety

Our complete health care policy is available upon request.

Health Care at Camp:

The Camp Director, camp counselors, and other full-time North River staff have certifications in First Aid and CPR. Our off-site healthcare consultant is Dr. Matthew Butka, a hospitalist at South Shore Hospital in Weymouth. The Camp Director acts as the onsite Healthcare Supervisor and will administer any prescribed medications during camp. The Marshfield Fire Department EMTs provide emergency care for North River camp programs.

Due to the outdoor and exploratory nature of our camp program, campers will be moving on uneven terrain throughout the camp day. The terrain at our site varies from hard-packed, gently sloped paths to steeper uneven trails that may have exposed rocks, tree roots, and other obstacles. We encourage all families to visit the camp's sanctuary prior to enrolling to understand its unique terrain.

If you have questions regarding your camper's ability to participate due to a health or behavioral concern, please contact the Camp Director, Jacqui Shuster, at jshuster@massaudubon.org or (781) 837-9400.

Camper Health Information with CampDoc:

Under Massachusetts state law, all campers must have a health form on file, which includes a health history, before attending camp. **North River Nature Camp uses CampDoc.com, an electronic health record system.** After registering, an email will be sent from **CampDoc.com** on how to complete your camper's health information online. A parent/guardian must complete their camper's CampDoc profile. Please contact our Program Registrar to add parents/guardians to a CampDoc profile for access.

Immunization Record/Physical Exam:

Immunizations and Physicals must meet the requirements of the MA Dept. of Public Health. We require a copy of your camper's immunization record (dates must be provided by the healthcare provider). A physical exam is requested within the 18 months prior to camp.

Please contact us if:

- You need a health care treatment/immunization form for your physician to complete.
- Families whose religious beliefs advise against physical exams and/or immunizations need to contact North River regarding our emergency treatment policy and waiver.

Remember:

- Doctors' offices are inundated, and it may take a while to get the information you need from them.
- School/Sport forms often contain camper's immunization record and health care information.

- Please plan ahead, your camper cannot attend camp without a current copy of their immunization record.

Medications at Camp:

Medication must be sent in the original container with the pharmacy label attached. Medication must be handed to the Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director upon arrival. No medication, whether prescription or over the counter, may be administered to a child without it being listed in CampDoc. Be sure that any inhalers have the prescription label attached, or bring along the box with the label attached. All over-the-counter medications should be in their original container with the camper's name and date of birth written on the container along with instructions for administration.

Sun Exposure/Insect Bites

We will have a designated sunscreen and insect spray area near the parking lot and encourage your camper to wear both. **Tip: *applying sunscreen first and bug spray second is recommended.***

Massachusetts Department of Health encourages the use of wide-brimmed hats, long-sleeved shirts and long pants when exposed to sun.

Absent/Sick Campers:

If a camper is going to be absent, please call the office at (781) 837-9400 to inform staff. If there are scheduled absences during the camp session, please inform camp staff in writing. Please do not send a sick camper to camp. Campers should stay home when they show any of the following symptoms:

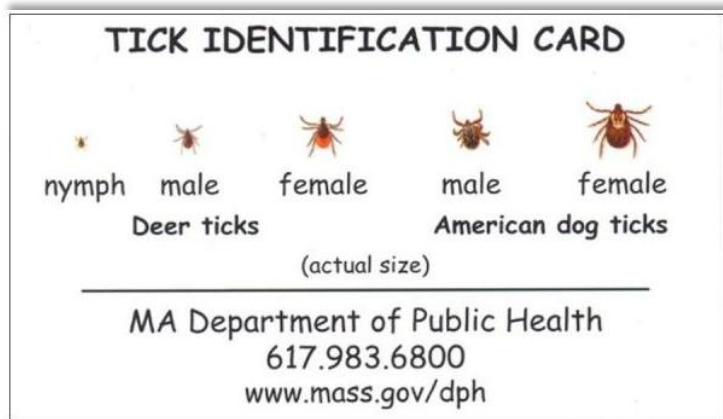
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| • Active lice or scabies infestation | • Fever |
| • Continuous cough | • Skin eruptions |
| • Diarrhea | • Sore throat |
| • Discharge from or red eyes | • Vomiting |
| • Earache | |

If your camper is sick, please keep them home until they feel better. If a camper starts to feel sick while at camp, we will have them rest in a designated area until they can be picked up. A staff member will stay with them during this time. Campers with viral infections can return when their fever returns to normal without the aid of fever-reducing medications. Campers with bacterial infections will be allowed to return after 24 hours on antibiotics. Campers infected with lice may return when they have been treated and are nit-free.

No refunds or transfer of funds will be given for incomplete attendance, including sick days.

In case of any illness where a camper is absent from camp, guardians must speak to the Camp Director before the camper may return to camp.

Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Prevention:



We live in New England and ticks can be found everywhere, including in your own backyard. During the camp day, we do **regular tick checks** at lunch and other times as needed. Every night at bath time or just before bed, please take a few minutes to **check your camper for ticks**. Be sure to check behind the knees, underwear lines, underarms, and at the hair line on the back of the neck. If you would like more information about ticks and Lyme disease, please visit the MA Department of Health website at: www.mass.gov/dph/tick.

