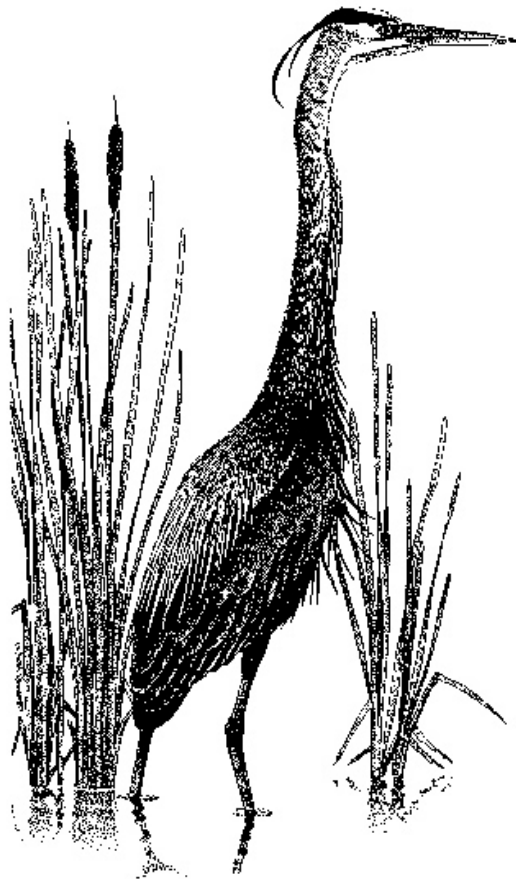


# Seven Ponds Nature Center

## Camp Seven Ponds!

Parent Handbook



[www.sevenponds.org](http://www.sevenponds.org)  
[spnc@sevenponds.org](mailto:spnc@sevenponds.org)  
810-796-3200

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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Seven Ponds Nature Center is to conserve its natural environment as a sanctuary for plants and animals and to serve as a community resource for environmental education that fosters an understanding, appreciation, and stewardship ethic for our natural world.

## **Camp Seven Ponds! Curriculum**

Camp Seven Ponds! programs not only provide environmental education to people ages 2-15 years old, but also a chance to immerse learners in nature. We try to honor background experiences and provide opportunities for discovery learning. Children are also given the opportunity to share their knowledge with others. One of our most important curriculum goals is to encourage students to become lifelong learners while discovering the amazing wonders of nature. We strive to foster independent, self-confident, and inquisitive learners.

Camp Seven Ponds! forms curriculum around the following styles of learning:

- Linguistic: reading, writing, and telling stories
- Logical/Mathematical: experiments, problem solving, reasoning/logic
- Spatial: drawing, building, designing, puzzles, using their imagination
- Musical: singing, sounds, rhythm
- Kinesthetic: moving around, games, sports, body language
- Interpersonal: group/teamwork, communicating, sharing, cooperating
- Intrapersonal: journaling, individual work, working in an independent self-paced instruction
- Naturalistic: discriminate among living things as well as sensitivity to the natural world

## **Contact Information**

Seven Ponds Nature Center – 810-796-3200 or 810-796-3419  
3854 Crawford Road, Dryden MI, 48428

Director of Environmental Education / Chief Naturalist – Carrie Spencer, [cspencer@sevenponds.org](mailto:cspencer@sevenponds.org),  
810-796-3200

Executive Director – Daryl Bernard, [dbernard@sevenponds.org](mailto:dbernard@sevenponds.org), 810-796-3200

## **Camp Seven Ponds! Hours**

Pint-Sized Explorers and Knee-High Naturalists – Tuesday to Friday 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Young Explorers – Tuesday to Friday 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Junior Naturalists – Tuesday to Friday 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

## **Registration Policies**

- Spaces are limited and reserved only with payment.
- Enrollment will be accepted on a first come first serve basis.
- Register online at [www.sevenponds.org](http://www.sevenponds.org) under Special Events.
- In the event that a camp is full, your child's name will be added to a waiting list and you will be notified promptly if a space becomes available.
- Once registered, please fill out and submit Emergency/Medical Information and Photo Release Forms found at [sevenponds.org/camp-seven-ponds](http://sevenponds.org/camp-seven-ponds)

## **Prices per Week**

### **Pint-Sized Explorers**

\$40.00 (members of Seven Ponds)  
\$50.00 (non-members of Seven Ponds)

### **Knee-High Naturalists**

\$40.00 (members of Seven Ponds)  
\$50.00 (non-members of Seven Ponds)

### **Young Explorers**

\$100.00 (members of Seven Ponds)  
\$120.00 (non-members of Seven Ponds)

### **Junior Naturalist**

\$100.00 (members of Seven Ponds)  
\$120.00 (non-members of Seven Ponds)

## **Staff**

Seven Ponds believes strongly in positive, enthusiastic, experienced role models for your children. The members of our naturalist staff bring knowledge and rich experiences to Seven Ponds that they can share with your children. All staff is certified in both CPR and First Aid and is required to receive background checks before they are allowed to work with children.

