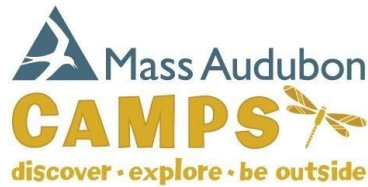


# BERKSHIRE NATURE CAMP AT PLEASANT VALLEY

## Summer 2025



Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary  
472 West Mountain Road  
Lenox, MA 01240

Camp Office  
413-637-0320

[berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org](mailto:berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org)

*Our camp complies with the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, is licensed by the Tri-Town Health Department, and is accredited by the American Camp Association. Copies of our background check policy, health care policies, discipline policies and grievance procedures are available upon request.*

Welcome to Mass Audubon's Berkshire Nature Camp! We look forward to meeting your camper and having a fun summer exploring and learning about the natural world. This document is full of important information to help prepare you and your camper for a memorable summer camp experience. Please read through this document prior to camp and contact us with any questions.

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## CAMP GOALS & INCLUSION

We are committed to ensuring that every camper has the best possible experience at camp.

### **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.

### **Additional guiding Camp Goals and Outcomes**

At Berkshire Nature Camps, we want to encourage campers to investigate nature, acquire new skills, and deepen their understanding of the natural world. We want each camper to....

#### **Connect with Nature**

Spending quality time outdoors while encouraging campers' curiosity, sense of discovery and understanding helps foster a deep, lifelong connection to nature.

#### **Learn Science Outdoors**

Through a nature-based science curriculum children learn and practice science skills in a real-world setting. Skills include critical thinking, creativity, communication, and environmental literacy.

#### **Growth Through Play**

Children and young adults learn by playing fun age-appropriate activities and games. Play fosters independence, imagination, and socialization.

#### **Feel a Sense of Belonging**

Building friendships, discovering new interests, and trying new activities, children will grow socially, emotionally, and physically at camp.

## **Be Part of the Camp Community**

To create a safe and inclusive camp atmosphere, we foster a camp staff that is well-trained, passionate about camp, and excited to inspire this next generation of environmental stewards. This allows us to create an emotionally and physically safe environment where the camper can have a successful experience.

## **Engage in Stewardship**

Campers will develop awareness and appreciation of the natural world and engage in age-appropriate environmental stewardship, such as turning off water in bathrooms, using eco-friendly products, turning off outside lights at night, picking up trash, educating peers, leading by example, or contacting local politicians.

## **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 verbal 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](mailto:camps@massaudubon.org).

*Berkshire Nature Camp staff encourages and welcomes observations, suggestions, and ideas from campers, families and camp staff. We want to be able to offer an engaging and well-designed camp, one that is creative and innovative and appreciate all feedback to help us achieve this goal.*

## **AGE GROUPS & THEIR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Knee High Naturalists and Discoverers – 3-6 yrs old**

Goal: Encourage a young child's curiosity, increase sensory awareness, and promote joyful play in the outdoors.

Objectives:

- Campers will spend time learning to look for signs of animal life.
- Campers will learn about the tools that scientists use and experiment with their use.
- Campers will use all their senses to observe and experience the world around them.
- Campers will begin to explore cycles in nature through observation and activities.

## **Explorers – 7-9 yrs old**

**Goal:** Engage campers with observational and hands-on field activities that emphasize the characteristics and adaptations of living things and will provide opportunities for free play in nature.

**Objectives:**

- Campers will discuss the differences and similarities between the human concept of “home” and animal habitats.
- Campers will learn the “ingredients” of a habitat (flora, fauna, natural resources, natural features, and climate) and identify primary habitats on our sanctuaries.
- Campers will identify species that live in each of the primary habitats.
- Campers will explore each habitat to compare and contrast between them.
- Campers will identify human impacts on habitats, discuss their effort on the animals and plants that live there, and explore ways these effects can be minimized.

## **Naturalists – 10-13 yrs old**

**Goal:** Enhance a camper’s ability to identify specific plants and animals through more in-depth field studies and community science projects.

**Objectives:**

- Campers will discover facts about these habitats through experimentation and observation.
- Campers will conduct mini projects to discover patterns and cycles present in animal behavior and within ecosystems.
- Campers will learn to answer their own questions about the way the natural world works and its interrelatedness to human life by following the scientific process: question, hypothesis, and observation.
- Counselors will stimulate and encourage campers’ questions and rather than answering them, ask “How can we find out?”