Adapting to the weather:

- **Rainy Days:** Campers are outside for most rainy days. Summer rains can be cold. Be prepared with rain gear and jacket. We have outdoor shelters to use when needed as well as indoor spaces to use during thunderstorms.
- **Hot Days:** On very hot days we will have misters set up. Your camper may be damp when you pick them up! You may want to bring a towel to protect your car seat. Please inform your camper and/or the staff if you wish to limit how wet they get. We will gain their verbal consent before any camper gets wet!

In the event of injury or first aid: Families will be notified, indicating the injury's nature, what was provided, and by whom. North River keeps a copy of all first aid records. All camp staff are first aid and CPR certified.

Families will be contacted during the camp day if:

- A camper needs health care beyond our training
- A camper is not feeling well, and we determine it is best that they rest at home
- First aid was provided, and health care supervisors want to alert families prior to pick up
- A camper sustained an injury to the head.

In case of emergency: First aid will be administered at the level of training. The front desk staff, Camp Director, or Assistant Camp Director will notify families. We will work with you to coordinate further care, pick-up, or transportation of the child. When appropriate, local emergency response personnel will be called at the same time families are being notified. If a camper needs transportation, it will be provided by a parent/guardian or ambulance service. If the parent/guardian or emergency contact persons cannot be reached, the child's physician will be called, and that person will make decisions about additional help, i.e. ambulance and hospital care.

If unable to reach the camper's primary contacts, we will call emergency contacts from the health form.

Risk Management

Mass Audubon staff members make every effort to conduct safe programs, to orient and support campers, and to inform camp families of inherent risks. Some activities may involve risks that campers do not routinely encounter at home. Risk management is an essential element of all the activities that we offer. Our standard precautions include conducting our program in a manner consistent with the practices and procedures recommended by the Mass Department of Public Health and the American Camp Association. While we anticipate that these efforts will ensure the well-being of each participant, we are also aware that it is neither possible to foresee every contingency nor to eliminate all risk.

Visitor Interactions:

During the summer months, North River Wildlife Sanctuary and Visitor Center are open to the public from 9:00am to 3:00pm, Monday through Friday. Staff are on duty in the Visitor Center whenever camp is in session. The trails are open dawn to dusk every day. Trail patrols are done weekly by property staff to assess the condition of trails for visitor use. Before camp season, the Camp Director and Property Manager meet to discuss security concerns and develop a plan of action as necessary.

For staff and camper safety, all counselors are required to carry a two-way radio. Campers shall be instructed in safety procedures for interactions with the public during their camp orientation. Campers shall not approach strangers on or off camp property and shall refer all questions/concerns about strangers to a supervising staff member. Visitors will not be allowed to disrupt camp activities and will be asked to leave camp areas (Camp Shelters). Staff are instructed to ask unrecognized persons to leave the program area, kindly explaining that the area is not open to the public. If the person poses a safety threat, staff shall make sure the campers are safe. Staff will bring the campers to a place of safety and contact the Camp Director. Staff will seek help from other camp and North River staff if the incident constitutes a threat to campers or themselves. The Camp Director will contact the appropriate authorities if necessary.

Camper Surveys

We're excited to hear from Mass Audubon campers about their experience. This summer, some campers may have the opportunity to participate in a brief, internal survey to help us learn about and improve the camp experience. These surveys are optional; campers have the choice of participating or not. Trained camp staff will make audio recordings, which we will share with the Director of Evaluation to transcribe and analyze. Quotes and data from these surveys may be published, however campers will not be identified. Campers will be chosen at random, and only campers with prior authorization (media release) signed by their parents/guardians may participate in the camper survey. If you have questions, please contact us at camps@massaudubon.org.

Payment and Deadlines

The full payment for camp and all forms (including health forms and immunizations to CampDoc) **are due on or before May 15** unless a payment plan has been set up with the Camp Director or Camp Registrar.

A late fee of \$25 per camper will apply if any forms or payments are late or incomplete.

If registering after May 15, payment is required in full unless special arrangements are made. If payment or forms are incomplete, we cannot guarantee your camper's slot will be held.

No camper is allowed to attend camp unless all forms, waivers, and payments are complete.

Deposit and Refund Policy

A **nonrefundable deposit of \$50 per session** is required. This amount is a portion of the fee; it is not an additional charge. Nonrefundable deposits cannot be transferred to another camper, session, family, or camp location. Please check your calendar for conflicts before registering.

Refunds will be given as follows:

- On or before May 15: refund of any payment other than the nonrefundable \$50 deposit
- After May 15: no refunds

If North River must cancel a session, you will receive a full refund. Refunds are not given for participant dismissal, failure to attend, absence, or sick days. If your family has a special circumstance, please contact the Camp Director or the Camp Registrar to discuss options.

Questions?

