

JUNIOR NATURALIST FIELD CAMP (JNFC) 2011 SUMMER PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Durango Nature Studies' Junior Naturalist Field Camp. *Please go over this guide* together, so that you and your child have the same expectations for camp. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact me at any time. Whether your child is attending camp for the first or fourth time, the information provided in this guide will help you and your child prepare for a fun-filled experience at camp. The camp staff and I are looking forward to learning, growing and having fun with your child!

See you Soon,

Karen Hickerson, Program Director

karen@durangonaturestudies.org / 970.769.1948

For scheduling, sign-up, and payment questions please contact our Executive Director, Sally Shuffield at 970.769.1800 or sally@durangonaturestudies.org



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Our Mission

The JNFC Program strives to provide fun and safe experiences that allow all children to grow an appreciation and understanding of nature through curiosity and respect of their natural community.

Our Philosophy:

Our goal is to empower children using the **ACORNS Philosphy** to guide us.

Be:

- A**ctive - in your camp group and your community
- C**urious - ask questions, try new things, explore
- O**utside - get the physical & mental benefits of the outdoors
- R**espectful - to yourself, your neighbor, and to nature
- N**ature - nature education is the way we learn life lessons
- S**afe - all participants will always be safe!

HOW TO GET TO THE NATURE CENTER

From Durango:

Take US Highway 550 south towards Farmington 12 miles from Farmington Hill. At the base of Bondad Hill, turn left at the Ignacio sign onto County Road 310/318. Make an immediate left onto "River's End Lane" and travel less than 1/10 mile to the parking area. Travel time from Durango is about 1/2 hour.

From Aztec/Farmington/Bloomfield:

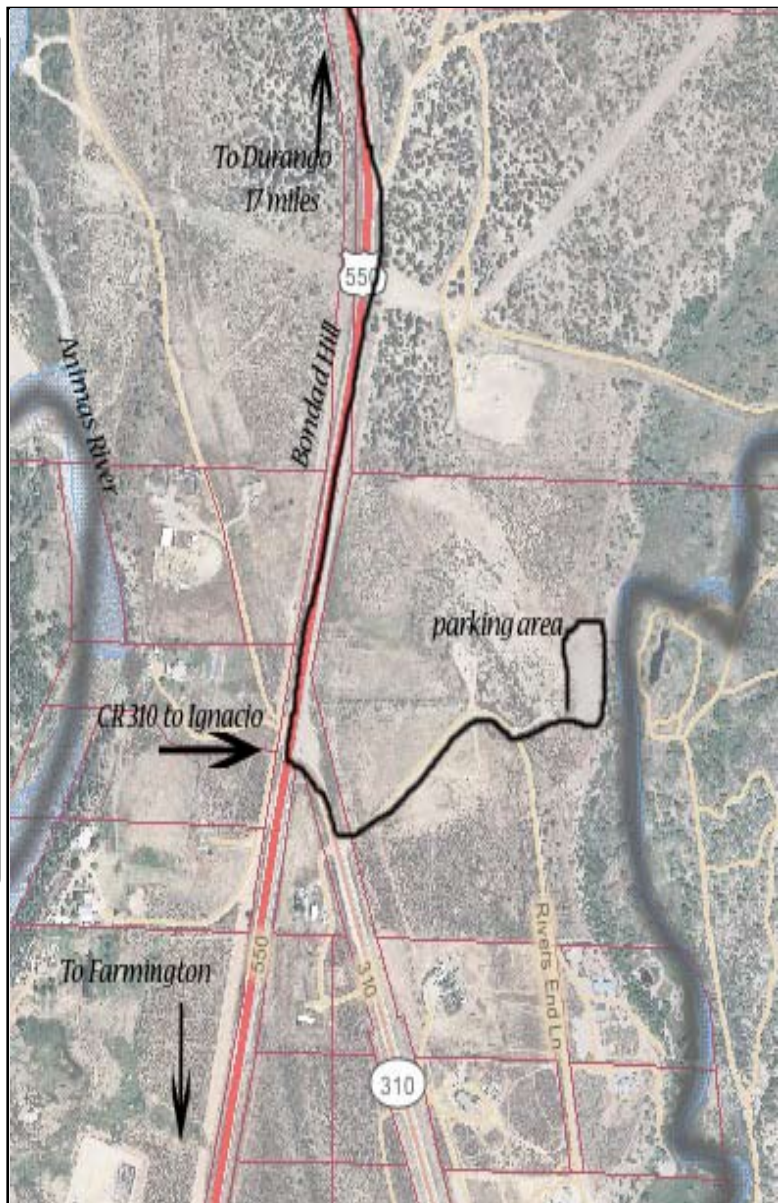
Take US Highway 550 north from Aztec about 19 miles. Be looking for a firehouse on your right, just before you see County Road 310/318. Turn right onto County Road 310/318, and make an immediate left onto "River's End Lane." Travel less than 1/10 mile to the parking area. Travel time FROM AZTEC IS ABOUT 1/2 HOUR.

