



SUMMER CAMPS

at the
Environmental Education Center

June - August 2024

(Ages 4-16)

**COYOTE KIDS
ECO-EXPLORERS
AWESIM KIDS
AWESIM TEENS**



Somerset County
Park Commission



Summer memories start with summer fun. Outdoor experiences, new friends, and creative learning opportunities will help develop your child's love of science and nature. We aim to inspire a life-long love and respect for the natural world, while cultivating a curiosity about the environment and a fondness for science. With over 500 acres of fields, forests, ponds, and river, the Environmental Education Center at Lord Stirling Park offers unique opportunities in a natural learning environment. **Camps run Monday through Friday.**

Registration

Registration begins Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 9:00am. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit somersecountyparks.org or call 908.722.1200 Ext. 5002 to register. Individuals with a hearing/speech impairment may call the Relay Service @ 711.

Payments/Refunds/Cancellations

- Full payment is due at the time of registration.
- Cancellations will receive an 80% refund only if the position is filled. A processing fee of 20% the total amount paid for each cancelled session will be retained. There will be no refund if the position is not filled.
- A doctor's note must be provided within 5 days of illness in order to request a medical refund.
- The Somerset County Park Commission reserves the right to cancel or modify all programs. Refunds will be provided if programs are cancelled by the Somerset County Park Commission.

Eligibility

Participants must meet the eligibility requirements for each camp with which they enroll. Please visit the following web address to reference the requirements. www.somersecountyparks.org/environmental-education-center/pages/summer-camps-environmental-education-center

The Environmental Education Center welcomes everyone to participate in its programs. If you have individualized needs due to a disability, please call 908.722.1200 Ext. 5324 and we will be happy to arrange reasonable modifications. Six weeks' notice is required to ensure that appropriate modifications can be provided.

Come Prepared

Each group will have a designated indoor space for limited use and during inclement weather. Indoor bathrooms and hand washing will be available. Camp will take place rain or shine. Please be prepared to be outside in varying weather conditions. Please wear comfortable summer clothing, sturdy footwear that can get wet/dirty, and a hat. Bring a day bag with a complete change of clothes, sunscreen, bug spray, snack, lunch, water bottle, and towel.

Participant Expectations

The following expectations are designed to ensure a successful, positive experience for all camp participants.

- Arrive on time.
- Dress according to each day's weather and activities.
- Be respectful to staff, peers, and the surrounding environment.
- Follow directions and rules as presented by staff.
- Keep cell phones and other electronic devices in backpacks or at home.
- There is zero tolerance for bullying, hitting, threats, etc. Police will be called if necessary.

Failure to meet these expectations may lead to a participant being removed from a program with a forfeiture of fees paid. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the Naturalist(s) and/or management.





COYOTE KIDS

(Ages 4-6)

Hooooowl! Join the pack for a fun nature program full of outdoor exploration, activities, and more. Eight, one-week sessions are offered Monday through Friday, 9:00am-Noon. Session 2 (Section 25) has an adjusted fee of \$120 due to the Independence Day holiday.

\$200 per person

Activity Number: 51911

- EEC-24 Monday, June 24-Friday, June 28
- EEC-25 Monday, July 1-Wednesday, July 3
- EEC-26 Monday, July 8-Friday, July 12
- EEC-27 Monday, July 15-Friday, July 19
- EEC-28 Monday, July 22-Friday, July 26
- EEC-29 Monday, July 29-Friday, August 2
- EEC-30 Monday, August 5-Friday, August 9
- EEC-31 Monday, August 12-Friday, August 16



For more information regarding Coyote Kids please contact
Naturalist Rebecca Vermeesch at 908.722.1200 Ext. 5334 or rvermeesch@scparcs.org.



ECO-EXPLORERS

(Ages 7-9)

Get ready to explore! This weekly summer program offers participants a fun-filled adventure in learning and discovery! Eight, variable nature and science-themed sessions are offered. Each week includes hiking, nature exploration, games, live animal presentations, science activities, art projects, and free play. Your child will be challenged with fun Jeopardy quizzes, teamwork activities, individual projects, and creative thinking. Local off-site trips may occur once each session via school bus except the July 1st session. We are sure to have a fun and educational summer!

