



# Briar Bush

NATURE CENTER



**SUMMER  
CAMPS**  
2024

# WELCOME

## Our Summer Camp Program

Summer is a time when learning and play go hand-in-hand. Briar Bush Summer Camps give your child the opportunity to experience the wonders of nature through scientific discovery, interpretive hikes, live animal encounters, games, crafts, nature play, and more.

For campers ages 4-12, our 12.5 acres of forest serve as a rich oasis and perfect summer camp setting in the middle of the suburbs. We also provide campers ages 8-12 with the opportunity to explore outside of the Briar Bush forest through regional day trips. Campers ages 11-15 are welcome to join us for Overnight Camp to Hickory Run State Park. We look forward to providing your child with memories full of excitement, new experiences, nature exploration, and all-around fun in the outdoors.

## Our Summer Camp Staff

We are very fortunate to have highly experienced educators who love what they do. Our summer camp staff pass a rigorous set of clearances, complete relevant trainings and certifications, and care about the health and safety of our campers. Staff members recognize that summer camp is a unique experience in a child's life and are dedicated to providing an exceptional experience for each child.



Year-round staff members lead Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 8-9 and Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 10-12 while seasonal counselors lead Seedlings Half-Day Camps for Ages 4-6 and Saplings Full-Day Camps for Ages 6-7. Our seasonal camp counselors are typically college students or recent college graduates who are carefully selected after an extensive interview process is completed and all clearances have been passed. Their skills, character, experiences, and leadership add to the success of our summer camp program.

Camp Aides, teenage summer camp volunteers, accompany and assist counselors throughout the summer. Their dedication to our camp program, love of nature, and joy of working with children make all the difference in our summer camp program and in the life of each camper.

If you have any questions regarding Summer Camp, please call (215) 887-6603 to speak with Melissa Eldridge, Program and Summer Camp Director.

# GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

## Registration

Members-Only Registration begins at 12:00pm on Monday, January 29, 2024 for Friends of Briar Bush Members at the Household Level or above.

Registration opens to the public at 12:00pm on Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

For registration tips and to register, please visit our website at [www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org) or call (215) 887-6603. Payment is due in full at the time of registration.

## Discounts

Friends of Briar Bush Members at the Household Level or above receive a 20% discount on our summer camp programs. You may purchase a membership at the time of registration to take advantage of early enrollment and discounted fees.

Abington Township residents, who do not hold a current FOBB Household Membership, receive a 10% discount. Be sure to register your residency on your account to activate the discount on your order.

Discounts apply to camp fees only; extended care is not discounted.

## Financial Aid

At Briar Bush Nature Center, we believe nature is for everyone. To apply for financial aid, submit an application and required materials as outlined on our website or call for a paper application.

Financial aid is determined on a rolling, first-come-first-served basis until funding is dispersed.

## Refunds and Cancellations

If you transfer or cancel a summer camp program 15 days or more before its start date, you will receive an 80% refund (20% service fee). No refunds will be issued within 14 days of the program start date.

## Extended Care

You may register for Before/After Care at the time of camp registration and up until the Thursday before the camp start date.

Before Care	After Care
AM Half/Full-Day Campers	PM Half/Full-Day Campers
8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
\$30/week	\$45/week

# SEEDLINGS HALF-DAY CAMPS FOR AGES 4-6

AM SESSION: 9:30AM - 12:00PM; PM SESSION: 1:30PM - 4:00PM | REGISTER FOR AM OR PM IN A GIVEN WEEK.

DATE\* = SHORTENED CAMP WEEK

Campers must be within this age range to participate. Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once. Campers registered for more than one week per theme will be removed.

## The Pond and Beyond

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 10-14      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

July 15-19      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

August 19-23      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

The Briar Bush pond is the place to be this summer! Explore the pond by catching frogs and tadpoles, searching for aquatic bugs, and meeting our resident aquatic turtle!



## Authors and Animals

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 17-18, 20-21\*      \$260.00 | Res: \$234.00 | **Mem: \$208.00**

July 22-26      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

August 26-30      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

This week, literacy and science come together as we dive into our favorite children's books and become part of the story. Bring classic nature books, like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, to life this week!

## Fur, Feathers, and Scales

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 24-28      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

July 29-August 2      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

Some body coverings help keep an animal warm, help them disappear, or help them get noticed. Explore the Briar Bush trails and museum to learn how body coverings help animals to survive!

## Wild by Nature

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 1-3\*      \$175.00 | Res: \$157.50 | **Mem: \$140.00**

August 5-9      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

Become one with the natural world this week by exploring the outdoors and getting your hands dirty. The best way to learn about nature is to get wacky and wild while having fun!

