



Briar Bush

NATURE CENTER



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, 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 email Melissa Eldridge, Program and Summer Camp Director, at melissa@briarbush.org.

GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

Registration

Members-Only Registration begins at 12:00pm on Monday, February 24, 2025 for Friends of Briar Bush Members at the Household Level or above.

Registration opens to the public at 12:00pm on Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

For registration tips and to register, please visit our website at 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 or camp spaces have filled.

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 transfers or 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 registration and up until the Thursday before the camp start date. Extended Care for Overnight Camp is prorated.

Before Care

AM Half/Full-Day Campers

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM

\$30/week

After Care

PM Half/Full-Day Campers

4:00 PM - 5:30 PM

\$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 WEEK.

DATE* = SHORTENED CAMP WEEK

Campers must be within the age range to participate (campers who turn 4 years of age up to one month after the camp start date will be eligible to register). Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once.

Pond Pals and Playmates

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 9-13	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00
July 14-18	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00
August 18-22	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00

Explore the pond by catching frogs, tadpoles, and insects. Meet Briar Bush's resident turtles and observe the wild ones at the pond. Get ready to splish and splash this week!

Nests, Holes, and Homes

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 16-18, 20 (No 6/19)*	\$265.00	Res: \$238.50	Mem: \$212.00
July 21-25	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00
August 25-29	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00

Explore habitats found at Briar Bush and discover the animals that live there. Wander through the forest, dig deep in the soil, catch critters at the pond, and then explore some more!

Scales, Tails, and Slime

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 23-27	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00
July 28-August 1	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00

From bugs to slugs, Briar Bush is home to some cool critters that will make you wriggle and squirm. Learn more about these critters and their icky, yet awesome, body coverings.

Woodland Wonderland

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 30-July 3 (No 7/4)*	\$265.00	Res: \$238.50	Mem: \$212.00
August 4-8	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00

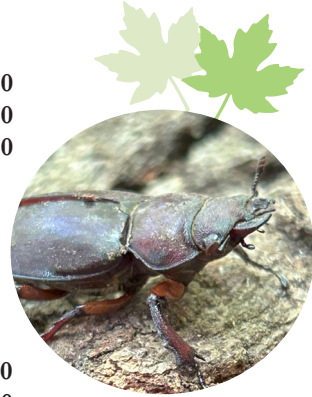
It's time to use your imagination, climb down the rabbit hole, and get "lost" in Briar Bush's enchanted forest! Explore our resident woodland creatures and maybe spot a fairy or gnome along the way. Get ready to discover the hidden treasures of the forest.

Nature Play Date

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 7-11	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00
August 11-15	\$295.00	Res: \$265.50	Mem: \$236.00

When children engage in nature play, amazing things happen – they explore, imagine, and observe; think creatively; cultivate a sense of place and self; and gain perspective of the world around them. It's time to use your imagination and connect with nature!



SAPLINGS FULL-DAY CAMPS FOR AGES 6-7

9:30AM - 4:00PM

DATE* = SHORTENED CAMP WEEK

Campers must be within the age range to participate (campers who turn 6 years of age up to one month after the camp start date will be eligible to register). Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once.

Awesome Adaptations

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 16-18, 20 (No 6/19)* \$340.00 | Res: \$306.00 | **Mem: \$272.00**

July 21-25 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

August 25-29 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

Over time, animals develop special tools that make them unique. These adaptations help them to better survive in their habitat. There are so many adaptations to explore this week!

Bones or No Bones

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 23-27 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

July 28-August 1 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

Our bones help us move, play, and explore, but does every animal have bones? Explore real animal bones and discover live animals with and without backbones!

Creative Creatures

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

June 30-July 3 (No 7/4)* \$340.00 | Res: \$306.00 | **Mem: \$272.00**

August 4-8 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

Wake up your creativity this summer! Explore and become inspired by nature's colors, patterns, music, and more. Then, create your own masterpieces to take home!

