Norman Bird Sanctuary
583 Third Beach Road
Middletown, RI 02842

Main Office: (401) 846-2577
Hours: Daily, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

camp@normanbirdsanctuary.org

*Updated May 2023

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Camp Overview

Thank you for registering for Norman Bird Sanctuary’s Summer Camp! We are looking forward to another season of nature exploration, games, crafts, animal encounters, experiments, and much more.

For six decades, Norman Bird Sanctuary has welcomed hundreds of campers to our award-winning Summer Camp. Generations of curious campers have explored our expansive 300-acre outdoor classroom and developed a positive relationship with nature. Our age-appropriate and innovative camps offer a unique blend of hands-on learning, games, animal encounters and team building. Camp groups are led by caring, enthusiastic, and professional Teacher Naturalists who utilize our campus as a living laboratory for teaching.

This packet includes the following information that you and your child will need for the Summer Camp season:

- Camp Overview
- Camp Information and Things to Know
- Pick-Up and Drop-Off
- What to Wear and What to Bring
- Health and Wellness
- Sun, Insects, Ticks, Weather, and Allergies

Summer Camp Mission & Vision

**Mission:** Norman Bird Sanctuary will provide a safe and fun summer camp environment that allows campers to expand their appreciation and awareness of the natural world and deepen their connections to nature.

**Vision:** Norman Bird Sanctuary envisions a future where all children find joy in being outside, are curious about the environment around them, and act individually and collectively to be stewards of the natural world.

Year-round NBS Staff: Camp Leaders

**Dr. Jolie Colby | Director of Education:** Jolie has been an educator for nearly twenty years. Most recently she taught Endangered Species Management at UC Santa Barbara, where she recently finished her PhD in Education. Her dissertation focused on wildlife conservation education and the human dimensions of species reintroduction. Her Master’s in Education investigated Early Childhood Environmental Education. She was the Co-Founder and Director of Education for a neo-tropic conservation biology field study school and wildlife sanctuary. Before working with primates in the jungle, Jolie focused on tropical reef conservation whilst on Fulbright in Indonesia. Jolie is excited to see camp again this summer through the eyes of her two young children who will be NBS campers for the second year in a row!

**Sophie Gregory | Assistant Director of Education:** A native Rhode Islander, Sophie spent the Summer of 2021 on the NBS trails teaching the sanctuary’s youngest naturalists before joining the year-round NBS Education Team. Now as Assistant Director of Education, Sophie is beyond thrilled to be directing camp for the second year in a row! A published poet, she was recognized for her thesis collection, *A small bird sings for miles*, by the Academy of American Poets. Sophie recently graduated with a degree in the Written Arts from Bard College in New York. During her time in the Hudson Valley, Sophie’s passion for youth education met its match with eco-studies, and after graduating she found her way to hone both passions on the NBS team!

**Tess Kostisin | Lead Teacher Naturalist and Volunteer A.N.T. Coordinator:** Tess has been our Teacher Naturalist since 2020. She came to us after finishing up a field study position researching Rhode Island’s Bobcat population. Born and raised in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, Tess’ career in conservation started at a young age through volunteering at Roger Williams Park Zoo as an educator for over eight years. A graduate of the University of Rhode Island where she majored in Veterinary Science with a minor in Wildlife Conservation, Tess conducted her first field study on the Osa Peninsula in Costa Rica before returning home to focus on the amazing wildlife here in Rhode Island! This season, Tess is coordinating our volunteer, high-school Assistant Naturalists in Training program.

Staff Selection Criteria
We select our summer staff based on their experience and character. All of our staff must pass a background check and receive training in CPR and First Aid.

Contacting the Office
You can reach our Main Office at (401) 846-2577. If you reach our voicemail, please do leave a message as they are checked regularly throughout the day.