Jaws & Claws

Learn about amazing characteristics of animals and the behaviors which help them survive!

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-24 Monday, June 24-Friday, June 28
9:00am-4:00pm

Most Extreme Earth - NEW

Volcanoes, earthquakes, floods, oh-my! Intense color and defense. Learn the extreme ways of Earth's habitats and animals as we explore the planet through fun activities and games!

\$240 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-25 Monday, July 1- Wednesday, July 3
(No Program July 4 or July 5)
9:00am-4:00pm

Swamp Scientists

Put on your lab coat and conduct fun, wacky experiments while finding out more about the science behind nature!

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-26 Monday, July 8-Friday, July 12
9:00am-4:00pm

Aquatic Adventures

Learn about the properties of water and observe aquatic wildlife during this water filled adventure!

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-27 Monday, July 15-Friday, July 19
9:00am-4:00pm

Mystery in the Swamp

There are a lot of mysteries to solve in the Great Swamp! Be sure to bring your sense of adventure!

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-28 Monday, July 22-Friday, July 26
9:00am-4:00pm

Bugtastic

Fly, crawl, hop, and buzz through the week while learning all about bugs and their amazing characteristics!

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-29 Monday, July 29-Friday, August 2
9:00am-4:00pm

Scales & Tails

What do Bearded Dragons, Ball Pythons, and dogs have in common? They are all pets! Meet a variety of pets and learn the importance of pet care while assisting with critter care.

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-30 Monday, August 5-Friday, August 9
9:00am-4:00pm

Forest Fanatics

Unlock a fascinating natural world as we play, explore, and discover in our fun forested home.

\$400 per person

Activity Number: 51910

EEC-31 Monday, August 12-Friday, August 16
9:00am-4:00pm

For more information regarding Eco-Explorers please contact Naturalist Vanessa Darras at 908.722.1200 Ext. 5335 or vdarras@scparcs.org. A parent handbook is also available at www.somersetcountyparks.org.



AWESIM KIDS

(Ages 10-13)

Animals, Wetlands, Environment, Science, Imagination, Minds, Knowledge, Interdependence, Discovery, and Solutions! Three, two-week sessions of fun await your child. Daily, Monday through Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm.

Animal House

Animals are awesome! This session is all about animals, the places they live, and the special adaptations that help them survive! Whether you are interested in slithery snakes, sly foxes, graceful gliders or slimy sliders, this is the session for you! Learn about what it takes to care for animals and more! Thursday, July 11th - join us for an *irregular* 'day' of camp; get dropped off at 2:00pm and picked up at 9:30pm. We will spend the evening searching for fireflies and learning about swamp life after dark! *Weather reschedule is Thursday, July 18th.*

\$800 per person

Activity Number: 50102

EEC-62 Monday, July 8-Friday, July 19
9:00am-4:00pm

Survive

Learn the basics of both animal and human survival! Finding safe water for drinking, gathering food, basic knots, compass use, and shelter building are some of the essentials for human survival. These hands-on activities are fun and potentially lifesaving!

Thursday, July 25th - join us for an *irregular* 'day' of camp; get dropped off at 2:00pm and picked up at 9:30pm. We will spend the evening searching for bats and learning about swamp life after dark! *Weather reschedule is Thursday, August 1st.*

\$800 per person

Activity Number: 50102

EEC-63 Monday, July 22-Friday, August 2
9:00am-4:00pm

YUM!

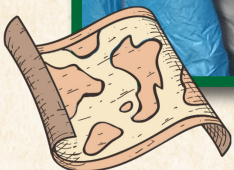
Come enjoy nature's bounty as we learn about wild edibles and organic food. Spend time working in the garden, learning about plants, and hiking the trails in search of highbush blueberries and wild blackberries! When perfectly ripe these berries are tasty treats. Search for the pollinators responsible for making flowers bloom and our food grow.

Thursday, August 8th - join us for an *irregular* 'day' of camp; get dropped off at 2:00pm and picked up at 9:30pm. We will spend the evening searching for moths and more as well as learning about swamp life after dark! *Weather reschedule is Thursday, August 15th.*

\$800 per person

Activity Number: 50102

EEC-64 Monday, August 5-Friday, August 16
9:00am-4:00pm



For more information regarding AWESIM KIDS please contact Naturalist Christa Wood at 908.722.1200 Ext. 5337 or cwood@scparcs.org. A parent handbook is also available at www.somersetcountyparks.org.