THE SITE ENTRANCE IS MARKED WITH DURANGO NATURE STUDIES SIGNS.

IF YOU ARE DRIVING TO CAMP:

Please drop your child off in the Nature Center Parking Lot no later than **9:00 AM**

Pick-Up is **3:00 PM SHARP!** The bus can not leave with the rest of the campers until pick-ups have been made



If You Are Taking the Bus To Camp:

- Transportation costs **\$25**. This can be added onto your payment for the session and must be marked on your registration form. For the safety of your child we use 9-R buses and certified 9-R bus drivers.
- The bus leaves each morning from the east side of Park elementary at the corner of 7th Ave. and 4th St.
- Meet by the play ground equipment at **8:15 AM**. The bus leaves at **8:30 AM SHARP!** We will leave promptly at 8:30 in order to meet those campers who are driving to the site, consequently we are unable to wait for anyone running late.
- Pick-up is at Park elementary at **3:30 PM**.

You MUST sign your child out when you come to pick them up.

Pick-up time can be crazy, please make sure that you come and sign your child out before leaving with them. We understand you may be anxious to get home, but this is for the safety of the campers. *If a friend or other family member other than those listed on the camper registration form is picking your child up one day during the session, please give the staff a written note granting that person permission to pick up your child.*

REQUIRED GEAR LIST:

PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CAMPER'S ITEMS WITH FULL NAME!

• *Camp fun can be dirty and wet. Please send your child with clothes/shoes/bags that can get dirty/wet*

• **Sturdy backpack** to carry supplies

• **Canvas bag or duffel bag** to store bathing suits during day / clothes during river activities

• **Water**

At least two liters of water (2 Nalgene bottles or 1 full-size camelback)

There is NO potable water available at the Nature Center; we bring a limited supply of water each day to refill bottles

• **Snacks**

Preferably two, especially for the younger Junior Naturalist (ie Bobcats)

• **Lunch**

Keep in mind that refrigeration is not available at the Nature Center

• **Play Clothes and Hat or Baseball Cap**

Durable camping clothes appropriate for bushwacking, hiking, and outdoor play. Long shorts or lightweight pants (they better protect legs) are best. Hats are great sun protection, Junior Naturalists will be exposed to it all day!

• **Hiking Shoes**

Sturdy, closed toe shoes with traction on the bottom, preferably lace-up (or velcro.) Supportive and comfortable tennis shoes or hiking boots are best. ***Please do NOT send a Junior Naturalist to camp in crocs, slip-ons, or keens*** (Although keens are appropriate river time shoes)

• **River Shoes**

Waterproof sandals with a heel strap, waterproof shoes, or old sneakers. ***No Flip-Flops!*** We are not responsible for shoes that float away in the river, CROCS are not a good river choice.

• **Swimming Clothes and Towel**

• **Sunscreen and Insect Repellent**

Please send your child with sunscreen on in the morning, we will reapply throughout the day

• **Sunglasses (optional)**

• **Rain jacket**

• **Change of clothes**

Spare shirt, pants or shorts, socks and underwear

• **Medications**

Please be sure to let us know if your child requires medication will assume students are able to administer their medications (ie asthma inhalers)

If there are any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact us.

AND AS ALWAYS...

PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANY PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (CELL PHONES, I-PODS, OR VIDEO GAMES), WEAPONS, KNIVES, FIREWORKS, MATCHES, CANDY OR GUM.

JNFC STAFF WILL CONFISCATE THESE ITEMS FOR THE DURATION OF THE CAMP SESSION!

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT APPROPRIATE JUNIOR NATURALISTS DAILY GEAR, WE WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU. FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US BEFORE CAMP, OR DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S COUNSELOR ON OPENING DAY.

CAMP BEHAVIOR POLICY: PLEASE REVIEW THIS WITH YOUR CHILD

Parents and Junior Naturalists are required to read through the following Behavior Policy information together and to have a clear understanding of the expectations we will have of all Junior Naturalists. The Behavior Policy is the first step in creating a positive camp environment in which all Junior Naturalists feel safe to explore and play.

The Behavior Policy consists of ten specific expectations the Field Camp counselors will have for their group members (the Junior Naturalists.) The expectations will be reviewed on the first day of camp, but Junior Naturalists should arrive at camp with a clear understanding of the Behavior Policy and Action Steps.