Camp Information & Things to Know:

Registration
Camper registrations will be processed once you complete the camper application form found in your CampInTouch account. Please note that you must submit payment information to complete the registration process. To receive the member discount, you must have a membership valid through the last week of camp your child is enrolled. The option to add a membership is available in the registration process or on our website.

Some programs fill up quickly. If the camp program is full, we will notify you and place your child on a waiting list. We will only process payments once your child is officially enrolled in the camp program(s) you selected. Once we process your application, we will notify you of your camper’s status (enrolled or on the waitlist). If you are unable to register online, please call NBS at 401-846-2577 and we will help you with registration.

Scholarship Assistance
A limited number of full and partial scholarships are available based on need. To apply, please fill out the application on our website (https://www.normanbirdsanctuary.org/summer-camp). Please email camp@normanbirdsanctuary.org or call our main office if you have any questions. The deadline for full scholarship support is June 1st and the deadline for partial scholarship support is July 1st.

Special Requests
If your child wishes to be in the same camp group with ONE special friend in the same age range, BOTH parties must request the same one-on-one pairing on their online registration form. We cannot honor requests if campers have been registered for different programs or sessions. (For example, if you register your child for Nature Day Camp and your child’s friend has been registered for Explorers). We will try our best to honor all requests but cannot guarantee them.

Schedule Changes
Once enrollment is processed, there is a $25 fee for all session changes if the request is made by June 1. After June 1, the fee is $50. Session changes are not guaranteed and are pending availability.

Cancellation & Refund Policy
There is a $50 administrative fee for all cancellations before June 1, 2023. After this time, no refunds will be issued. Refunds will not be given for mosquito and tick bites, sunburn, cold or inclement weather, poison ivy, or other nature-related concerns.

Memberships:
A current NBS family membership (valid through the last week of camp your child is enrolled) is required to receive the member price. Memberships can be added during online registration, through our website, or in person at the NBS office.

Camper/Staff Ratio
This summer, the camper-to-staff ratio will be 12 campers max to 2-3 NBS Summer Staff for Fledglings and Coastal Camp programs and 12 campers max to 2-3 staff for Nature Day and Explorers programs. Staff includes one lead Teacher Naturalist and one Assistant Naturalist in Training (“ANT”).

Lost and Found
Found items are placed in Camper Lost and Found. To look for a lost item, please go to the Main Office and they will direct you to the Camp Lost and Found. Norman Bird Sanctuary is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen items. Please note that the most frequently lost items are reusable water bottles, sunglasses, and hats. At the end of the summer, these items will be donated to charity, so please do your best to leave no trace after your child attends camp.

Behavior
Camp guidelines for safety and behavior are established within each group at the beginning of the camp week. The Sanctuary’s expectations for campers, such as respect for others, are similar to those in school. If a staff member has a concern regarding your child’s actions or behavior, they will let you know as soon as possible, and will work with you to resolve the issue. If the behavior does not improve and becomes dangerous to your child or to others, they may be asked to leave camp for that week. In such cases, no refunds will be given.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop-off

Before Care
We will offer Before Care for families that wish to drop their child(ren) off early. Before care will run from 7:45 - 8:45am. Monday through Fridays at the Main NBS Campus (528 Third Beach Road). Please note that Coastal Campers participating in Before Care should be dropped off at the main NBS campus and will hike to the Third Beach Center that morning with a staff member. When camp drop-off begins, Before Care Coastal Campers will hike to the CEC with a Teacher Naturalist. You can sign up for Before Care in your CampInTouch account (additional fee).

- The only alternative Before Care drop-off will be for Fledglings Thursdays (dropped at the CEC for Beach Day).

