

## Welcome to the Montana Natural History Center's Summer Outdoor Discovery Day Camps!

**We are looking forward to exploring nature with your camper this summer!** Below, you will find information about our camps—what to pack, when to arrive, and other logistics. We hope this information helps you prepare. If you have any other questions, feel free to contact us!

### Emergency phone number

MNHC office: 406.327.0405. Please use this number for camp communications! A field cell phone number for emergency use will also be provided at check-in on Monday of your camp week.

### Pick-up/drop-off location

Montana Natural History Center at 120 Hickory Street in Missoula.

- On nice days, pickup is usually located in our Nature Adventure Garden, which is located at the east end of our building along the bike path.

### Time

Monday - Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- The camp day and activities end at 3:30. Guardians are encouraged to pick up their campers at that time. In the event a camper is not able to be picked up until later, our staff are available to supervise campers until 5:30\*. During this time campers will be engaging in independent free play, and planned activities are not provided. This option is also available before the camp day starts from 8:30 - 9:30.
- \*A \$1-per-minute fee may apply if a child is picked up after 5:30.

### Pick-up and drop-off procedures

To ensure the safety of our campers, children must be signed in each morning at drop-off and signed out each afternoon at pick-up. **Only those who have been given permission will be allowed to pick up the camper at the end of the day. Please bring photo ID to pick up.** We allow primary contacts and emergency contacts to pick up campers. You can give pick-up permission to additional adults by adding them to your "authorized pick-ups" form on the UltraCamp online registration system, telling your camp instructor in person, or calling/emailing MNHC ahead of time.



# Information for Camp Families 2021

If you would like your camper to walk, bike, or bus home you must contact MNHC's Director of Education at [jrobinson@montananaturalist.org](mailto:jrobinson@montananaturalist.org) before camp starts to give permission and make arrangements.

## **Absences and late arrivals**

Please call Jennifer Robinson at 530.329.6027 or email [jrobinson@montananaturalist.org](mailto:jrobinson@montananaturalist.org) as soon as possible if your child is going to be late or miss the day.

***If your child is sick, please keep them home from camp until they are no longer contagious.***

## **COVID-19 protocols**

While we're thrilled to be holding our traditional summer camps this year, we remain committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our campers and staff through **safe social distancing and the wearing of masks**. As the COVID-19 pandemic situation continues to change in 2021, so may our protocols for safe camper experiences. As these change we will be notifying you via email prior to the start of your camp. At the time of registration, these are our current protocols. All campers and staff are responsible for the following at all times:

- MNHC staff will conduct a symptom and risk check with the camper's parent/guardian upon check-in each morning.
- Maintaining a safe distance of 6 feet from other campers and staff whenever possible.
- Wearing of a mask over the nose and mouth at all times (except when eating or drinking) both in and out of doors.
- Using hand sanitizer before and after eating, and before/after touching shared camp supplies.
- Washing hands frequently with soap and warm water as resources allow.
- Should a camper begin exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 while at camp they will immediately be isolated and quarantined under supervision at the Montana Natural History Center and will need to be picked up by their parent/guardian.
- **If you, your child, or anyone in your household are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, do not bring your child to camp. Please notify Jennifer Robinson, Director of Education, by calling 530.329.6027 or emailing [jrobinson@montananaturalist.org](mailto:jrobinson@montananaturalist.org).**
  - Symptoms of COVID-19: fever, loss of smell or taste, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle aches and pains, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- If any campers or MNHC staff test positive for COVID-19 during your child's camp, MNHC will take appropriate measures to communicate with parents/guardians to ensure the safety of those exposed. This could result in MNHC cancelling or pausing camp, if necessary.



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## Restroom policy

All registered campers must be able to use the restroom facilities independently, without the assistance of MNHC staff. Should a camper have a restroom accident, the camper's parent/guardian will be notified at pick-up time. If the camper does not have clean clothes to change into, their guardian will be required to bring them for their child to continue that day's programming. If a camper has regular/routine accidents during programming, or is unable to use restroom facilities independently, the camper will not be able to resume camp activities for that week.

## Required forms

Your camper's required camp forms must be completed online before camp starts. You can access them through our UltraCamp online registration system using the same link you used to register for camps. If you have not yet done so, please go online, log in, and complete the required forms. **If you have any questions or problems completing the online forms, please contact MNHC as soon as possible. Camp forms must be submitted online by the end of the day on the Wednesday before your child starts camp.**



## Preparing for adventure

During your child's week of camp we will be exploring our local natural areas, taking field trips, playing games, using our creative talents, visiting scientists in the field, and making all kinds of amazing discoveries! Each camp varies by theme; a specific schedule, including field trip locations and planned activities, will be available at check-in on the first day of camp. Campers can expect to be outdoors most of the time and lunch is almost always eaten in the field.

## What to bring: PACKING LIST

We recommend that your child bring these items to camp each day; however, some may be left in the classroom in the interest of making backpacks as light as possible (i.e. rain gear if it's sunny, swimsuit if we're not going to do water activities, etc.).