## **CAMPDOC AND REQUIRED HEALTH FORMS**

CampDoc is a secure website that Mass Audubon uses to collect the required documentation needed for your camper to attend camp. 7-10 days after you register for camp, you will receive an email directly from CampDoc to upload your camper’s health forms and supporting documents for financial aid (if you’re applying for sliding scale). Please keep an eye out for this; you can also add the email [noreply@campdoc.org](mailto:noreply@campdoc.org) to your safe senders list to ensure it doesn’t end up in your spam folder. You will be asked to upload forms such as a health

history and doctor's exams, camp waivers, your camper's immunizations, income verification for sliding scale, and emergency contacts and camper pick-up information.

**Uploading these documents is mandatory and will be needed to secure your camper's spot in our programs.** CampDoc is a secure, encrypted, and password protected website that is used by camps across the country.

### **If your camper is new to Berkshire Nature Camps**

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

Note: Your camper's basic health information will save from year-to-year, so once you complete it in CampDoc.com this season, you won't have to start from scratch next year.

### **If your camper is returning to Berkshire Nature Camps**

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.

- You should use the same email address and password that you used previously to access your CampDoc.com information.
- If you forgot your password from last year, enter your email on the login page and click "Forgot Password" to reset your password.

### **CampDoc Guidelines for all Berkshire Nature 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.
- Upload any required documents to your CampDoc.com account. If you're on a phone/tablet, you can take a picture to upload the document.
- Upload the Health Care Provider form, including the immunization record.
- If you would like to apply for an immunization exception due to your religious beliefs or if you have a written recommendation from your child's physician that is different from the standard immunization schedule, please contact the Camp Director to receive a waiver application.
- 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.
- Complete all the tabs in CampDoc, including Emergency Contacts, Activity Restrictions, Health Care Providers, Health Insurance, Allergies, Diet & Nutrition information, Medications, Authorized Release/Pick-up People, Media Release, and Authorizations. This information will help us prepare and be able to provide the best experience for your camper!
- You can log in to CampDoc.com at any time to update your camper's health information.

**To avoid a late fee, please complete all forms in CampDoc by May 15.** If you register for camp after May 15, we ask that you fill out the CampDoc forms as soon as possible and at least two weeks before your camp session begins.

If you need help completing the forms or do not have access to the internet, please contact us at (413) 637-0320 or email [berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org](mailto:berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org). For help using Camp Doc, contact their support desk at 734-619-8300 x2.

## CAMP INFORMATION

At Mass Audubon's Berkshire Nature Camp, we strive to offer high quality outdoor experiences to all of our campers – experiences that they will enjoy and remember for their lifetimes. We cannot meet this goal without the cooperation of our campers and their families, so we invite you to enter into a partnership with us to ensure that every child has the best possible time while attending camp.

We pledge to provide:

- A safe and healthy environment for your child;
- A high-quality educational program;
- A staff firmly committed to providing a positive camp experience for each and every camper;
- A community-minded, inclusive environment which helps every child feel seen, heard, included, secure, and safe.

In return, we expect the following from families and campers:

- Cooperation with our stated and written policies including our behavior guidelines;
- Detailed attention to the daily needs of your child to prepare them to come to camp (dressed in the appropriate clothing, with a water bottle, nutritious lunch, and snack);
- Commitment to the well-being of the entire camp community (such as keeping a sick or over-tired child at home);
- Willingness to act in collaboration with camp staff to maintain or restore appropriate behavior and participation.

If at any time, you have a question or concern about our camp, please speak with Lydia Warters, the Camp Director, or Kayla Downs, the Assistant Camp Director. No question or concern is too small for you to bring to our attention! You may request copies of our background check, health care, and discipline policies and/or grievance procedures at any time.

## BEFORE YOUR CHILD ARRIVES AT CAMP

Please take some time, a day or two before your child comes to camp, to prepare them for participation in camp. Here are a few things we would like you to share with your child:

- Each child will have a special place to put their things, so they will not have to carry around everything they bring to camp. They will be expected to carry a water bottle with them, and there will be some days when they will carry a backpack with their lunch to eat out on the trail.