Monday Camper Registration
On Monday mornings, all camp families will park their cars and sign in. Please allow an extra 15 minutes in your Monday morning schedule for camper registration. All campers, even returning campers and those attending multiple sessions, must be checked-in by a parent/guardian every Monday. During this registration period, we will make sure that all forms are in order, direct you to walk your child(ren) to their group(s), and provide other important information. Please note the following registration times and locations:

- Fledglings (AM), Nature Day, Explorers, and Coastal Camp from 8:45 - 9:00 a.m. in the Apple Orchard
- Fledglings (PM) at 12:30 p.m. in the Apple Orchard

Camper Check-in (Tuesday-Friday)
We have a check-in window from 8:45-9:00 a.m. each morning. Please do not drop-off before 8:45am. See specific check-in times for each group in the table below. Campers must be signed in at their drop off location by a parent or authorized guardian. Please do not check your child in before 8:45 am as Teacher Naturalists use this time to prepare for the day. If you would like to drop your child(ren) off earlier, please sign up for Before Care.

*Thursdays are Beach Day for Fledglings, and both AM and PM Fledglings will be dropped off and picked up at the Coastal Education Center.*

*Campers at Coastal Camp will be dropped off at the round-about, and parents should NOT exit the cars as campers arrive. The Third Beach Naturalist oversees drop-off Tues-Fri, and the Coastal Teacher Naturalists should support.*
We have a check-in window from 8:45-9:00 a.m. each morning. See specific check-in times for each group in the table below. Campers must be signed in at their drop off location by a parent or authorized guardian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLEDGLINGS</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fledglings AM</td>
<td>(M) 8:15 am - 9:00 am</td>
<td>(M-W, F) Orchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(T-F) 8:45 am – 9:15 am</td>
<td>(Th) Coastal Education Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fledglings PM</td>
<td>(M-F) 12:30 pm - 12:45 pm</td>
<td>(M-W, F) Orchard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Th) Coastal Education Center</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NATURE DAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Day</td>
<td>(M) 8:15 am - 9:00 am</td>
<td>(M-F) Orchard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(T-F) 8:45 am – 9:15 am</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EXPLORERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorers</td>
<td>(M) 8:15 am - 9:00 am</td>
<td>(M-F) Orchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(W) 2:45 pm - 3:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(T-F) 8:45 am – 9:15 am</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COASTAL CAMP</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal Camp</td>
<td>(M) 8:15 am - 9:00 am</td>
<td>(M) Orchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(T-F) 8:45 am – 9:15 am</td>
<td>(T-F) Coastal Education Center</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Pick Up**

*Pick up:* Parents, guardians and authorized individuals listed on the Authorized Grownup Form must sign campers out with their Teacher Naturalists and must have photo identification. If someone is not on the Authorized Grownup Form, they will not be allowed to pick up a camper. Camper pick-up will occur in a few different spots throughout the week (see below). Your camper will be picked up for a majority of the week at their classroom. Children must be signed out by a parent or other guardian as listed on the Authorized Pick-up List. People picking up campers MUST show their ID’s, even if they have previously picked the child up. See the daily pick-up schedule below:

*Coastal Camp families picking up at the Coastal Education Center on Third Beach Road should NOT exit their car for a smooth pick-up process.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLEDGLINGS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fledglings AM</td>
<td>11:45 am - 12:00 pm</td>
<td>(M-W, F) Curiosity Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Th) Coastal Education Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Fledglings PM**

3:15 pm - 3:30 pm

(M-W) Curiosity Lab
(Th) Coastal Education Center
(F) Studio Lawn

*Friday Fiesta with families starts at 2:00pm and runs through pick-up*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature Day A. [Asters]</td>
<td>(M-Th) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(T-Th) Classroom - (M, F) Studio Lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Day B. [Bluebirds]</td>
<td>(M-Th) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(T-Th) Classroom - (M, F) Studio Lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Day C. [Cottontails]</td>
<td>(M-Th) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(T-Th) Barn Classroom - (M, F) Studio Lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Day D. [Dragonflies]</td>
<td>(M-Th) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(T-Th) Barn - (M, F) Studio Lawn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Friday Fiesta with families starts at 2:00pm and runs through pick-up*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explorers</td>
<td>(M, F) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(M, F) Studio Lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(T, Th) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(T, Th) Barn Museum (Floor 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(W) 8:45 pm - 9:00 pm</td>
<td>(W) Curiosity Lab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Friday Fiesta with families starts at 2:00pm and runs through pick-up*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Camp A. (Anemones) and Coastal Camp B. (Barnacles)</td>
<td>(M-Th) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(M-Th) Coastal Education Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(F) 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm</td>
<td>(F) Studio Lawn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Friday Fiesta with families starts at 2:00pm and runs through pick-up*