Trainer to Master

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 7-11 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

August 11-15 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

Go from Trainer to Briar Bush Master as you search for animals along the Briar Bush trails. Search the pond for water-types, the sky for flying-types, and the soil for ground-types. When you spot a new animal, add it to your Briardex and earn its trading card!

Mythical and Magical Creatures

Instructor: Seasonal Staff

July 14-18 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

August 18-22 \$425.00 | Res: \$382.50 | **Mem: \$340.00**

Become a wizard-zoologist and discover the wild, magical creatures found at Briar Bush! Explore the nooks and crannies of the enchanted forest in search of these creatures and discover what makes them so magical.



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. FIELD TRIP LOCATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE ITINERARY. SEE FAQs.

Campers must be within the age range to participate (campers who turn 8 years of age up to one month after the camp start date will be eligible to register). Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once.

Call of the Wild

Instructor: Briar Bush Educator

June 16-18, 20 (No 6/19)* \$375.00 | Res: \$337.50 | **Mem: \$300.00**

July 28-August 1 \$465.00 | Res: \$418.50 | **Mem: \$327.00**

Become one with nature and run wild with the pack as you explore the natural world around you. This week, we'll practice animal calls, identify tracks, camouflage in the forest, and more. It's time to answer the call of the wild!

Animals All Around I

Instructor: Katie Fisk

June 23-27 \$465.00 | Res: \$418.50 | **Mem: \$327.00**

August 4-8 \$465.00 | Res: \$418.50 | **Mem: \$327.00**

If you're an animal lover, this camp is for you! At Briar Bush, we'll spend ample time caring for our resident critters. Through field trips, we'll learn about animals in human culture, local wildlife, and the residents of Elmwood Park Zoo.

Wizards and Lizards

Instructor: Sarah Busby

June 30-July 3 (No 7/4)* \$395.00 | Res: \$355.50 | **Mem: \$316.00**

August 11-15 \$490.00 | Res: \$441.00 | **Mem: \$392.00**

Welcome to Briar Bush's Camp for Wizards and Lizards! We'll begin camp with the basics: house sorting, wand making, and creating spell books and feather quills. Then, we'll spend the week attending "classes" about plants, magical creatures, potions, charms, astronomy, and more. Wands at the ready!

Nature Explorers I

Instructor: Heidi Malizia

July 7-11 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

August 18-22 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

Get ready to explore nature in all its glory! We'll kayak, play Frisbee golf, hike, stream-stomp, venture to Treehouse World, and explore the Manasquan Reservoir in New Jersey. Let the adventure begin!

Home Grown

Instructor: Kyrstin Schwarz

July 14-18 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

August 25-29 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

This week, we're getting back to our roots! Learn about the importance of local farming and composting. Visit a farm and an orchard to discover agriculture, pick fresh fruit, and make your own jam. Come grow with us!

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. FIELD TRIP LOCATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE ITINERARY. SEE FAQs.

Campers must be within the age range to participate (campers who turn 10 years of age up to one month after the camp start date will be eligible to register). Campers cannot be registered for the same theme more than once.

Outdoor Adventure I

Instructor: Heidi Malizia

June 16-18, 20 (No 6/19)* \$415.00 | Res: \$373.50 | **Mem: \$332.00**

July 28-August 1 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

Are you an adventurous kid who loves the outdoors? Well, this camp is for you! This week, challenge yourself on a high ropes course, kayak and explore local waterways, hike and hunt for fossils in New Jersey, and more. Adventure awaits!

Farm to Table

Instructor: Kyrstin Schwarz

June 23-27 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

August 4-8 \$515.00 | Res: \$463.50 | **Mem: \$412.00**

We find our food in grocery stores, but where does it come from in the first place? Discover how food makes its way from farm to table. Learn about food origins by visiting a farm. Create tasty dishes and jam from freshly picked fruits. Bake bread and make your own cheese. "Lettuce" dig in!

