



Summer Camp 2026

PARENT HANDBOOK

About Our Program

Cylburn Arboretum Friends' Nature Camp teaches children knowledge of and respect for the nature that surrounds them. Campers will explore our 200+ acres and learn about the plants, animals, fungi, and habitats they encounter.

We will spend our days at camp hiking the trails and partaking in environmental education lessons, activities, art, and group games. Our goals are to nurture a sense of wonder and curiosity about the natural world and to help children learn to be good stewards of their environment. This year, we are offering:

- **Two 1-week Mini camps for campers entering PreK through 1st grade (ages 4-6)**
- **One 2-week Elementary camps for campers entering grades K-5th (ages 5-10)**
- **Two 1-week Elementary camps for campers entering grades K-5 (ages 5-10)**
- **One 1-week Middle School camps for campers entering grades 6th-8th (ages 11-13)**

Extended Day

We are pleased to be able to offer an aftercare program for our campers registered for our mini camp and elementary camps. See camp registration for details and cost by camp session. To ensure proper staffing coverage and following of all safety measures, we ask that campers be registered for Extended Day at the time of camp registration. Before-care is not offered. A snack will be provided daily for children enrolled in aftercare.

Extended Day Procedures: parent/guardian should park and walk to the Nature Education Center to check out their camper. After 5 p.m. a \$1 per minute rate will be charged to cover staff overtime.

After Care Hours: 3:00- 5:00 p.m. (1:00-3:00 for Mini Camp)

Drop off & Pick Up Procedures

Drop Off/Pick up Location: Cylburn Main Parking Lot

Drop off: 8:45-9 am

Pick up: 3:00 pm

Because the Arboretum is closed to the public on Mondays, the front gate will be locked. You can access the Arboretum through the Service Entrance on Cylburn Ave. Come up the road and make the first right which will lead you through the lower Vollmer Parking Lot. The staff will be there to welcome the campers! Tuesday through Friday, you may use the main gate. Please be prompt on both ends of the day. For all guardians: For your child's safety, please sign them in and out each day. At no time should you let your child join or leave the camp without one of the camp staff being aware. Campers will be permitted to leave only with authorized adults (as listed on their Registration Form).

Weather & Clothing

Camp is held rain or shine. Please dress children accordingly. In the case of inclement weather, activities will be modified and moved indoors. Please dress your child in clothes that can get dirty! Hats, t-shirts, and sneakers are strongly encouraged. Flip-flops and open-toes shoes are NOT permitted. Water shoes are appropriate to wear on water days. Please be sure that your child is covered with sunscreen and insect repellent before their arrival to camp each day.

What to Bring

Please see the lists below for guidance on what to pack (or not to pack) for Nature Camp at Cylburn. Be sure to label all items with your child's name. Campers will be provided with a small cubby to store items throughout the camp session. Cylburn Arboretum Friends is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

Essentials:

- Snack (peanut-free)
- Lunch (peanut-free)
- Refillable, leak-proof water bottle (labeled with name)
- Spare set of clothes: shirt, shorts, socks, underwear, shoes

Optional:

- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Rain jacket
- Rain/mud boots
- Towel

Please leave at home:

- Phones
- Toys
- Cameras
- Electronic devices
- Money
- Valuables

Safety & Medical information

Cylburn's Nature Camp is under the care of Sinai Hospital should anyone need medical attention. The camper's medical form is shared with our nurse on call prior to the beginning of camp and all counselors are trained in administering first aid and CPR and will contact authorized medical personnel in the case of an emergency. In the event of a family emergency during camp hours, please contact the Cylburn Arboretum Friends office at (410) 367-2217, or directly notify a camp staff member.

Sun, Mosquitoes & Ticks

If you choose for your child to use sunscreen and/or insect repellent, please apply it prior to camp. Counselors will apply as needed with permission (see Registration and Waiver Form). Campers will be hiking through grass, wooded areas, and trails—all places where ticks may be found. While ticks have not posed a problem in the past, we ask that tick checks be done when campers return home each day.