## Backyard Biologists

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 8-12      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

August 12-16      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

Explore the things that keep Briar Bush's backyard interesting. Use binoculars, dig in the soil, catch frogs, and more! Learn about the natural world around you by becoming a backyard biologist!

# SAPLINGS FULL-DAY CAMPS FOR AGES 6-7

9:30AM - 4:00PM

DATE\* = SHORTENED CAMP WEEK

Campers must be within this age range to participate. Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once. Campers registered for more than one week per theme will be removed.

## Master of the Elements

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 17-18, 20-21\*      \$330.00 | Res: \$297.00 | **Mem: \$264.00**

July 22-26                      \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

August 26-30                 \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

Water, Earth, Fire, Air: Do you believe you can master all of the elements? Stomp in the stream, dig in the soil, explore the energy of the sun, and feel the summer breeze. Explore the power of these elements as you learn to master them!

## The Cycles of Life

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 24-28                     \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

July 29-August 2             \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

Nature is full of circles and cycles like the life cycle of a frog, the changing of the seasons, and the cycle of the moon. Explore these cycles at the pond, museum, and more!

## Eyes on the Sky

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 1-3\*                        \$250.00 | Res: \$225.00 | **Mem: \$200.00**

August 5-9                     \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

It's time to put your eyes to the sky and explore all the things that are happening above you like the soaring birds and drizzling rain. Be sure to keep your eyes on the sky this week - you don't want to miss a thing!

## Stealth and Survival

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 8-12                        \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

August 12-16                 \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

Explore how animals use color, texture, body coverings, and more to protect themselves from predators and weather. Can you hide as well as an owl? Can you survive the elements of nature? Put your skills to the test this week as we learn about stealth and survival!

## Child vs. Wild

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 15-19                      \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

August 19-23                 \$410.00 | Res: \$369.00 | **Mem: \$328.00**

It's time to live on the wild side! Explore the wild world at Briar Bush by catching frogs, hiking the trails, stomping in the stream, and getting your hands dirty. This camp is the perfect balance of fun and skill building!





# FULL-DAY TRAVEL CAMPS FOR AGES 8-9



9:30AM - 4:00PM | DATE\* = SHORTENED CAMP WEEK

FEES FOR REGIONAL FIELD TRIPS ARE INCLUDED IN CAMP COST. SEE FAQs.

Campers must be within this age range to participate. Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once. Campers registered for more than one week per theme will be removed.

## Time Trekkers

Instructor: Heidi Malizia

June 17-18, 20-21\*      \$400.00 | Res: \$360.00 | **Mem: \$320.00**

July 29-August 2      \$500.00 | Res: \$450.00 | **Mem: \$400.00**

If you could go back in time, would you? Follow the footsteps of the Lenape people at Robbins Park. Joust, noodle-fence, and explore a castle playground. Experience life in the 18th century at Peter Wentz Farmstead. Visit the mill at Morris Arboretum. Swing, climb, and have a swashbuckling time like pirates at Treehouse World. Get ready to trek through time!

## Beaks, Wings, and Feathered Things

Instructor: Katie Fisk

June 24-28      \$475.00 | Res: \$427.50 | **Mem: \$380.00**

August 5-9      \$475.00 | Res: \$427.50 | **Mem: \$380.00**

From their ability to fly to their colors and songs, birds are fascinating creatures. This week, we'll go on bird watching trips, learn to set up bird-friendly backyard habitats, complete an egg drop challenge, and meet some real birds up close!

## Nature Art

Instructor: Ehren Gross

July 1-3\*      \$285.00 | Res: \$256.50 | **Mem: \$228.00**

August 12-16      \$475.00 | Res: \$427.50 | **Mem: \$380.00**

This week is a mix of outdoor adventure and art creation! We'll explore surrounding parks and other natural areas to gain inspiration as we use natural and recycled materials to create amazing works of art.

## Reading the Land

Instructor: Dan Hicks

July 8-12      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

August 19-23      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

Nature is full of stories, but can you read its language? Bite marks on leaves, animal scat, footprints, and subtle changes in plant life give us clues as to what is going on in the natural world around us. We'll take a trip to the Wagner Free Institute and a trip to find real fossils to take home!

## Forest Foragers

Instructor: Kyrstin Schwarz

July 15-19      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

August 26-30      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

Nature is full of treasures, if you know where to look! Food, tools, and toys can all come from the bounty of our local ecosystems. Come hunt for berries, cordage, clay, tree toothbrushes, and more! \*This camp involves the harvesting and consumption of wild edible plants.

