



## 2018 Littleton Summer Camp “Camp Experience” Descriptions

This document contains descriptions for each unique “Camp Experience” offered by Thorne Nature Experience. Please use this document in conjunction with Thorne’s Summer Camp Brochure, to determine dates, rates, and locations. You can also use Thorne’s Online Catalog if you want to view all of this information in one place, plus determine current availability. The Brochure and Online Catalog as well as wealth of information including FAQ’s and registration information are available online at [www.thornenature.org](http://www.thornenature.org).

# First Time Campers

## "Camp Experiences" - Ages 5 & 6

Thorne's six-hour, week-long Eco-Explorers "Camp Experience" for First Time Campers is a great way for children to transition into Summer Camp and begin to find joy in nature! Throughout the week, campers will search for critters and play games, all designed around a weekly theme like insects, reptiles, water, and more! Weekly themes ensure that the "Camp Experiences" remain fun and exciting, no matter how many times your little one has attended in the past. These camps have a small 10:1 camper to adult ratio to ease the transition into camp for our youngest campers. Parents can drop-off between 8:30am-9am and pick up at 2:30pm. For parents needing full-day care for their child, Extended Care is available until 5:30pm.

In Littleton, camp is held at the Kassler Center, which is just a short walk from a variety of incredible natural areas like River Island. The Center itself provides an engaging indoor space for learning and play in the event of inclement weather. The diversity of ecosystems directly adjacent to the Kassler Center at the Bob Taylor Ecological Area and Waterton Canyon offer a myriad of natural environments that pique campers' curiosity and leave them excited to return week after week for more exploring with Thorne!

### Eco-Explorers

This "Camp Experience" is the perfect introduction for budding naturalists. Campers become eco-explorers by tuning in to observations and using all five senses. They will explore using scientific tools like dip nets to collect water creatures, and magnifying glasses to observe the miniature world of insects. Each week will have a different nature theme, so kids can come back for multiple weeks and learn new things each time! A 10:1 maximum camper-to-instructor ratio will ensure your child receives all the attention and care they need while they get used to attending camp and learning and playing in nature.



# Wanderers "Camp Experiences"

## Ages 6-8

Thorne's six-hour, week-long "Camp Experiences" for the Wanderers age group are packed with fun! These "Camp Experiences" are playful, experiential, and discovery-based. Experienced environmental educators will help your child foster a personal connection to the natural world through lively games, nature crafts, and exploration of different ecosystems each day. To accommodate the needs of some of our youngest campers, these "Camp Experiences" involve less than one mile of hiking per day and remain close to bathroom facilities, shade, and water. With a variety of themes for this age group, campers can focus on the aspect of nature that they love most, or spend an entire summer exploring diverse topics like bugs, amphibians, mammals, and more! The Wanderers age group even includes art-themed "Camp Experiences," as well as the ever-popular At Home in the Woods, which teaches campers how humans and other animals live safely in nature.

Wanderers "Camp Experiences" meet each day at the Kassler Center in Littleton. Campers set out on foot from the Kassler Center to enjoy the diversity of natural environments within Bob Taylor Ecological Area and Waterton Canyon. Parents can drop-off between 8:15am-8:45am and pick up at 2:30pm. For parents needing full-day care for their child, Extended Care is available until 5:30pm.

### At Home in the Woods

Campers will learn how to comfortably survive in nature with respect for and awareness of animal friends. They will make mini debris shelters out of sticks, purify drinking water, cook with a solar oven, practice plant and wildlife identification skills, and more. Campers will focus on learning important safety and survival techniques as they go on wild adventures through the woods to practice and strengthen their skills.

### Colorado Creatures

Attention all future wildlife biologists: this is the class for you! Campers will become nature detectives as we search for signs of life using tools such as nets, magnifying glasses, and field guides to learn which animals call Colorado home! We'll study these masters of survival and learn about the adaptations that enable bears, snakes, birds, bugs, and many more creatures to hide in plain sight!



### Mud Mucking

Campers will strap on their sturdy sandals as they venture into the wet-n-wild of Front Range ecosystems search for all the critters that live in the mud. As they find amphibians, reptiles, fish, insects, and birds, they will learn why such creatures live near water and how they survive all year long. Campers will explore, play, investigate tracks, and make crafts using mud. Campers should get ready to get MUDDY!

# Wanderers "Camp Experiences"

## Ages 6-8 (cont.)

### Nature Ninjas

Each day, campers will enter the ancient, secretive world of the Nature Ninja! As a master of stealth and invisibility, Nature Ninjas will activate their bodies and senses all while embarking on secret missions and challenges to earn ninja badges. Campers will learn from our animal friends, like foxes and weasels, who are masters of the ninja way, so that they too can travel silently and fluidly through the forest undetected, all while exploring the magical trails of the Front Range. This "camp experience" will be full of Wild Nature Play, imagination, creativity, games, storytelling, and exploration of the natural world, while focusing on the extraordinary ninja powers of nature's creatures.