Naturalists are responsible for creating a camp curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for the campers. Prior to the summer camps, the seasonal naturalists participate in a week of training and orientation in order to understand behavioral management policies and work as a team to create a well-rounded program for your child.

We provide at least one naturalist to every 14 children. This allows the naturalist to build strong relationships with all the campers, and allows the campers to get more individual attention.

Seven Ponds staff is available to share information concerning your child on a daily basis. We welcome your input, as you are the foremost expert about your child's needs.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Seven Ponds Nature Center enforces a non-discrimination policy where we shall not fail or refuse participation because of the race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, or mental or physical disability of such individual or such individual's friends or associations; but with regard to mental or physical disability, it is not discrimination for Seven Ponds to act as provided in this paragraph if there is no reasonable accommodation that the Nature Center can make with regard to the disability, the disability actually disqualifies the individual from program participation and the disability has a significant impact on program participation. We welcome all children and encourage parents to attend camps in order for a child with disabilities to enjoy a positive experience.

### **Supervision and Behavioral Policies**

- Seven Ponds maintains a 14:1 (or less) student to naturalist ratio during camp.
- At all times, staff will be actively supervising the children.
- For safety reasons, Seven Ponds encourages the use of the "Buddy System" during camp.
- Seven Ponds staff will know where campers are at all times.
- Campers and staff will be respectful to each other at all times (no abusive language, physical or verbal fighting, no stealing).
- Naturalists should hold high expectations for the campers, as well as the campers for the naturalists. Clear expectations and consequences will be discussed at the beginning of each camp.
- In the event that campers violate expectations or act in a disrespectful manner (as stated above) we will use the following steps:
  1. We will privately correct the behavior and, based on the severity of the issue, may give the child a time out.
  2. If the behavior is not corrected with above measures, parents will be informed of issue presently or at the end of the camp day.
  3. If the behavior remains an issue after above measures, the child will be suspended from the program.

### **Camp Seven Ponds! Communication**

A parent newsletter will be emailed before the start of each week of camp with the highlights and activities, as well as information regarding weekly special events or activities. On the first day of camp week, parents will be made aware of any special instructions for the week.

If you have any questions about the camp schedule, please contact the Director of Environmental Education. They will be on-site at least 30 minutes prior to camp starting and through 5:00 pm each day.

### **Missing or Lost Children**

Naturalists are required to perform head counts throughout all our programs. With the small student to naturalist ratio, it is unlikely that we may be faced with a lost or missing child. However, it is very important for you to know that we do have a procedure and policy in place if this unfortunate circumstance arises. Staff members will notify the Executive Director immediately when it is suspected that a child may be missing. The staff will look for the child for 15 minutes. If the child is not located, the police will be called by dialing 911. After the police have been notified, the parents will be notified of the situation.

All staff members are trained to be observant and aware of their surroundings. Any suspicious persons or activities will be reported to the Executive Director and appropriate law enforcement immediately.

### **Health Policies**

Each child's health and safety is a matter of importance. With numerous children in our program we request that children be kept at home from camp if they have:

- A fever within the last 24 hours
- An infectious runny nose
- A severe cough
- Has been vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Has been on antibiotics less than 24 hours
- Has a contagious or unidentified rash
- Has pink eye
- Has lice

If any of these symptoms occur after camp, we request you immediately notify Seven Ponds.

If a child appears to have symptoms during the day, the parent/guardian will be notified. It is important that parents/guardians pick up ill children immediately, as there is no staff available to isolate an ill child for an extended period of time. If your schedule prohibits this, please make arrangements for a backup person to be available for such an emergency. This person's name should be written on the Camp Seven Ponds! Medical / Emergency Information Form so that child may be released into their care.

In case of injury, Seven Ponds' staff will make an immediate attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the staff will attempt to contact the next person designated. If necessary, 911 may also be called. Until the arrival of the parents, the on-site staff with highest seniority will be in charge and make all decisions concerning the care of the child. It is to the child's benefit that you keep your paperwork up to date on phone numbers, emergency numbers and other pertinent information. If your child has a medical condition or allergy that might be important in an emergency situation, please indicate this on the Medical / Emergency Information Form.

### **Sunscreen Policies**

Seven Ponds' Naturalists will remind campers to apply their sunscreen when we are going outside for an extended period of time for an activity. Sunscreen application is performed as a group and

campers apply their sunscreen independently. The naturalists will observe to confirm campers are applying their sunscreen properly and assist as needed. Naturalists will be diligent about reminders, but it is the camper's responsibility to follow through. If there are any special instructions for your child's sunscreen application, including if they will need assistance applying it, please note on their medical / emergency form and re-iterate to staff at drop-off.

### **Pick-up / Drop-off Policies**

Camp Hours: Drop off for camp is 9:00 a.m. Pick up for camp is at 3:00 p.m.

Drop-off location is in the front of the nature center building. On the first day of camp, please arrive 10-15 minutes early so there is plenty of time to check-in, and get your campers where they need to go. There will be staff to direct you accordingly. Please allow space for everyone to check-in. For the rest of the week, your child's naturalist will be waiting outside the building to check your child in.