**Early Pickup:** Please notify your Teacher Naturalist at least a day in advance of any schedule changes. Group explorations cannot be interrupted due to a schedule change.

**Late Pickup:** Parents MUST call the main office (401-846-2577) if they will be delayed. We understand that sometimes circumstances beyond your control may cause you to be late. However, if you are over 15 minutes late more than once, we reserve the right to charge you a $50 administrative fee each time.

**Absent Camper:** If your child will be absent, please leave a message at the main office (401-846-2577) with your camper’s name and session name. There are no refunds or make up days for camp days missed. If your camper misses a lot of camp due to an illness or emergency and there is an opening in another camp for their age group, we will happily try to move your child to a future session, however, this is a courtesy and not a guarantee.

**Monday and Friday Pick-up:** You might notice looking at our drop-off and pick-up schedules that Monday and Friday are different for many camp groups this season! This year, on Mondays, our whole camp (excluding AM Fledglings) will gather at the end of the day for a grand welcome to NBS with Sophie and Jolie as well as a camp song sing-along. Coastal
Campers will have a Coastal Education Center camp song sing-along. On Friday, our whole camp (excluding AM Fledglings) will gather on the Studio Lawn at 2:00 p.m. for our Friday Fiesta featuring performances by all camp groups.

**Friday Fiesta:** On Friday at 2:00 p.m., your camper’s family is invited to come and witness the joy of summer camp as we observe performances by each camp group about what they learned that week! Join us on the Studio Lawn. Pick-up will take place following the Fiesta between 2:45-3:15p.m. If you do not attend the Friday Fiesta, please plan to pick-up at the Studio Lawn. Our AM Fledglings will have a mini-fiesta at their classroom at 11:30am on Friday.

**Transportation**
No transportation will be provided to and/or from Camp.

### What to Wear & What to Bring

**What to Wear**
Camps should dress according to the weather and should expect to spend all day outside unless there is serious inclement weather. We recommend campers wear shorts and short sleeve shirts on hot days, sneakers or other closed toe shoes (required), non-aerosol insect repellent, and a hat and sunscreen for sun protection. Coastal Campers, and other campers on their beach days only may wear athletic sandals (i.e. Tevas, Chacos, other sandals with straps) or Crocs **no flip flops.** Campers will be required to wear closed toe shoes at all times, including at the beach. Please label all clothing with your child’s name and be aware that all clothing may get wet or muddy from camp activities!

**Camp Lunches and Snacks**
Full-day campers must bring their own labeled lunch in a sturdy bag or lunch box and include a mid-morning snack and drink. Half-day campers (Fledglings only) must bring a snack and a water bottle (no lunch). Refrigeration is not available and we do not have a way to heat up lunches at Camp. It is extremely important for children to stay hydrated during the summer. Please be sure to send a refillable water bottle with your child even if you send other beverages. Please use reusable containers to cut down on waste.

