



'You Pick' Programs at Gardner Camp

For additional information or to schedule a program, email us at info@gardnercamp.org or call 217/432-1999

NATURE EDUCATION

Bugs & Butterflies – Search Gardner Camp for colorful and camouflaged butterflies and bugs. Learn about their food sources (flowers), where they lay their eggs and how plants and butterflies are companions/friends. We will do some collecting and be able to observe these beautiful insects up close. We will also have a chance to plant our own nectar sources (flowering plants).

Age Level: 8-12 Max #: 25
Season: Summer Length: 2 hours

Wings of Wonder: Waterfowl – Gardner Camp is situated along the Mississippi River on the “highway” for waterfowl. Ducks, geese and other migratory birds make a stop here at Camp. Study wings and feathers and why these are important in identifying waterfowl. Learn how biologists use banding to study migration and collect water bugs that waterfowl eat. Take a tour of our hunting blinds.

Age Level: 8-14 Max #: 25
Season: Spring, Fall Length: 2 hours

Wildlife Signs: Tracks, Skulls and Furs– How do we know that wildlife exists if we don't see them? Become investigators of the signs of wildlife, learn spy tactics using trail cameras and search for that unique animal track to cast.

Age Level: 8-14 Max #: 25
Season: Any Length: 2 hours

Wetland Exploration - The ultimate hands-on experience! Youth wade into our wetlands and search for its inhabitants -frogs & tadpoles, dragonfly larvae, fish, turtles and whatever we can find. We also gather water samples to test and measure water quality, create an observation pond and look at organisms under the microscope on the big screen TV. Youth will learn proper collection techniques and will be able to see and feel critters up close.

Age Level: 8+ Max #: 25
Season: Spring, Summer Length: 2 hours

StarLab & Star Gazing – Move about the sky in our StarLab planetarium. Put your feet on the Moon or travel to galaxies far away! Outdoors, Gardner Camp has the best viewing sky in the entire region. The expansive open space and limited lighting makes for perfect conditions to observe the night sky. Look through our professional telescope to see planets or the moon up close, learn from amateur astronomers, listen to the telling of constellation stories and find your special star.

Age Level: 8-Adult Max #: 25
Season: Any Length: 2 hours

OUTDOOR SKILLS

Explore Archery – Taught by USA Archery and NASP certified instructors, these sessions will teach students the basics of archery through skill-building challenges. Challenges may include archery relays, balloon and candy shoots and musical quivers.

Age Level: 8+ Max #: 12
Season: Spring, Summer, Fall Length: 2 hours

Outdoor Skills Amazing Race – Teaches a variety of basic outdoor skills based on the Leave No Trace Principles. Groups are teamed up and compete against time to learn outdoor etiquette and skills like packing a backpack, hanging a bear bag, nature photography, fire-starting, tent building, archery & waste sorting.

Age Level: 10+ Max #: 35
Season: Spring, Summer, Fall Length: 3 hours

Kayak the Wetlands – Explore our peaceful wetlands by kayak. After a safety check-up, learn the basics of flatwater paddling, perform challenges with your new kayak friends and follow our water trails to see what's around the bend.

Age Level: 10+ Max #: 8
Season: Spring, Summer Fall Length: 2 hours



ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS OFFERED

Air Gun Marksmanship – Train how to safely and properly handle an air rifle. Once safety training is complete, start perfecting your shot using a variety of fun targets and body positioning like sitting, standing and laying on the ground. Air gun shoots will focus on safety, becoming consistent in hitting targets and friendly competitions at our static range and in the woods at our shooting stations.

Age Level: 10+ Max #: 10 Season: Any Length: 2 hours

Outdoor Cooking & Wild Edibles - Take a hike to find berries and other tasty treats that nature provides. Also, youth will learn how to prepare a meal cooked outside over a campfire using a variety of techniques including stick, foil and pie iron cooking.

Age Level: 8+ Max #: 25 Season: Any; Berry Picking (Summer Only) Length: 2 hours

Basic Fishing Clinic– Learn the basics of fishing etiquette including safety, basic fishing tackle and knots, baiting a hook, casting techniques and what to do when you catch fish! We will also discuss fish ecology and up-close encounters with our fish species will be included in this experience. Can be adapted to all age levels.

Age Level: 8+ Max #: 15 Season: Spring, Summer Fall Length: 2 hours

Nature Appreciation & Relaxation – Slow down as we appreciate the pace of nature. This session will take youth on a journey hiking through the woods, identifying native plants and trees and tapping into all their senses. Spend some time experiencing nature yoga and meditation.

Age Level: 8+ Max #: 25 Season: Spring, Summer, Fall Length: 2 hours

Nature STEM: Use natural materials to engineer boats to float on our wetland lakes and make your own nest. Study the way birds and other nest-building animals build their homes. Be sure to build your nest so that the eggs don't crack!

Age Level: 8-12 Max #: 25 Season: Any Length: 2 hours