General camp questions: Jacqui Shuster, Camp Director, (781) 355-6103, jshuster@massaudubon.org

For registration questions, camp session openings, or camp payments, contact the North River Nature Camp Registrar, (508) 952-1041 or email at northrivercamp@massaudubon.org

Visit our website at www.massaudubon.org/northrivercamp for more information.

Meningococcal Disease and Camp Attendees: Commonly Asked Questions

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is caused by infection with bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. These bacteria can infect the tissue (the “meninges”) surrounding the brain and spinal cord and cause meningitis, or they may infect the blood or other organs of the body. Symptoms of meningococcal disease may appear suddenly. Fever, severe and constant headaches, stiff neck or neck pain, nausea and vomiting, and rash can all be signs of meningococcal disease. Changes in behavior, such as confusion, sleepiness, and trouble waking up, can also be important symptoms. In the US, about 350-550 people get meningococcal disease yearly, and 10-15% die despite receiving antibiotic treatment. Of those who survive, about 10-20% may lose limbs, become hard of hearing or deaf, have problems with their nervous system, including long-term neurologic problems, or have seizures or strokes. Less common presentations include pneumonia and arthritis.

How common is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is becoming much less common. Over the past 20 years, the overall incidence of meningococcal disease in the US has declined ten-fold. Twenty years ago in Massachusetts, there were 80-100 cases of meningococcal disease per year. In contrast, for the past decade, the average is approximately 12 cases per year. Declining rates of meningococcal disease may be due in part to the introduction of meningococcal vaccines (initially recommended routinely in 2005 for adolescents aged 11-12 years, unvaccinated college freshmen living in residence halls) as well as other factors such as the decline in cigarette smoking, which may impact susceptibility to this disease.

How is meningococcal disease spread?

These bacteria are passed from person to person through saliva (spit). You must be in close contact with an infected person’s saliva for the bacteria to spread. Close contact includes activities such as kissing, sharing water bottles, sharing eating/drinking utensils, sharing cigarettes, or being within 3-6 feet of someone who is infected and coughing and sneezing.

Who is most at risk for getting meningococcal disease?

People who travel to certain parts of the world where the disease is very common, microbiologists, people with HIV infection, and those exposed to meningococcal disease during an outbreak are at risk for meningococcal disease. Children and adults with damaged or removed spleens or persistent complement component deficiency (an inherited immune disorder) are at risk. Adolescents and people who live in specific settings, such as college freshmen living in dormitories and military recruits, are at greater risk of disease from some of the serotypes.

Are camp attendees at increased risk for meningococcal disease?

Children attending day or residential camps are not considered to be at an increased risk for meningococcal disease because of their participation.

Is there a vaccine against meningococcal disease?

Yes, there are multiple meningococcal vaccines. Quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menveo and MenQuadfi) protects against 4 serotypes (A, C, W, and Y) of meningococcal disease. The meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) protects against serogroup B meningococcal disease for people aged 10 and older. Pentavalent meningococcal vaccine protects against serogroups A, B, C, W, and Y. It may be administered to persons aged ≥ 10 years when both a quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine and meningococcal B vaccine are indicated at the same visit.

Should my child or adolescent receive the meningococcal vaccine?

Different meningococcal vaccines are recommended for a range of age and risk groups. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) is routinely recommended at age 11-12 years with a booster at age 16 and is required for school entry for grades 7 and 11. In addition, these vaccines may be recommended for additional children with certain high-risk health conditions, such as those described above.

Meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) is recommended for people with certain relatively rare high-risk health conditions (examples: persons with a damaged spleen or whose spleen has been removed, those with persistent complement component deficiency (an inherited disorder), and people who may have been exposed during an outbreak). Adolescents and young adults (16 through 23 years of age) who do not have high-risk conditions may be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine, preferably at 16 through 18 years of age, to provide short-term protection for most strains of serogroup B meningococcal disease. Parents of adolescents and children at higher risk of infection because of certain medical conditions or other circumstances should discuss vaccination with their child's healthcare provider.

How can I protect my child or adolescent from getting meningococcal disease?

The best protection against meningococcal disease and many other infectious diseases is thorough and frequent handwashing, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette. Individuals should:

1. wash their hands often, especially after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food (hands should be washed with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand gel or rub may be used if hands are not visibly dirty).
2. cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and discard the tissue in a trash can; or if they don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve.
3. not share food, drinks, or eating utensils with other people, especially if they are ill.
4. contact their healthcare provider immediately if they have symptoms of meningococcal disease.

If your child is exposed to someone with meningococcal disease, antibiotics may be recommended to keep your child from getting sick.

You can obtain more information about meningococcal disease or vaccination from your healthcare provider, your local Board of Health (listed in the phone book under government), or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Divisions of Epidemiology and Immunization at (617) 983-6800 or on the MDPH website at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/school-immunizations>.

For additional information on *Invasive Meningococcal Disease (IMD)*, please visit the CDC's website: [Meningococcal Disease Surveillance and Trends | Meningococcal | CDC](#).