

WELCOME TO BACKYARD EXPLORERS CAMP!

Mon, July 30; Tues, July 31; & Wed, Aug 1: Cypress Swamp, 9am-12pm
Thurs, Aug 2 & Fri, Aug 3: Flag Ponds, 9am-12pm

Dear Parents and/or Guardians,

Welcome to Backyard Explorers Camp! To help insure that your child has a safe and fun time, we have a few suggestions:

- **Drop off and pick up** your child at the following locations, promptly at the above times.
 - **Cypress Swamp:** nature center conference room
 - **Flag Ponds:** education building (please stop at the front gate booth and inform the park staff that you are here for camp)
- **Sign In:** Please sign your child in and out every day (with your full name) and let us know if someone else will be taking them home.
- **Tips For Making the Drop-Off Less Stressful:** The weekend before, allow your child to be involved in packing their camp bag, including picking out a special snack; perhaps, permitting them to pick snacks at the store. If you have the book, *The Kissing Hand*, by Audrey Penn, read it the night before. Get a good- night's sleep. On the way to camp talk about some fun things they will get to do (arts and crafts, see live animals, catching animals with nets). At camp, after signing them in, you can help them find their chair. Allow staff to show you some of the fun opening activities, including journals. Once your child gets started on an activity, give them a quick hug/kiss and a prompt goodbye. Next, the hard part...walk away. Most children are just fine within a few minutes of their parent leaving.
- **Snacks:** Pack a non-perishable food item for snack which can easily be opened by your child. Don't forget to pack a water bottle that can be refilled. Both parks have a picnic area if you would like to eat with your children after the program.
- **Backpacks:** Campers will store all personal belongings in their backpacks, which will be kept in the building except for Friday, when we need to carry towels and such to the beach.
- **Clothing:** Wear OLD CLOTHES that can get wet, dirty, and/or painted. Please provide a change of clothes in a Ziploc bag.
- **Shoes:** Comfortable shoes are a must, since we will be walking quite a bit throughout the day. For safety reasons, we ask that campers do not wear flip flops or crocs.
- **Bullying:** We want our campers to feel safe; therefore, campers who are bullying others will be permanently expelled from all CCNRD camps.
- **Health/Safety:** While we are having fun exploring nature, we will make every effort to minimize your child's exposure to things like poison ivy, ticks, and jellyfish; however, if your child develops a rash or other symptoms, don't hesitate to contact your physician. In addition, please check your child for ticks after camp every day.

We have enjoyed preparing for this camp, and can't wait to explore the outdoors with your children. We look forward to meeting everyone this summer, and please don't hesitate to call us (at Battle Creek Nature Center 410-535-5327) if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Keridwynn Budd

Calvin Trunkseton

BACKYARD EXPLORERS CAMP CHECKLIST

What to bring every day:

- Insect Repellent (one that works for both ticks and mosquitoes)
- 2 or 3 plastic bags for crafts, wet clothes, etc.
- T-shirt/swim shirt worn over swimsuit (reduces jellyfish stings & sunburn)
- Water Shoes or old tennis shoes must be worn for swimming (no flip flops or crocs)
- Towel
- Raincoat or Poncho (no umbrellas) if rain is forecasted
- Hat
- Sunscreen (put this on before you get to camp and pack more)
- A snack
- Refillable water bottle
- Backpack
- Extra Set of Clothes (in a bag labeled with camper's name)
- Small Antibacterial Gel (optional)

What NOT to Bring:

- Electronic Devices
- Money
- Candy
- Toys
- Flip Flops or Crocs

Special Notes:

Monday: bird day

Tuesday: herp day (reptiles and amphibians)

Wednesday: plant day

Thursday: insect day

Friday: beach day (Campers need to arrive wearing their bathing suits and sunscreen; please pack clothes for them to change into at the end of camp in a bag labeled with their name . Since the walk to the beach is approximately a half mile, campers need to wear comfortable shoes, and carry their water shoes with them.)

Parent/Grandparent Time:

While your little one is in camp, feel free to explore our parks. Perhaps you would like to catch up on some reading at one of our quiet park benches, or maybe there are brothers and sisters who would enjoy having you to themselves for a couple hours at Flag Ponds' beach. (We have beach toys to borrow along the main boardwalk.) Jefferson Patterson Park, Calvert Cliffs State Park, American Chestnut Land Trust, and the Marine Museum are within a 15 – 20 minute drive too.

Cypress Swamp and Flag Ponds both have picnic areas. Feel free to bring food to have after camp. Sometimes campers like to eat with their new friends and appreciate the additional playtime.