AWESIM TEENS

Animals Wetlands Environment Science Imagination Minds (Ages 14-16)

Join us for eight exciting days as we explore the beauty of the Great Swamp in Lord Stirling Park. Over 500 acres and 9.5 miles of trails will be our classroom while learning about ecology, conservation, and stewardship. Each morning we will travel the trails and observe life in the swamp. Our group will leave a lasting impact on the park by completing a stewardship project. Participants will photograph, video, and document the program experience. Together we will create three short films, *Life in the Swamp*, *Life in a Pond*, and *The Life Cycle of Butterflies*, along with artwork images of life in the swamp. A film debut and art exhibit of completed projects will follow in the autumn of 2024. *A limited number of participants will be selected on a rolling basis through an application process.*

\$640 per person upon acceptance to the program

Monday, June 24-Friday, June 28 & Tuesday, July 2

9:00am-4:00pm

Monday, July 1

2:00pm-9:30pm

Wednesday, July 3

5:30am-1:00pm

Attend an Open House to learn more about this exciting new program!

Saturday, January 13 2:00pm-4:00pm

Saturday, February 17 10:00am-11:30am

Saturday, March 9 2:00pm-4:00pm



For additional information regarding AWESIM Teens, or to request an application, please contact Naturalist Christa Wood at 908.722.1200 Ext. 5337 or cwood@scparcs.org.

MEET THE NATURALISTS

All six full-time Naturalists have an important leadership role within the various camps. Each Naturalist has their own unique niche, but all have a Bachelor's Degree in a science-related field and bring years of passion, experience, knowledge, and an unmatched level of professionalism to the Environmental Education Center summer camp programs.



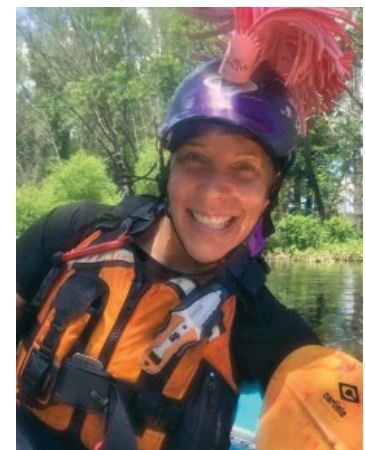
Vanessa Darras is excited to begin her 15th summer as the coordinator of Eco-Explorers. She has extensive knowledge of coastal and forest ecology and experience teaching audiences ages infant to 100+. Vanessa loves handling live animals and leading kids on hikes!



Christa Wood has been co-leading AWESIM KIDS for 23 years and will also co-lead AWESIM Teens. She has worked summer camps since she was a teenager and loves it that way! She enjoys exploring the great outdoors and is especially passionate about native plants, dragonflies, and rock/fossil collecting.



Rich Hoffman will begin his 30th summer as co-leader of AWESIM KIDS and will also co-lead AWESIM Teens. He loves the swamp in the summer and especially enjoys star gazing, juicy watermelon, black lights, and moths! Rich looks forward to working in the organic garden with campers and helping out Monarch butterflies.



Monica Juhasz coordinates all things paddling. She has been teaching at the Environmental Education Center for 26 years and loves canoeing and kayaking. Monica is also a certified pool lifeguard. Her paddling passions include whitewater and stand-up paddling, including SUP yoga.



Ben Barkley is starting his eighth summer as co-leader of the Coyote Kids program. He found his passion for birds at an early age and has been all about the birds ever since! Ben is quickly learning to love all things with wings, as he recently became enamored with butterflies.



Rebecca Vermeesch is starting her sixth summer as co-leader of Coyote Kids. Summer is her favorite season; it means the beach, fishing, and summer camps! Rebecca has a passion for coastal habitats, and the Great Swamp is easily one of her favorite wetlands. She loves going on hikes looking for animal tracks, frogs, and turtles.





Environmental Education Center
190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
908.722.1200 Ext. 5002
somersetcountyparks.org