JUNIOR NATURALIST BEHAVIOR POLICY EXPECTATIONS:

1. I will show respect for my group and support others during the session. Interrupting my group members, name calling, and physical altercations (ie, hitting, biting, slapping, or punching) are never ok.
2. I will show respect to my group by participating in all activities. Feeling nervous when trying something new is normal. I understand this and will be willing to try all activities at least one time.
3. If I have tried an activity and would still like to sit out I may do so. I will respect my group members and wait quietly while the activity is completed.
4. I will not swear or use inappropriate language of any kind. If my counselor tells me that I am using language that is not appropriate for Field Camp, I will respect their decision and not argue the point.
5. I will use good communication with my counselor when I am upset or unhappy about something. I will try my hardest to explain to my counselor how I am feeling and why. I understand that pouting, moping, yelling, and crying are not appropriate ways of communicating my feelings.
6. I will never wander off alone while at Field Camp. If I need to use the restroom, I will let my counselor know before I leave.
7. I will not bring guns, knives, weapons of any kind, or electronics (such as videogames, ipods, or cellphones) to camp. If I do so, my counselor has the right to confiscate the item until the end of camp.
8. I will always respect the three core Nature Center Rules: To respect myself, to respect others, and to respect the Nature Center. (Counselors will explain these rules in greater detail on the first day.)
9. I have read and understand all of the expectations listed above, and understand the Behavior Action Steps that will be taken if I do not meet those expectations (see Behavior Action Steps below.)
10. I will enjoy each day at camp that I spend outside exploring and discovering my world!

BEHAVIOR ACTION STEPS:

- 1. First infraction results in timeout**, allowing the Junior Naturalist time to reflect on his/her behavior. Timeout will be followed by a discussion with their counselor. This is an opportunity to clear up any confusion the Junior Naturalist may have about the Behavior Policy
- 2. Second infraction results in a phone call to the Junior Naturalist's parent(s)** by their counselor. The counselor and parents will have time to discuss the issues that have come up and the counselor's expectations for the next day. Parents and Junior Naturalists can use this opportunity to review the Behavior Policy and reflect on what behaviors need to change for the following day.
- 3. Third infraction results in a phone call to the parent(s), requesting that they come and pick up their child from camp (at the Nature Center.)** Junior Naturalists who cannot commit to the Behavior Policy after 2 warnings will be asked to leave Field Camp and not return for the rest of the session.

NO REFUND WILL BE GIVEN FOR ANY JUNIOR NATURALIST ASKED TO LEAVE CAMP DUE TO A 3RD BEHAVIOR POLICY INFRACTION.

CAMPER SIGN-IN / SIGN-OUT:

For the safety of your child, **ALL Junior Naturalists MUST be signed in and out DAILY by a parent/adult guardian.** Parents must present themselves to the staff and sign out their child during pick-up, campers will not be allowed to run to waiting cars.

If someone other than those adults authorized on the registration form will be picking up your child one day during the session, please send a written note to your child's counselor, and mention this to field staff who are checking in campers during morning sign-in

SAMPLE OF DAILY CAMP SCHEDULE:

- 8:15** Arrive at Park Elementary if you are riding the bus to the Nature Center
- 9:00** Bus arrives at DNC / Drop-off for Junior Naturalists not signed up for transportation
- 9 - 11:30** Morning Activities + Snack + Hike
Morning activities are typically high-energy. Junior Naturalists will likely be exposed to the sun and running / hiking during majority of morning activities
- 11:30-12:30** LUNCH
- 12:30 - 2:00** Afternoon Free Choice Activities + Snack
Junior Naturalists are offered a variety of lower-energy activities to choose from in the afternoon. Choices will usually consist of a craft activity, nature journaling, storytime, and one higher-energy activity like field games, archery, or creek sloshing
- 2 - 2:45** River Free Time or Pavilion Free Time
Always the most popular portion of the day, staff and Junior Naturalists will spend the hottest hours of the day cooling off in the river. Proper watershoes are required for all Junior Naturalists who wish to play on the beach or go in the water (sharp, beaver-chewed branches are present on beaches and in the river.) One staff member will remain at the pavilion to stay with those Junior Naturalists who do not wish to swim or forgot their swimsuits and watershoes. River time is very safe and well controlled by staff. The water is low and slow moving in the section designated as our play/swim area. Staff stand in the water at either end of the designated swim area to act as barriers/life guards. Feel free to contact us with any questions regarding river time.
- 3:00** Depart DNC / Pick-up those Junior Naturalists not signed up for transportation
- 3:30** Pick-up & Sign-out Junior Naturalists at Park Elementary

FRIDAY FAMILY FEST (11:30 - 1:30)

We will celebrate the end of the session with a Friday Family Fest BBQ. Your camper will be given a slip of paper with a food item to bring on Friday instead of their usual lunch.