- Each child will be expected to be courteous and respectful of themselves and others; while we will discuss group expectations on the first morning, you might also want to talk to your child about listening when other children or camp staff are talking, and about the need to follow our expectations (for example, always staying together, respect each other and nature, be safe, be curious, have fun!).
- On the first morning, we will be showing the campers where the bathrooms are, where they will be eating lunch, where they can put their things, and where they will be picked up when their camp day is over. We want to ensure they have a sense of their surroundings to help them settle in.
- Please demonstrate to your child how to apply sunscreen and insect repellent. We can help younger campers at your request. We will ask that campers step a little away from the group when applying these products in spray form.
- Remind them that their counselors are really excited to meet the campers and enjoy working with children! They can't wait to share the world of nature with the campers and to get to know them. We welcome any and all questions that your child might have. Counselors are here to ensure that each camper has a great time!
- Remind your camper that this is an outdoor nature camp. All activities, including snack and lunch, take place outside. We are outside even when it rains and when it's hot. Every camp group has a covered outdoor shelter as well as an emergency indoor space if needed. Bathrooms are inside; and we will go inside if there is severe weather, such as a thunderstorm, high winds, etc. We'll take indoor cooling breaks and play water games on days when it's extremely hot.
- There are no swimming activities at Berkshire Nature Camps.

## WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP AND HOW TO DRESS

Dress for exploring outdoors and playing games. Be prepared for any weather - we will be outdoors even on rainy days, so rain gear and something warm may come in handy! Any clothing should be ok to get muddy, wet, or dirty since our camps are hands-on in nature.

Please make sure that your child's name is on everything. We cannot be held responsible for lost items. We will keep a Camp Lost and Found. Any items not picked up by September 15 will be donated to a local charity.

### Your child should wear:

- Shorts and t-shirts are fine; some families prefer long pants and long shirts to protect against the sun and against ticks or poison ivy.
- Long pants are HIGHLY RECOMMENDED on fielding day (we will let you know which day this happens) as they provide better protection from ticks. We will do tick checks and ask you to do them every day as well.
- Closed-toe shoes like sneakers or rugged hiking shoes – For safety reasons, **no sandals please**. Closed-toe water shoes are ok for days we explore the pond



and for use during water games, but please make sure your camper also has sneakers or rugged hiking shoes with them as well for hiking.

- Socks (to protect against blisters and accidental exposure to poison ivy)
- A wide-brimmed hat to protect them from sun and insects.

**Your child should bring:**

- Backpack to hold their belongings (and to keep their hands free!)
- A hearty lunch and nutritious snack. We notice that campers want to eat much more at camp than they do while at school. **PLEASE NOTE THAT WE ARE A NUT-FREE CAMP\***. A foam insulated bag with an icepack is recommended if their lunch needs to be cold.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- At least one water bottle. Please do not freeze the water bottle – the ice will not melt fast enough to give your child enough water to drink. We will refill water bottles throughout the day.
- A spare set of clothes so your child will be able to stay clean and dry if they get wet or have an accident while at camp.
- An extra pair of long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. If your child decides to go into the field for choice time they will be better protected against ticks.
- A spare set of socks and old sneakers – our campers love to go explore the ponds and creeks and will need to be able to change out of their wet shoes and socks.
- A raincoat- we will be outside all day, even in the rain!

**What NOT to bring to camp:** Do not bring electronic devices, personal treasures, or expensive items to camp. Cell phones and other electronics are not to be used during the camp day. 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 animals, other than service animals, are allowed in camp.

*\*Note on allergens: We ask that all lunches and snacks packed for campers be nut-free to accommodate our campers with severe allergies. Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary is open to the public for hiking, so we cannot guarantee an entirely nut-free environment however we take the following precautions:*

- Staff and campers are asked to bring nut-free snack and lunch only to camp
- Any surfaces (like picnic tables) that could be shared with the public are cleaned prior to using for camp.
- Camp activities happen away from the public and camp groups keep distance from hikers & visitors.
- Staff are trained to reinforce strict no food-sharing policy with campers.

Please contact Lydia with any additional questions regarding allergies.

## PICK UP AND DROP-OFF

**Knee-Highs AND Discoverers Drop-off:** For the Knee-Highs (age 3-4) and Discoverers (age 5-6) groups, drop-off is between 8:55-9:05am. Drop-off for the Knee-Highs and Discoverers

happens near the roadside parking lot/entrance of Pleasant Valley. Please park on the Visitor's Center side of the parking lot and walk your camper to the staff member waiting to greet you. They will check you in and walk your child to their meeting spot. We ask that all family members head out by 9:15am so that we can get started with the day's activities! If your camper needs some extra time at drop-off, please plan to arrive a little early. Please note – if you have campers in other age groups to drop off, please drop them off in the field parking area first (see below) before driving to the roadside lot to drop off your younger campers.