# FULL-DAY TRAVEL CAMPS FOR AGES 10-12

9:30AM - 4:00PM | DATE\* = SHORTENED CAMP WEEK

FEES FOR REGIONAL FIELD TRIPS ARE INCLUDED IN CAMP COST. SEE FAQs.

Campers must be within this age range to participate. Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once. Campers registered for more than one week per theme will be removed.

## Eco Art

Instructor: Ehren Gross

June 17-18, 20-21\*      \$380.00 | Res: \$342.00 | **Mem: \$304.00**

July 29-August 2      \$475.00 | Res: \$427.50 | **Mem: \$380.00**

Wake up your creativity this summer using nature as your inspiration! This week, we'll use nature to create spore prints, Gyotaku "fish printing," natural plant dyes, and more. Join us where art meets nature!

## Future Naturalist

Instructor: Kyrstin Schwarz

June 24-28      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

August 5-9      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

This week, practice identifying plants and animals along the trails, learn to lead a guided hike with the help of professionals at other parks and nature centers, and spend time improving the habitats at Briar Bush. If you've ever said, "I want to work at Briar Bush!" this camp is for you!

## Habitat Hunters

Instructor: Heidi Malizia

July 1-3\*      \$300.00 | Res: \$270.00 | **Mem: \$240.00**

August 12-16      \$500.00 | Res: \$450.00 | **Mem: \$400.00**

Discover fantastic critters and plants that inhabit the world around us. Stomp in some streams, frolic in the fields and forests, visit local farms, and explore a real cave. Spend fun-filled days uncovering many hidden nooks and crannies both here at Briar Bush and beyond.

## Wildlife Biologist

Instructor: Katie Fisk

July 8-12      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

August 19-23      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

This week, experience different aspects of Wildlife Biology: examine skulls in mammalogy, master bird watching in ornithology, and learn how to measure the height of trees for dendrology, without ever leaving the ground. Sharpen your observation skills and experience the life of a wildlife biologist!

## Take a Hike

Instructor: Dan Hicks

July 15-19      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

August 26-30      \$450.00 | Res: \$405.00 | **Mem: \$360.00**

Lace your boots and uncover the many wonders of Pennsylvania! Learn how to plan a hiking trip, read a map, pack a day bag, create a safety plan, and more. Let's find some hidden treasures while exploring Southeast PA.



# OVERNIGHT CAMP FOR AGES 11-15

MONDAY: 9:30AM - 4:00PM; TUESDAY-FRIDAY: OVERNIGHT; FRIDAY: 4:00PM PICK-UP AT BBNC

FEES FOR REGIONAL FIELD TRIPS ARE INCLUDED IN CAMP COST. SEE FAQs.

Campers must be within this age range to participate.

## Overnight Camp

Instructor: Mark Fallon and Seasonal Staff

July 22-26

\$600.00 | Res: \$540.00 | **Mem: \$480.00**

Join us for a memorable camping adventure at Hickory Run State Park! Campers come to Briar Bush on Monday, sleep at home, then stay overnight Tuesday-Friday. There's so much to do, we can't list it all: safe camping skills, night hikes, creek walks, waterfalls, swimming, songs, s'mores around the campfire, and more. Look forward to a week immersed in nature, teamwork, and self-reliance!





# CAMP AIDE PROGRAM FOR AGES 13+

## Our Camp Aide Program

Camp Aides are an important aspect of Briar Bush Nature Center's Summer Camp program. Our Camp Aide Program is designed to give teens the opportunity to serve alongside summer camp staff while gaining naturalist, leadership, education, and communication skills; earning community service hours; building resume experience; and having a fun-filled summer.

Camp Aides will assist the counselors with camp preparation, group management, daily activities, camp cleanup, and more. Camp Aides are expected to model appropriate behavior and actively participate in games and activities, nature exploration, and camper support.

## Requirements and Application

Briar Bush Nature Center seeks hard-working, patient, fun-loving, and energetic teens to volunteer for our Camp Aide Program. Camp Aides must be 13+ years of age by June 1, 2024 and can expect to be scheduled to volunteer for one to two weeks of summer camp.

Interested? Complete the application found on our website, [www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org), for consideration.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## How many campers are within each camp group?

The Seedlings Half-Day Camps for Ages 4-6 have a total of six campers per AM and PM Session. The Saplings Full-Day Camps for Ages 6-7, Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 8-9, and Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 10-12 each have a total of twelve campers per session. Overnight Camp for Ages 11-15 has a total of 10 campers.