Parents and family members are encouraged to come and share in the fun with the Field Camp counselors and Junior Naturalists. Meet the staff, go for a hike around the Nature Center, enjoy a delicious BBQ lunch, and stay for River Time!

If you attend, please allow your camper to stay until the end of the day for group wrap-ups. Pick-up will be at the usual time.



MEDICATION

“Medication” is any substance a person takes to maintain and/or improve their health. This includes vitamins and natural remedies.

If your child will be taking medication while at camp, please include this information on their health form.

Field Camp staff will assume that your child is able to administer their own medication (such as inhalers) unless otherwise notified.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you feel you need to discuss this topic with us further, or should you have any questions regarding our medication policy.

EMERGENCIES / ILLNESS AT CAMP

All Field Camp staff are certified as Wilderness First Responders, or have current Wilderness First Aid and/or Basic First Aid/CPR certifications. We are well equipped to handle the many bumps, scrapes, and bruises that come up from time-to-time. Karen Hickerson, the Program Director, also carries an Epi-Pen and Benadryl in case of an anaphylactic emergency.

Should there be any emergency involving your child, or if your child becomes ill while at camp, we will contact you immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will call the individuals you have designated as alternate emergency contacts. Please make sure all information provided is accurate. If you have a family emergency at home and need to pick your child up early, please call Karen Hickerson’s cell phone at (970) 769.1948, or our Executive Director, Sally Shuffield, at (970) 769.1800. Sally will be in the office during the week, but can reach the instructors or drive to the site if necessary.

TICKS, MOSQUITOS AND RATTLESNAKES (NATURAL HAZARDS)

It is possible that while exploring the habitats at the Nature Center, your child may come in contact with ticks, mosquitos, or other biting flies. Our staff will do their best to remind campers to check themselves for ticks and reapply their bug spray if the bugs are bad. However, you must check your child each night when they get home because ticks hide in places that is only appropriate for parents to check.

Other natural hazards such as rattlesnakes are present at the Nature Center. Junior Naturalists will be taught how to identify venomous animals such as rattlesnakes and how to avoid them, and how to react should they encounter one. The Field Camp staff is familiar with all of the creatures that call the Nature Center home and will use good judgement, caution, their knowledge of the wildlife at the Nature Center, and of course, common sense to ensure the safety of the Junior Naturalists. Please call us with any questions or concerns regarding the flora and fauna found at the Nature Center.

PHOTO RELEASE POLICY

Durango Nature Studies keeps its website and Facebook page up-to-date with information on current programs, workshops, and activities. As such, we will frequently upload pictures from our programs for our members, volunteers, and fans to view. In addition to our website and Facebook page, we like to include photos from our programs in our quarterly newsletters, flyers, and program brochures.

A photo release is included with the camper registration paperwork, please let us know if you have questions regarding our use of photos.



LOST & FOUND

We ask that all personal belongings be marked with the camper's name. At the end of each day we will make an effort to match lost items with their owners. We will hold a large "lost and found" on Friday at the end of camp as part of our session clean-up.

Lost & Found will be kept for one week after camp and can be found in a bucket outside our office door. Our office is located in the Smiley Building, Rm 34. All unclaimed items will be added to our bin of extra camper clothes, or will be donated to a local charity. Please do not bring items of great value to camp. Durango Nature Studies is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.



REFUND AND CANCELLATION POLICY

We are unable to give refunds for cancellations within 1 week (5 business days) of the camp's start date.

If you cancel before this time, we will refund half of the tuition.

We must receive half of camp payment or a credit card to hold the spot before your camper will be registered.

BUS "MAIL" SYSTEM

If your child is using the camp bus, please give all information that needs to be relayed to your child's counselor to the Camp staff riding the bus (Bus Staff.) Bus Staff may also have updates for you from your child's counselor.

PARENT'S CHECK LIST:

BEFORE CAMP

- Register for camp & turn in all required paperwork
- Make sure that you are paid in full.

We can not reserve spots without payment!

- Read the entire Parent Information Guide
- Review the Behavior Policy and and Behavior Action with your child
- Pack all recommended camper items
- Mark ALL of the camper's items with full name
- Talk with your child about the great time they will have at the Nature Center!

DURING CAMP

- Tell your child's staff person about any last minute changes in your camper's health or life situation
- Make sure to collect information on what your child has been asked to bring to Friday's Family Fest from your camper (will be sent home on Monday or Tuesday)
- Check your child for ticks, mosquito bites, or sun-burn each evening. Adjust your child's clothes, sunscreen, and bug repellent accordingly.
- Visit the Nature Center For Friday Family Fest and enjoy camp for yourself!

AFTER CAMP

- Expect a photo of your child's camp group.
- Talk with your child about what they learned, the new friends they made, and the fun they had at camp!