**Explorers and Naturalists Drop-off:** For Explorers (age 7-9), and Naturalists (10-13), drop-off is between 8:55-9:05am. Drop-off for Explorers and Naturalists will take place in the field parking lot at Pleasant Valley. When you arrive, please stay in your vehicle and drive to the area indicated on the map below to check in with the director and drop off your camper. **Campers will be walking with their counselors down Alder Trail to their group sites promptly at 9:05am. If you arrive after 9:05, please park in the roadside lot or field parking lot and walk your camper up to the Visitor's Center to sign them in and a staff member will bring them to their group site.** If your camper needs extra time at drop-off, please plan to arrive a little early.

#### **End of Day Pick-Up:**

**Please note that the person doing pick-up will be required to show a photo ID each day and only people listed in the Child Release section of the CampDoc health form will be allowed to sign out your camper – there are no exceptions to this policy.** A parent or guardian may add additional people to their release form. This can be done through CampDoc or in person during the camp week. Please see additional details about the time and location of daily pick-up for each group below:

#### Knee-Highs:

Pick-up for Knee-Highs takes place between 12:55-1pm. Please park in the roadside lot and walk over to the Knee-High pick-up/drop-off area in front of the Nature Play Area (same as morning drop-off!) to sign out your camper!

#### Discovers:

Pick-up for Discoverers and Full Day Knee-Highs takes place between 2:55-3pm. Please park in the roadside lot and walk over to the Discovers/Knee-Highs pick-up/drop-off area (same as morning drop-off!) to sign out your camper!

#### Explorers & Naturalists:

Pick up for Explorers and Naturalist takes place between 2:55-3pm. Families should park in the field parking lot and walk down the Alder Trail to the meeting location indicated on the map. From there a staff person will be waiting to sign your child out and direct you to your camper's group.

*Please note, the roadside parking lot is used by other sanctuary visitors and does not have capacity for all camp families to park there. **If you have concerns about accessibility and are unable to***

**use the field lot, please contact Camp Director, Lydia Warters, at least one week prior to your camper's session so that accommodations can be made.**

