



What you need to know about Summer Camp at the Calusa Nature Center & Planetarium-FAQ's

The Calusa Nature Center's Nature Adventures Summer Camp is designed to inspire children to connect with nature through meaningful hands-on activities, games, crafts, outdoor adventures, & up-close animal encounters. Each weeklong themed camp is tailored to immerse children in the diverse nature of Southwest Florida equipping them with the skills to explore and care for the natural environment safely and with respect.

When does camp start?

- The first week of summer camp will start June 9, 2025. Followed by weekly camps ending with August 4-8, 2025.
- Camp Drop off starts at 8:30 AM with camp starting at 9:00 AM.
- Camp Pick-up is from 3:30-4:00 PM. With camp ending at 3:30 PM.

How much does camp cost?

- The Family Membership price is \$200.00 per week; the non-member price is \$250.00 per week.
- June 30th-July 3rd is \$180 with a Family Membership and \$200 for non-member.

How do I register for Summer Camp?

- To register for Summer Camp visit our website at www.calusanature.org and click on the Events & Registration tab. If you have a family membership, go to member log-in first to make sure you receive the membership discount.
- At the Events & Registration page click on Summer Camps and scroll down to choose the weeks of camp you need.
- Please make sure you fill out all of the information requested on the form for registration.

What if I need to cancel a camp registration?

- If for any reason you need to cancel your camp registration, please contact us as soon as possible by emailing cnameth@calusanature.org or by calling 239-275-3435.
- More than 2 weeks prior to the first day of the camp session full refund less \$20.00 administration fee.
- Between 1-2 weeks prior to the first day of camp session 50% refund.
- Less than 1 week prior to the first day of the camp session-no refund.

Can I switch camp registration to a different session?

If we have the space available, yes! However, some of our more popular themes like Outdoor Survival and Jr. Naturalist might fill up quickly and may not be available to switch.

What should my camper wear to camp?

Campers will spend time both indoors and out and should dress accordingly. Close-toed shoes are required. We keep a close eye on the weather and monitor the heat index as well as rainstorm forecasts. Campers should be prepared to spend time outside in the sun, heat, & sometimes rain. Campers will get sweaty, muddy, & sometimes messy, so please wear clothes and shoes that are allowed to get dirty!

What should I pack for my camper?

- Campers should be dressed appropriately for the weather and should always have an extra change of clothes.
- Closed-toe shoes that are good for hiking and playing outside, no flip flops.
- Water shoes or boots. Our trails often flood in the summer.
- Refillable water bottle.
- Preferred sunscreen & insect repellent.
- Lunch & snacks.
- Please do not send- electronic devices, personal toys, expensive jewelry, knives or tools, or anything that can't get wet and dirty.

Will food & beverage be available on site for purchase?

Water and Gatorade are available to purchase in our gift shop, sodas & caffeinated drinks are prohibited. We also have a free filtered water station where campers can refill their water bottles at any time. Campers should bring their own snacks from home for snack time but we do have a small selection in our gift shop. Campers will be responsible for managing their own money and can only purchase snacks during snack time.

Will there be merchandise to purchase?

- Each camper will receive 1 camp tee shirt included with registration costs. Additional shirts will be available for purchase in our museum gift shop.
- The gift shop will not be open to campers during camp. Campers can shop in the gift shop with an adult once they have been picked up for the day.

What is your behavior policy?

We have 5 main behavior guidelines at the Calusa Nature Center. They are...

- **Be kind.** We ask that all campers are kind and encouraging to one another. Campers should never be rude, mean, or troublesome on purpose. We do not tolerate any form of bullying.
- **Be respectful.** Campers should practice respectful behavior practices like, keeping their hands to themselves, listening to other campers, respecting camp equipment & supplies and listening to and following the guidance and leadership of the camp & Nature Center staff.
- **Be safe.** The safety of all of the campers, staff, & animals is of the utmost importance. Campers should try to always be aware of their surroundings and pay attention to what they are doing. When outside campers will have to stay with the group, and inside when live animals are present campers will need to be calm and quiet. Campers will need to keep their hands & belongings to themselves as physical violence will not be tolerated.
- **Be smart.** We ask that campers make smart and wise decisions that line up with the other guidelines of being kind, respectful, & safe.
- **Have fun!** We have a lot of great educational content, programs & activities planned that we hope lead to all campers having a fun & memorable experience!

How is discipline handled when necessary?

- **Discipline-** We operate on a three-strike system. If campers cannot adhere to the 5 guidelines listed above with reminders, guidance & redirection, campers may be removed from activities or programs for a time-out or rest break until they are ready to re-join the group, (strike one). Strike one rest break happens in the camp classroom.

- If camper still cannot adhere to 5 guidelines after a short time-out or rest break, campers will be removed from camp for a longer time-out and a phone call will be made to the responsible parent/adult, (strike two). Strike two will remove the camper from camp and they will spend their time-out or rest break supervised by staff in our staff administrative offices.
- If after two strikes the camper still cannot be adhere to our 5 guidelines, they will be pulled out of camp and we will call the responsible adult to come pick up the camper for the day, and we will decide depending on the circumstances and situation if the camper will be allowed to come back (strike three).
- We have very strict policies for bullying and physical violence which will lead to immediate strikes and contact of responsible adult will be made.

What activities might my child experience at camp?

Camp activities run from 9am-3:30pm each day. Typically, outdoor activities are scheduled for the morning hours when the temperatures are cooler and the weather forecast doesn't include rain. Some outdoor activities will still happen even if there is rain, if no lightning is detected. Some activities that camp could include are listed below but not limited to the list.

- Hikes on our trails, including our secret trails that only summer campers get to use.
- Watch space & nature related shows in our Planetarium.
- Each week campers will attend a live animal talk presented by the Nature Center's staff, as well as meet extra animals up-close throughout the week, depending on weekly theme.
- Campers will have scheduled time to explore our natural history museum & animal exhibits.
- Each day campers will also have the opportunity to play games, participate in hands-on exploration activities, and make crafts.

What animals might my camper meet or encounter?

The Calusa Nature Center is home to rescued and injured animals that cannot be released into the wild. Each week campers will visit our Bird Aviary that houses injured birds of prey, our outdoor turtle & tortoise enclosures, large alligator enclosure and our educational museum full of different reptiles & amphibians. In addition, each week campers will attend a live animal talk where they will learn about and encounter live animals up-close as well as meet extra animals throughout the week depending on the week's theme. Campers attending the Jr. Naturalist camps or Riveting Reptiles will have more up-close & behind-the-scenes animal experiences than other weeks.

What if I have other questions that were not answered here?

Should you have any additional questions or concerns you can email our Education & Wildlife Director, Carrie, who plans and over sees all aspects of summer camp at cnameth@calusanature.org