*We suggest campers have the following items all week. Campers may leave some items at their group’s ‘home base’ each morning if they’d like.*

- ✔ Day Pack (for carrying lunch, water, etc.)
- ✔ Lunch and snack
- ✔ Refillable water bottle
- ✔ Hat and sunglasses
- ✔ Change of clothes
- ✔ Sneakers or other **closed toe shoes**
- ✔ Sunscreen
- ✔ Non-aerosol insect repellent
- ✔ Rain Jacket or Boots (as needed)
- ✔ Jacket/sweatshirt
- ✔ Swimsuit, towel, & water shoes (**for days at the beach**- see your camper's specific schedule)

**What NOT to Bring**
Please leave cell phones (**campers who need to call a parent/guardian should go to the Main Office**), gum, hand-held electronics/games, music devices, toys, collectible cards, and sports equipment at home. Additionally, weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and pets are not permitted on NBS property. If camp staff sees a child with a prohibited item, staff reserves the right to hold onto the item in the main office for the day and return them to the camper at dismissal. Please do not send peanut or tree nut products in your child’s lunches or snacks.

**Forms:** ALL forms must be submitted to the NBS office no later than June 1, 2023. If you register your child after June 1, forms must be turned in no later than 2 weeks prior to the start of your program. This year, most camper information and medical forms will be completed through your CampInTouch account. Once you have finished your application, you may return to the homepage of your CampInTouch account and click on the “Forms” Dashboard.
Please fill out forms below online (all REQUIRED):
● Medical Form
● Photo Release Permission
● First Aid Release Form
● Authorized Grownup Form

Please download and return the following forms, either via mail or upload directly to CampMinder:
● Immunization Form (required)
● Physical Exam Form (required)
● Medication Authorization Form (if needed)

Note that your child will not be able to attend camp unless all necessary forms are on file. This is designed with your child’s safety in mind and in alignment with state and national regulations. Having accurate records allows us to respond effectively in case of an emergency. All campers, even those who have attended NBS summer and vacation camps in the past, must have 2023 forms on file.

We will make every effort to contact you if your forms are incomplete, but it is every parent’s responsibility to verify that their forms are in before camp begins. There are multiple pages for you to sign; please review this list carefully. For a complete list of forms, please visit your CampInTouch account.

Wellness, Health, and Safety

*This section is subject to change based on RI Department of Health regulations at the time of Camp. We will revisit these policies closer to the start of Camp. Last updated 6.5.23

Medication at Camp: Prescribed and Over-The Counter
If your child is taking a prescribed medication to camp, it must be in its original container with the pharmacy label, and you must personally check-in the medication with camp staff during Monday morning registration. Over-the-counter products must be in original packaging with dosing instructions specific to the camper. Epi-pens and Inhalers will be kept with your child’s Teacher/Naturalist at all times and should be picked up on the last day of the session. All other medications will be placed in a locked box in the Camp Director’s office and administered per doctor’s instruction. The Authorization to Administer Medication and Authorization to Self Medicate form, available in your CampInTouch Account, must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian and signed by the camper’s physician.

Campers with special needs
NBS enthusiastically welcomes campers of all abilities and backgrounds. In order to ensure camper safety and that your child has the best camp experience possible, we ask that you notify NBS in advance of your child’s needs on the camper Medical Form. We are always happy to speak with parents about their child’s specific needs. Please Note: If your child works with a 1:1 Teaching Assistant at school, they must be accompanied by a Teaching Assistant at camp. Exceptions from this policy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Illness and Emergency Procedures
If your child becomes ill or is injured to the extent that they must be removed from activities, we have a secluded area for resting in the Main Office. Parents will be called immediately if it is determined that the child should not return to camp for that day. It is extremely important that we have several accurate numbers to reach you in case of illness or emergency. Small injuries (bumps, small cuts, etc.) will be reported to parents at the end of each day. Please let your child’s Teacher Naturalist or the Camp Director know if you have any questions regarding a particular injury or our reporting procedures. If your child is ill, please keep them home from camp. Any child with a temperature over 99°F will be sent home from camp.

Health Policy
Norman Bird Sanctuary is equipped to care for children who are in good health.
**Children should not attend Camp and will be asked to be picked up if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:**

- Fever of 100°F or more;
- Vomiting or diarrhea;
- Severe nasal or eye discharge;
- An unidentified rash;
- A contagious disease (e.g.: chicken pox, measles, etc.)
- If a child is prescribed antibiotics, the child must be on that medication for at least 24 hours before returning to Camp. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the Camp office as soon as possible.
- If a child becomes ill at Camp, parents/guardians will be contacted to make necessary arrangements to pick-up their child within 30 minutes.