## Please label all items with your child's name!

- 2 clean masks
- Hand sanitizer
- Lunch (including snacks) that can be eaten outdoors
- Snacks to last the entire camp day
- Filled water bottle



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and stewardship of nature through education*

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- Sunscreen
- Backpack
- Outdoor clothing for the weather (suitable for outdoor exploration, art activities, and play!)
- Sun hat
- Rain gear
- Insect repellent (optional, but we go to a lot of places with mosquitos!)
- Water shoes (must have back/heel strap; closed-toe is preferred)
- Swimsuit or other clothing that can get wet (be sure to provide a change of clothes)
- Towel
- For preschool/kindergarten camp, you may also send a pillow, stuffed animal, or blanket for rest/nap time.

### **What NOT to bring: electronics and irreplaceable things**

Please do not send your child to camp with electronics (iPods, phones, smart watches, video games, etc.) We spend most of the day outdoors, often in wet or dirty areas, and we cannot guarantee the safety of these items. Also, we want our campers to be able to “unplug” and experience the world around them! If campers bring electronics with them to camp, they will be asked to leave them in a secure location during the day. Our staff are equipped with cell phones to contact parents/guardians in case of emergencies.

Please do not send expensive or irreplaceable items to camp with your child.

### **Snacks**

We’ll take snack breaks throughout the day; please send your child with extra snackable items in their lunch box to eat at snack time.

### **Medications**

**MNHC does not administer medications, including over-the-counter medications, without a signed doctor’s note and instructions.** Parents must note any medication that needs to be administered during the camp day on your camp forms and should bring the medication and documentation to Monday camp check-in. If your child is taking or needs to carry a prescription (including epi-pens and inhalers) the prescription should be labeled with the date and instructions and sent to camp **with a signed doctor’s note**. MNHC staff are not responsible for lost prescriptions or medications.

### **Special accommodations**

We do our best to make camp accessible. If your child requires special accommodations (or even if you just want to let us know more about them!), we encourage you to contact Jennifer Robinson at 530.329.6027 or [jrobinson@montananaturalist.org](mailto:jrobinson@montananaturalist.org) as soon as possible before camp



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starts so we can be adequately prepared.

## **Cancellations/refund policy**

Program fee is refundable ONLY if a cancellation is made 30 days before the start of camp, **minus a 25% non-refundable administrative fee per camp session.** Withdrawals after this deadline forfeit the full registration fee. Membership fees are non-refundable. Purchased t-shirts are fully refundable.

## **Camper Photos via SmugMug**

Campers whose guardian(s) have signed a photo release waiver will have access to photos of their child(ren) shortly after their week in camp. Only photos of that child's camp will be available to their guardian(s). A link and password to an unlisted, secure, online gallery will be shared with the guardians for free download of photos of their camper(s). We ask that guardian(s) please be aware that when downloading photos of their campers for personal use that other campers from their camp may be present in those photos. Guardian(s) should check for permission with those camper(s) guardian(s) before posting or sharing any photos of other children online who are not their own.

The online photo platform MNHC will be using is called SmugMug ([www.smugmug.com](http://www.smugmug.com)). Camp photos cannot be found or searched for using the basic SmugMug search engine tool - only through the provided private link and password can photos be accessed.

## **Field trips and activities**

Our summer camps participate in a wide range of nature-based activities. Your child can expect to be outside every day. We take time to explore natural areas from the perspective of a naturalist: a scientist, artist, and writer. Each camp will also include games and time for play in the outdoors, which research shows is important. Kids can expect to learn a lot while having fun! Activities are tailored to be appropriate for camper age groups.

All camps will walk, use public transport, or use our activity buses for field trips. Preschool camps can expect to stay in town for field trips but older camps may travel as far as the National Bison Range, Seeley Lake, or Beavertail Pond. Specific field trip and activity information will be provided for you on your first day of camp.

## **Buses**

All MNHC buses are equipped with safety belts and staff are trained, have passed required certification tests, and are evaluated for safe driving. Parents may provide a booster seat for their child though they are not required. One of our buses has a lift to accommodate wheelchair



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users. Campers are required to wear a seatbelt and follow bus rules and the directions of the bus driver and other staff while riding on MNHC buses.

## **Volunteer opportunities**

Parent volunteers are welcome to participate with advanced notice and planning. Contact Jennifer Robinson at [jrobinson@montananaturalist.org](mailto:jrobinson@montananaturalist.org) to let us know if you would like to attend part of camp, and we will get you set up to join us.

## **Montana Natural History Center camp goals**

The mission of the Montana Natural History Center is to promote and cultivate the appreciation, understanding, and stewardship of nature through education.

Based on our mission, our summer camps have three main goals:

1. To provide quality outdoor education experiences to all participants through exploration, guided discovery, and hands-on learning experiences.
2. To teach stewardship concepts through daily activities.
3. To provide kids with the opportunity to develop a positive, respectful, long-term relationship with nature that will stay with them throughout their lives.