Health and Wellness

The Maryland Department of Health Youth Camps Program regulates and licenses all youth camps in Maryland to protect the health and safety of kids attending Maryland youth camps. To ensure the health and safety of all campers, Cylburn Nature Camp has the following policies in place:

- Much of the camp day's schedule will be held outdoors, weather permitting.
- We are asking children to bring their own snacks, lunch, and refillable water bottles.
- We will provide hand sanitizer and will sanitize surfaces and supplies regularly.
- We ask that guardians screen their camper daily for symptoms of illness and keep their sick camper at home.
- We ask that all campers and camp staff be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Camper Behavior

Our camp environment is structured but relaxed. Campers will be informed of Arboretum rules and etiquette on the first day of camp. All campers are expected to respect each other, as well as the Arboretum's plants and wildlife. Disruptive behavior affects the fun, safety, and overall quality of the camp experience in the group. In the event of repeated misbehavior, camp staff will notify the parent/guardian and request that the camper be picked up or dismissed. No refunds will be given to campers who are dismissed.

Registration Policies

Online registrations will be processed as they are received and payment in full via the Eventbrite website is how a camper's place in the program is reserved. A completed Registration and Waiver Form will be emailed to you, and must be submitted within two weeks after an online registration has been completed in order to hold a camper's place in the program. Please email naturecamp@cylburn.org if you wish to be placed on a waiting list. Cancellations occasionally occur.

Cancellation Policies

Cylburn Arboretum Friends reserves the right to cancel a camp session due to insufficient enrollment. If a session is canceled, all fees will be refunded. If you withdraw a camper before a session begins, you must submit your request in writing to the camp office. If you must cancel your reservation, the following policy applies:

- Before May 1, 75% of your registration will be refunded.
- May 1- 30 days prior to the first day of camp, 50% of your registration will be refunded.
- Up to one week before camp start date, 25% of your registration will be refunded.
- No refunds will be given after 1 week prior to the camp start date.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is a typical schedule at Cylburn Nature Camp?

Campers begin their day with a hike on our beautiful grounds before the day heats up! Afterward, they engage with nature lessons, crafts, outdoor exploration, and games throughout the day. We spend much of our day outside, and schedules vary by theme and age. Our emphasis is on learning, safety, and fun!

2) Can I be added to a wait-list?

Yes. If a camp week is indicated as full on the on-line registration page, please contact us at naturecamp@cylburn.org to be placed on our waiting list.

3) What should I do if my child cannot attend camp one day?

If your child is sick or cannot attend camp for any reason, please notify us at naturecamp@cylburn.org or by calling the camp director (phone contact information provided at the start of camp). Refunds are not provided for missed camp days.

4) What happens if it rains?

Camp takes place rain or shine! In the event of inclement weather such as thunderstorms, campers will move learning and playing indoors.

5) Can I send my child home with another parent?

Campers can be sent home with those listed on the Registration Form. Additions to this list can be made by emailing us at naturecamp@cylburn.org.

6) What happens if I am late dropping off or picking my child up?

Drop off begins at 8:45 a.m. each day. If a camper will be later than 9am, please notify us. Pick up is promptly at 3:00 p.m. Extended day rates will be charged after 3:00 pm.

7) Can I stay at the Arboretum after I drop my child off?

Yes, only but only Tuesday through Friday. The Arboretum is closed to the public on Mondays.

8) Can I sign up my child for just one week of the two-week session?

Not at this time. However, if you would like to be considered on a waitlist status for a one-week opening during the two-week camp, please email us at naturecamp@cylburn.org. We will consider these requests only if a session does not fill or with a last-minute cancellation.

9) Can I sign up my child for more than one session?

Due to high demand, each camper is limited to two weeks of camp this summer. Thank you for your understanding!

10) More questions? Please email us at naturecamp@cylburn.org