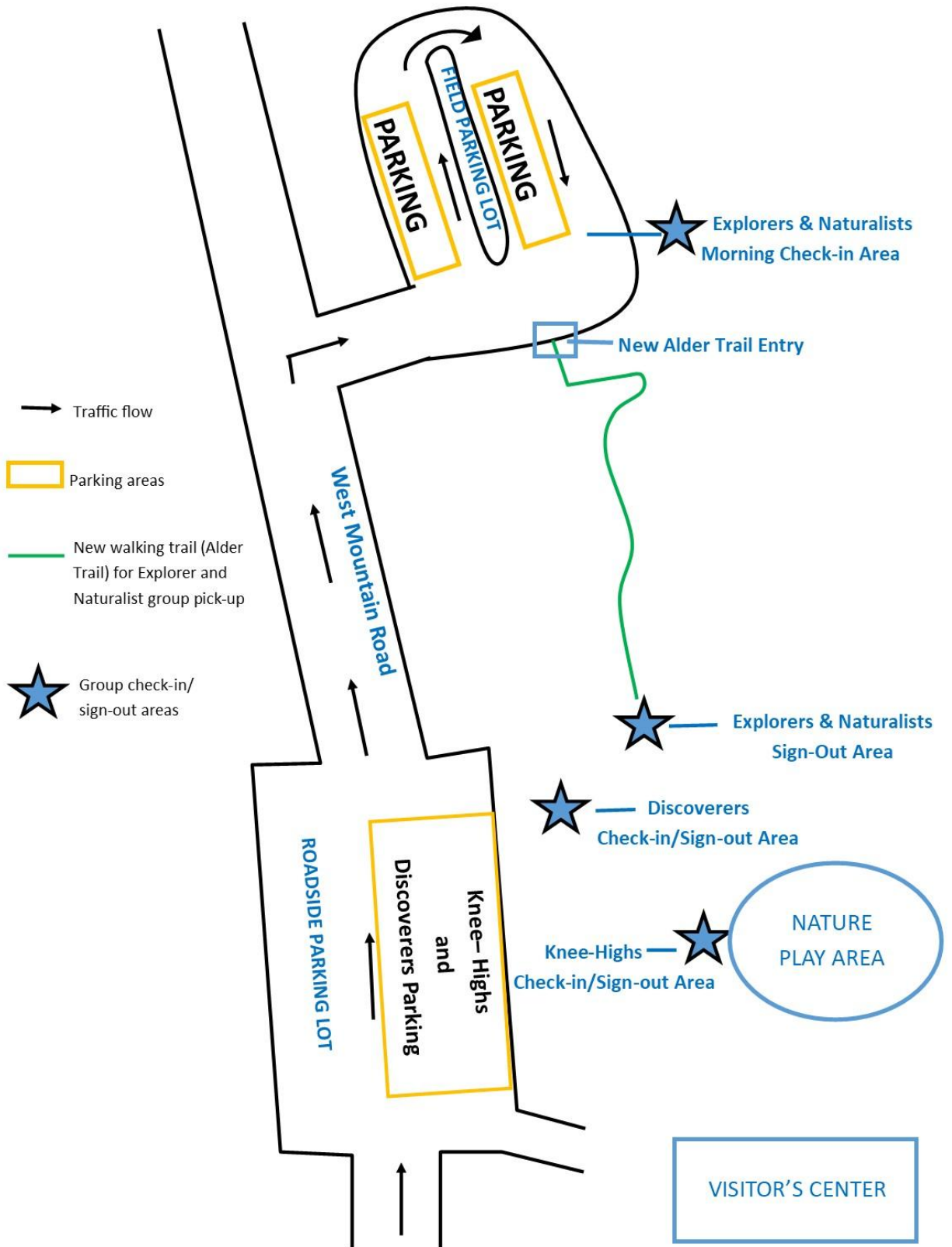
**Friday Closing Circle:**

On Fridays, families are invited to arrive at 2:45pm (12:45pm for Knee-Highs!) to join us for a closing circle where campers will have a chance to share highlights from the camp week and sing a favorite camp song!

After our closing circle, campers will follow their counselors to their nearby group sites. Families will go to the group site to show their ID and sign out with their counselors. Any families unable to come to closing circle, can arrive at the usual pick-up time and walk over to their regular sign out locations where they will be directed to their camper's group site to sign out their camper.

**Late Drop off or Early Pick Up:** Much of the day is spent outdoors, often away from the main area, which makes it difficult to accommodate late arrivals and early departures. Please speak to the Camp Director or Assistant Director in advance so we can plan accordingly if you need to drop off your camper late or pick them up early.

**Absent Children:** If your child will be absent during any camp day, please email us at [berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org](mailto:berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org) or call the camp office at 413-637-0320 by 8:30am. If no one is available to take your call, leave a message. If a camper does not arrive and we have not been notified of their absence, we will call you on the phone numbers listed on your emergency forms to find out if they are not attending or if you are running late.



## MASS AUDUBON CAMPS 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.

	<b>Leader Response</b>	<b>Consequences for Camper</b>
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 or Assistant Director on the steps taken so far. Supervise camper during longer break. Add to incident report. Camp Director or designee updates family.	Camper will take a longer break which may include an entire activity. 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 POLICIES**

*Our complete health care policy available upon request.*

**Health Care at Camp:** The Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, camp counselors, and other full-time Pleasant Valley Staff have certifications in first aid and CPR. Our off-site healthcare consultant is Dr. Peter Everett. The Camp Director and Assistant Camp Director act as the onsite Health Supervisors and will administer any prescribed medications during camp. The Lenox Fire Department EMTs provide emergency care for Berkshire Nature Camp programs.

**Sick Campers:** If your camper is sick, please keep them at home until they feel better. If a camper starts to feel sick while at camp, we will have them rest inside or in a designated

outdoor space until feeling better or until they can be picked up. A staff member will stay with them during this time.

**Medications:** 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 completely updating the medication information on the health form on CampDoc. Your family physician as well as a parent or guardian must sign this form. All medication administered shall be overseen by the Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, Acting Health Care Supervisor, or trained counselor. No child shall be allowed to administer an epi-pen unless we receive written permission from the child's doctor, and the medication form has been signed. Be sure that any inhalers have the prescription label attached, or bring along the box with the label attached. All over-the-counter medications need to follow the aforementioned procedures.