**Your child can return to Camp when:**

- Their temperature is consistently below 100°F for 24 hours without medication;
- Nasal or eye discharge has subsided;
- An infection has been diagnosed and your child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours;
- It has been 24 hours since the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea;
- Their rash has subsided, or a physician has determined it is not contagious;
- Ringworm has been treated and covered.
- Depending on symptoms, a negative COVID-19 test may be required for return.

**Lice:** To prevent the spread of lice, please do not send your child to camp if you know or suspect they have head lice. If we do find that your child has lice, they will be sent home immediately. Your child must stay home until the lice are gone or for a minimum of 24 hours after treatment.

**Please note that some policies may be updated prior to or during the Camp season as new guidelines are released.**

- **Wellness Checks:** By dropping your child off at Camp, you are confirming that your child does not have any symptoms of illness present such as: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Your child may not attend Camp until they are symptom-free and cleared by a healthcare professional.
- **Hand Washing & Sanitizing:** Campers and staff will be required to wash and sanitize their hands frequently throughout the day.

**Sun, Insects, Ticks, Weather, and Allergies**

**Sun and Insect Protection:** We ask that you apply bug spray and sunscreen in the morning before camp and send a bottle of non-aerosol repellent and sunscreen with your child for the week. Permethrin is recommended to prevent ticks, but this can only be applied to clothing and shoes in advance. It cannot be applied to skin and cannot be applied at camp. Please note that we will not issue refunds due to high numbers of mosquitoes, ticks and tick bites, sunburn and other nature-related concerns. We may modify camp activities to include indoor alternatives on days when mosquitoes or other insects are especially severe and on ozone alert days.

**Ocean Safety:** When visiting the beach, campers will only be allowed to go up to their knees in the water. The only exception will be if there is designated free swim time with a lifeguard on duty.

**Inclement Days:** Camp is held rain or shine. Almost all activities are conducted outdoors. In the event of rain, please send your child(ren) with appropriate rain gear (boots, coat/poncho, etc.) In the event of severe weather, campers will be moved to an inside location with their group and remain there until the storm passes. For the safety of our campers and their parents/guardians, we do not permit campers to move about Camp during a storm; therefore, we ask that you wait to pick them up until the storm is over. In the case of severe weather or other emergencies, please contact the Main Office 401-846-2577 regarding camp cancellations.
**Camp Food**: NBS will occasionally offer special snacks. If your child(ren) has food allergies, please list them on your health forms, and let us know at Monday morning check-in of any other concerns.

**Peanuts**: NBS is not a peanut-free facility. Many children have moderate to severe peanut and tree nut allergies. Please do not send peanut or tree nut products in your child’s lunches.

**Ticks and Mosquitoes**: Ticks and mosquitoes are commonly found at the Sanctuary and throughout New England. We suggest non-aerosol repellents (for mosquitoes) and shoes and clothing (for ticks) as preventive measures. We ask you to review tick prevention guidelines in this packet with your family. We will conduct several tick checks every day, but we also strongly recommend that parents check their children daily. A notice will be sent home if a tick is found on your child during the camp day.
Frequently Asked Questions about Ticks and the Norman Bird Sanctuary

What is Lyme Disease? Lyme Disease is a potentially serious bacterial infection, caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi*, a bacterium that is carried by deer ticks. The disease affects humans and a wide range of animals including pets and livestock. It affects the skin in its early stages and spreads to the joints, nervous system, and other organ systems. Lyme is the most common arthropod-borne illness in the United States.