Pick-up location will also be in front of the building. Your child will be in their pod with their naturalist. You will have to sign your child out with the naturalist. If you need to pick your child up early, please let nature center staff know the morning of so we can make arrangements for that to happen. If anyone besides the child's parents will be picking them up they need to be listed on the medical/emergency form.

### **Absences / Tardiness**

If a child will not be attending Camp Seven Ponds! due to an illness or other reason, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to inform the staff. Please call 810-796-3200 to inform us of such occasions. Please inform us if your child will be late to camp, as well, by calling the phone number above.

### **Child's Belongings / Toys / Money**

Campers will keep their belongings at their camp station, under a canopy. We recommend that all belongings that come to camp be labeled with your child's name. We ask that children leave money and toys at home. This prevents your child from losing their prize possessions and avoids distraction during exciting camp moments. Seven Ponds also asks that children leave all electronic devices (mobile phones, games, etc.) at home.

### **Lost Belongings**

A common occurrence at Seven Ponds is a parent asking a bewildered camper, "Where did you leave your lunch box?" or "How did you get your shirt dirty?" Please remember they will lose things and get dirty. By minimizing what your child brings to camp, you will cut down on the amount of lost items. Leave new, expensive things at home. There will be a Lost and Found at Seven Ponds where you can check for all abandoned items. While we make every effort to be sure your child leaves with what they came with, we cannot be responsible for things left behind at Seven Ponds. Expect that your child will be involved in their most important work – having fun. This fun may be messy. Drop by Seven Ponds' Interpretive Building to check the lost and found located at the reception desk.

### **How to Come Prepared (include water activity preparedness)**

Campers should bring a backpack with the following: a lunch and one snack, a reusable water bottle, sunscreen, bug repellent, extra clothes (especially shoes and socks), comfortable walking shoes (that tie or Velcro), rain gear, sunglasses... and a positive attitude. Please be sure the backpack and belongings are clearly marked with your child's name.

#### **Please NO crocs, sandals, or flip-flops!**

There may be times in which we request special clothing for camp. We may request a white t-shirt be brought in for tie-dye, clothes for getting wet, etc. This information will be listed in the weekly parent newsletter.

### **Weather / Natural Disaster Policies**

#### **Fire:**

##### **Inside building**

1. Calmly announce there is a fire in our building.
2. Evacuate the building according to the evacuation plan, all persons exiting out the closest exit to their location.
3. Close all doors upon exiting the building.
4. Groups will stay together and walk to the Three Oak Island (unless otherwise instructed).
5. Staff will perform a role call after exiting the building.
6. All students and staff must remain outside building until permission to return is given by the Fire Department.

##### **Outside building**

1. Contact 911 immediately.
2. Account for all children, line up and safely return to the Interpretive Building.

#### **Thunderstorm and Lightning:**

In the event of a thunderstorm watch or warning is declared for Seven Ponds' immediate area campers will continue as usual. However, if thunder or lightening is heard or seen all campers will stop outdoor activities and return to the Interpretive Building and wait 30 minutes from the last sound of thunder or sight of lightning before returning outdoors.

#### **Tornado:**

In the event that a Tornado Watch is declared during camp, the program will be conducted as usual. Campers will be dismissed at the end of the day. In the event of a Tornado Warning, the children will be held in the Interpretive Building until the "all clear" is given by the proper authorities.



**Cancellation Policies**

If weather threatens the safety of Camp Seven Ponds! participants, camp may be cancelled at the discretion of a Seven Ponds staff member and approved by the Executive Director. Participants will be reimbursed for all camps that Seven Ponds has decided to cancel.

In the event that a family cancels a registration, it must be done during normal business hours, and may be made by phone or in person. For cancellations on the part of the registrant, program fees will be refunded on the following terms:

**TIME OF REQUEST**

**REFUND AVAILABLE**

**10+ days prior to the start of the program**

**90% refund**

**1-9 days prior to the start of the program**

**50% refund**

**Day of program**

**No refund**

# Camp Seven Ponds! Evaluation For Campers

1. Who was your Naturalist at camp? \_\_\_\_\_

Scale: 1 – Did Not Like 2 – Was Okay 3 – Not Good Not Bad 4 – Liked 5 – Loved 6 – No Comment

2. How much did you like your Naturalist's activities? 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. What was your FAVORITE activity at camp? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What was your LEAST favorite activity at camp? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What activity do you wish we did more of? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How much did you like your fellow campers? 1 2 3 4 5 6

# Camp Seven Ponds! Evaluation For Parents

1. What week(s) of Camp Seven Ponds! did your child(ren) participate in? #1 #2 #3 #4 Jr. Naturalist

2. Would you recommend our camp to your friends for their children? Yes No No Comment

Scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 - Strongly Agree 6 - No Comment

3. Do you believe your child had a good time at camp? 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. What activities do you wish your child(ren) could have partaken in?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What about the camp experience do you think was most valuable for your child(ren)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Will you send your child back to camp next summer? Yes No No Comment

7. Has your child told you anything about the camp experience that they did not enjoy?  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. How can we make the camp experience better for you, as a parent?  
\_\_\_\_\_