**Sun Exposure/Insect Bites:** Please do not apply spray sunscreen or insect repellents inside the buildings. 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 suggested. The State encourages the use of wide-brimmed hats, long-sleeved shirts and long pants when exposed to sun.

**Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Prevention:** Families need to be aware of the potential health risks ticks represent and take an active role in protecting their child by checking each evening for ticks by feeling the skin for bumps. Visual checks for ticks on campers' arms, legs, and clothing is a regular part of our routine. Even though we do regular tick checks at camp, we ask that you do a thorough tick check each evening. Please visit the following Mass Department of Public Health website for a fact sheet on ticks and tick-borne diseases: [www.mass.gov/tick-borne-diseases](http://www.mass.gov/tick-borne-diseases)

**Bathroom Needs:** Campers will have many opportunities to use the bathroom throughout the camp day. However, should nature call when we are far from any facilities, we will provide campers support if they need use the forest as their bathroom. Staff carry an outdoor bathroom kit and are trained in how to provide camper privacy and hygiene and minimize our impact. Please talk to your camper about this bathroom option before camp. Preparing campers for their time at camp is essential in ensuring a successful and fun camp experience. If your camper seems unsure, please arrange a time visit Pleasant Valley in advance and/or reach out to the camp director if you have questions.

#### **Adapting to the weather:**

- **Rainy Days:** Campers are outside for most rainy days. Summer rains can be cold. Be prepared with rain gear and a sweatshirt or jacket. We have roofed, outdoor shelters to use when needed.
- **Hot Days:** On very hot days your camper may be damp or wet 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 if first aid is provided:** Families will be notified, indicating the nature of the injury, what first aid was provided, and by whom. Staff will keep a copy and this will be logged into the first aid log by health care supervisors. 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 10
- A camper is not feeling well and health care supervisors determine it is best that they go home
- A camper has symptoms related to COVID-19
- First aid was provided and health care supervisors want to alert families prior to pick up
- A camper sustains an injury to the head

**In case of emergency:** First Aid will be administered as per standing medical orders and at the level of our first aid training. The camp registrar, Camp Director, or Assistant Camp Director will notify families using numbers on the child's registration and medical forms. We will work with you about arrangements for 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. Attempts to notify the primary contacts will be indicated in the health log.

## **CAMP COVID-19 POLICIES**

The health and welfare of our campers and staff remains our highest priority. We feel confident that the success of Mass Audubon Camps in designing and offering safe camps the last 4 years, as well as our policies, will guide us into another great summer in 2025. We will continue to stay informed and engaged with the work of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the American Camp Association, ensuring best practices and staying safe as we adapt to the developing phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to work closely with partners in public health, childcare, and camp programs, will keep our camp community updated and adjust our COVID-19 policies accordingly. Based on current public health guidelines, masks will be optional. If you prefer for your camper to wear a mask, please make a note of this in their CampDoc account. Feel free to pack a few masks in their backpack, we will also have some masks available in case your camper needs one.

## **Mass Department of Public Health Information**

### **COVID-19 Information**

<https://www.mass.gov/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

### **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.

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/meningitis-vaccination-requirements#information-for-students,-camp-attendees,-and-daycare-attendees->

## PAYMENT

If paying by check, write your camper’s first and last name on the memo line (make the check out to Mass Audubon). MasterCard, Discover, and VISA accepted.

## DEADLINES

**The balance of the camp fees 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 Operations Manager. **A late fee of \$20 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 you 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 \$75 per session is required** to hold each child's space in camp. This amount is a portion of the stated fees; it is not an additional charge. Nonrefundable deposits cannot be transferred to another camper, 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 all payments, except the non-refundable deposit
- After May 15: no refund is available.

If Berkshire Nature Camps 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 Operations Manager to discuss options.

## ANY QUESTIONS? DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT US!!

For general camp questions, please contact:

- Berkshire Nature Camp office (Pleasant Valley) 413-637-0320, [berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org](mailto:berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org), or;
- Lydia Warters, Camp Director: 413-252-9587, [lwarters@massaudubon.org](mailto:lwarters@massaudubon.org)

For registration questions, camp session openings, or camp payments, contact the camp office at 413-637-0320 or email [berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org](mailto:berkshirecamp@massaudubon.org)

We look forward to seeing you and your camper soon!