Do all ticks carry Lyme Disease? No. The two tick species which are most common in Rhode Island are the American dog tick and the deer tick (also called the black legged tick), but only the deer tick carries Lyme disease. Statistics indicate that approximately one in three deer tick nymphs (~30%) are carriers, while one in two adults (~50%) can transmit the disease. Most people are infected by the bites of immature ticks, called nymphs. Nymphs are very small (less than 2 mm) and are often very difficult to see.

Where do ticks live? How do they get on to people? Although deer ticks prefer cool, moist woodlands, they can be found in many areas including grasslands, open fields, and edges of forests and roads. They can also be found in stone walls, where one of their primary hosts, the white-footed mouse, resides.

Ticks wait in vegetation for animals to walk by. After sensing the animal’s heat signature, they grasp the animal’s fur, skin, or clothing and crawl up the body. Once they are on you, they will look for a place to attach. They prefer dark, warm areas such as your neck, waist, near your armpits, or behind your ears. Generally, ticks will wander for at least 30 to 60 minutes before they bite and attach.

If I find a deer tick on me, does that mean that I will definitely get Lyme Disease? No. Not all deer ticks are infected with Lyme. Deer ticks must be attached for an average of 24 hours to transmit the Lyme disease pathogen. If a tick is attached to your skin for less than 24 hours, your chance of getting Lyme disease is small but, you should still monitor your condition closely.

What are the symptoms of Lyme Disease? Early symptoms often mimic the flu (i.e., fatigue, headache, stiffness or pain in neck, muscles or joints, fever, or swollen glands). The most definitive early indicator is a gradually expanding circular or oval-shaped red rash (often called a “bull’s eye.”) This rash only develops in about 70-80% of infected individuals, however, and may be overlooked. If left untreated, later effects may include heart and neurological disorders, and arthritis.

If you experience any of these symptoms after being bitten by a tick (or having spent time in tick-infested areas), you should consult your physician immediately.

Is Lyme Disease treatable? Yes, for both children and adults. If diagnosed and treated early with antibiotics, Lyme disease is almost always easily cured. In its later stages, the illness can also be treated effectively, though some patients may have symptoms that linger for months or years.

How can I prevent tick bites? Follow simple steps such as tucking pants into long, light-colored socks, doing frequent tick checks after walking in grass or brush (and checking every night during a bath or shower), and applying repellents with Permethrin to clothes. You should also avoid stone walls and stay away from high grasses and leaf litter in your yard. While at NBS, we ask our visitors and guests to stay on designated trails and to use the “buddy system” to check for ticks.

If I find an embedded tick, how should I remove it? Remove ticks with tweezers only (bent, “needle-nose” tweezers are best). Do not use alcohol, nail polish, hot matches, Vaseline, or other methods to remove ticks. These techniques may actually traumatize ticks, causing them to regurgitate gut contents (which may include the Lyme disease bacterium). Wash your skin with soap and warm water.
Is the tick problem unique to the Norman Bird Sanctuary? No. Incidences of Lyme disease are on the rise throughout the Northeast. Unfortunately, you can pick up infected ticks in parks, playgrounds, and even in your own backyard. In fact, in a 2006 URI study, more than two thirds of Rhode Island residents were at risk for encountering a deer tick in their yards.

Are my pets at risk? Yes. Dogs and cats can also become infected with Lyme disease, and some may develop arthritis. While they cannot spread the illness directly to humans, they can bring infected ticks into your home or yard. Consult your veterinarian for preventative treatment and tick-control products.

Should I just stay indoors this summer? No, as long as precautions are taken, you should not stop your outdoor activities.

Where can I find more information? You can stop by the Norman Bird Sanctuary for additional fact sheets, tick ID cards, and tick prevention products. Other helpful websites include:

Rhode Island Department of Health - www.health.state.ri.us/disease/communicable/lyme/index.php
Center for Disease Control (CDC) - http://www.cdc.gov/lyme
Tick Encounter Resource Center (URI) – www.tickencounter.org
The American Lyme Disease Foundation (ALDF) – www.aldf.com