CSI: Nature Detectives

Instructor: Briar Bush Educator

June 30-July 3 (No 7/4)* \$375.00 | Res: \$337.50 | **Mem: \$300.00**

August 11-15 \$465.00 | Res: \$418.50 | **Mem: \$327.00**

Become a rookie investigator and solve mysteries of the natural world! Advance your knowledge of nature and practice your teambuilding, sleuthing, and problem-solving skills in an effort to solve nature's mysteries this week.

Outdoor Survival I

Instructor: Katie Fisk

July 7-11 \$465.00 | Res: \$418.50 | **Mem: \$327.00**

August 18-22 \$465.00 | Res: \$418.50 | **Mem: \$327.00**

If you were lost in the woods, how long could you stay alive? What skills would you need to help you survive? From fire starting to shelter building and orienteering to edible plants, get ready to learn real-life survival skills and put them to the test!

Streaming Nature

Instructor: Sarah Busby

July 14-18 \$490.00 | Res: \$441.00 | **Mem: \$392.00**

August 25-29 \$490.00 | Res: \$441.00 | **Mem: \$392.00**

It's time to meet nature face-to-face, so leave your screens at home! This week, we'll learn about watershed ecology, discover local waterways, and explore the life within. We'll also have a splash with stream-stomping and visit Fairmount Water Works!



OVERNIGHT CAMP FOR AGES 11-15

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

FEES FOR OVERNIGHT CAMPING ARE INCLUDED IN CAMP COST.

Campers must be within the age range to participate (campers who turn 11 years of age up to one month after the camp start date will be eligible to register).

Overnight Camp

Instructors: Mark Fallon and Kyrstin Schwarz

July 21-25

\$625.00 | Res: \$562.50 | **Mem: \$500.00**

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, 2025 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, for consideration.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who will manage my child's camp group? What are your camp ratios?

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

Seedlings Half-Day Camps for Ages 4-6	1 staff : 2 aides : 6 campers
Saplings Full-Day Camps for Ages 6-7	2 staff : 2 aides : 12 campers
Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 8-9	1 staff : 2 aides : 12 campers
Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 10-12	1 staff : 2 aides : 12 campers
Overnight Camp for Ages 11-15	2 staff : 2 aides : 10 campers

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

Seedlings Half-Day campers will participate in activities onsite at Briar Bush. Saplings Full-Day campers will participate in activities onsite, but may also walk to Highland Elementary School to utilize the playground and field. Most activities will directly relate to the camp theme, but campers can always look forward to general summer fun, animal encounters, guided hikes, pond exploration, and visiting the Bird Observatory regardless of the theme.

Campers in Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 8-9 and 10-12 will participate in some activities at Briar Bush, but will mostly travel in our vans to regional places of interest to participate in activities such as hiking, kayaking, creek-walking, farm tours, and more. 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 registration before the general public. It is recommended to purchase a membership in advance of registration so you will just need to focus on signing waivers/policies and selecting 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 camp spot even if you've purchased a membership and prepared in advance. If this is the case, join the waiting list during registration.

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, specific field trip locations, 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 before the start of the summer in order for your child to participate. The 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. 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 and bring 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 comfortable clothing and closed-toed shoes/sandals. Flip-flops and other open-toed shoes are not permitted due to safety concerns.

Send your child to camp with a backpack complete with a filled reusable water bottle between 20oz-32oz, snacks, lunch (full-day), full set of extra clothes, pair of water-only closed-toed shoes/sandals, rain jacket, plastic bag for wet/dirty clothing, insect repellent, and sunscreen. Personal items such as toys, games, and stuffed animals 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 keep your child home and report the absence. If your child isn't feeling well at camp, we will notify you for early pick-up.

What are the expectations for camper behavior?

Staff, volunteers, and participants deserve a safe and enjoyable camp experience. Campers are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior as outlined in our Summer Camp Handbook. Removal from the camp day/program is a possibility depending on the severity and continuation of unacceptable behavior. Our summer camp is an inclusive program in which staff strives to accommodate campers and set them up for success. However, we may not have the capacity for all special medical, behavioral, or social support. Please reach out with any questions regarding support for your child.



Briar Bush

NATURE CENTER

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Abington, PA 19001

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