## Who will be overseeing my child's camp group?

Each camp group is lead by a year-round or seasonal adult counselor. Two to three teenage volunteer camp aides are scheduled to assist the counselor.

## What activities occur during the week? Will my child travel offsite?

Children in the Seedlings Half-Day Camps for Ages 4-6 will participate in activities onsite at Briar Bush Nature Center. Children in the Saplings Full-Day Camps for Ages 6-7 will participate in activities onsite, but will also walk to Highland Elementary School to utilize the playground and field. Most activities will relate to the camp theme, but campers can always look forward to live animal encounters, guided hikes, pond exploration, and visiting the Griscom Bird Observatory regardless of the theme.

Children in the Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 8-9 and Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 10-12 will participate in some activities at Briar Bush Nature Center, but will mostly travel to regional places of interest relating to the camp theme to participate in activities such as kayaking, tree-climbing, hiking, creek-walking, farm tours, and more. These camps will utilize the Briar Bush vans in which all passengers are required to wear seat belts. If your child requires a booster seat, note this on the medical form. Review the camp descriptions for more information. Be sure to assess your child's interests and abilities before registering as your child may not have the opportunity to sit out of certain activities.

## Can I register my child for multiple weeks of the same theme?

Summer Camp at Briar Bush Nature Center is a partial summer program option. Children cannot be registered for the same theme more than once. Children registered for more than one week per theme will be removed from the duplicate week.

## How can I best prepare for Summer Camp Registration?

In order to best prepare for Summer Camp Registration, be sure to fully review the offerings and have your camp choices ready to go.

As most camps fill at the opening of Members-Only Registration, it may be in your best interest to purchase a FOBB Membership at the Household Level or above to have access to Summer Camp Registration before the general public. It is recommended to purchase a membership in advance of registration so you will just need to select camps at that time.

If you do not already have an account with our online registration system, create an account, purchase or renew your membership, and practice navigating the system so you are prepared for registration. However, please be aware that our camps fill VERY quickly and you may not be able to secure a spot even if you've purchased a membership and prepared in advance. If this is the case, please call to be added to the waiting list.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONT.



## Will I receive additional information about my child's camp(s)?



Yes, after camp registration, you will receive a confirmation email with a receipt of the order and the Camp Handbook attached. Approximately two to three weeks before your child's scheduled camp week, you will receive a Camp Itinerary via email that outlines general camp activities as well as some preparation reminders.

## Do I need to complete a medical form?

Yes, you must complete a medical form after camp registration. In the confirmation email, you will find a link to our electronic medical form in the highlighted section. We must have this form completed at least three weeks before your child's scheduled camp week in order to participate. This medical form also includes a pick-up authorization section, as we check IDs at pick-up. Only one form is required for the camp season.

## How do I drop-off and pick-up for camp?

We implement a carline for drop-off and pick-up. Drive down the one-way parking lot and stop at the garage to check-in with camp staff. It is policy for our staff to check photo ID at pickup. If you need to pick-up early or have another adult pick-up who is not on the authorization list, please contact the Program and Summer Camp Director.

## What should my child wear to camp?

Your child should dress for outdoor play - it's nature camp and we're going to get wet and dirty! Your child should wear shorts/pants, a t-shirt, and closed-toed shoes or sandals. Flip-flops or other open-toed shoes are not allowed due to safety concerns.

## What should my child bring to camp?

Your child should come to camp with a backpack complete with a filled reusable water bottle between 20oz-32oz, snacks, lunch (Full-Day Campers), a full set of extra clothes, a pair of water-only closed-toed shoes/sandals, rain jacket, a plastic bag for wet/dirty clothing, insect repellent, and sunscreen. Personal items such as toys, games, stuffed animals, etc. should be left at home.

## What if it rains?

In the case of rain, campers will put on their rain gear and keep exploring! We seek shelter in heavy rain, thunderstorms, and excessive heat. We will contact families in the event of cancellation or early dismissal due to extreme weather conditions.

## What if my child is sick?

If your child isn't feeling well, please stay home and report the absence. If your child isn't feeling well at camp, we will notify you and early pick-up may be necessary.

## Should I be concerned about poison ivy or ticks?

Our camp staff is trained to identify and avoid hazards like poison ivy and ticks, and they teach the campers these skills as well. However, be sure to check your child for ticks after each camp day.



# Briar Bush

NATURE CENTER

1212 Edge Hill Road  
Abington, PA 19001

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