### Nature Play!

Unstructured play in nature is where the magic of nature connection really happens! During the Nature Play! "camp experience", we let our campers' curiosity, interests, and sense of wonder inspire our adventures. Experienced Instructors provide a loose framework for each day's nature explorations and seamlessly weave in activities like storytelling, scavenger hunts, and quests at the request of the campers. While it may sound simple, guiding unstructured and self-directed time in nature, requires an active mentorship model that is sensitive to each child's needs and interests and promotes skills like problem solving and appropriate risk-taking. This "camp experience" is all about discovery, imagination, and letting kids be kids!



### Scrapbook of Summer

Stalking through the woods and sloshing through wetlands, campers will use their senses as tools to interpret observations through drawings, crafts, music, and stories. In this "Camp Experience," campers will also learn how to use natural art techniques such as nature rubbings, painting with natural dyes, and sculpting out of clay. Campers will add their creations to our nature journals to make a collection of accomplishments and memories.

### Talking Stones & Fossil Bones

Campers will look for old secrets locked in stone and find evidence of the ocean that once covered Colorado and the prehistoric animals that roamed this same land. They will get the chance to look at real fossils, study the dinosaurs of Colorado, and learn how mountains are made through the motion of tectonic plates. Campers will uncover the mystery of how our environment was shaped, learning basic geology and local natural history.

# Pathfinders "Camp Experiences"

## Ages 9-11

For the Pathfinders age group, Thorne's six-hour, week-long "Camp Experiences" focus on skill-building. These "Camp Experiences" build upon campers' earlier experiences with the natural world to develop new tracking, identification, and observation skills in areas like biking, fly fishing, and outdoor survival. Our Pathfinders campers venture further from trailheads, on foot or by bike, so that they can see and experience more of the natural world.

In Littleton, because of the diversity of the natural areas within the Bob Taylor Ecological Area and Waterton Canyon, all campers meet daily at the Kassler Center and travel by trail to the sites best suited for their skill-based camp. For parents needing full-day care for their child for their child, Extended Care is available for select Pathfinders camps, until 5:30pm.

### Aquatic Explorers

Campers will investigate the organisms that live along the banks of streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes as they explore the wet and wild riparian zones in Waterton Canyon, visiting a different pond or stream each day. They'll catch and examine water striders, follow stoneflies through their many life changes, and conduct pollution studies using water testing kits. They'll learn about Waterton Canyon's watershed, search for and learn about the animals that live in these areas, and learn why it is so important to protect our waterways. Get your kids ready to get wet!

### Bike the Platte

We'll use our bikes to cover more ground as we ride the trails in and around Waterton Canyon, the Highline Canal, and Chatfield State Park. We will learn to identify plants and animals that we see along the way and take time to get our feet wet in the riparian ecosystems that abound in the area! This "Camp Experience" is best for intermediate bikers. The average distance traveled per day is 15-20 miles. To ensure the safety, fun, and learning of all participants, this "Camp Experience" has a maximum camper-to-instructor ratio of 6:1.



# Pathfinders "Camp Experiences" Ages 9-11 (cont.)

## Fly Fishing

This "Camp Experience" is for all levels, including the camper who has little or no experience in fly fishing and those with many years as an angler. Campers will split into two groups based on skill level and will explore the Waterton Canyon watershed and tackle the waters around the Kassler Center. Those newer to fly fishing will learn first how to assemble, use, and care for fly fishing gear and then learn the fundamentals of fly fishing: casting, knot tying, and reading the river, while experienced anglers will spend more time on the water and will be challenged with more advanced skills like new knots, different casting techniques, and selecting the proper flies. All campers will get plenty of time to fish, but will also learn about the ecology of fly fishing, such as understanding hatches, the life cycles of insects and fish, and ethical approaches to interacting with the natural world. This "Camp Experience" is for campers ages 9-15.



## Fly Fishing by Bike

Designed for intermediate fly fishers, this "Camp Experience" will blend the fun and technical challenge of Fly Fishing with touring on Mountain Bikes to find choice locations in the Watershed around the Kassler Center. Having the freedom of riding bikes to get to these locations will provide our group access to new places, with exciting possibilities for discovery and better fishing locations. Campers will be challenged with more advanced skills like new knots, different casting techniques, and selecting fishing locations and the proper flies. Campers learn about the ecology of fly fishing, such as understanding hatches, the life cycles of insects and fish, and ethical approaches to interacting with the natural world. For the safety and learning of all our campers, this "Camp Experience" has a maximum camper-instructor ratio of 6:1, and is for ages 9-15.

## Minecraft - Unplugged

In this "Camp Experience," campers will unplug from the virtual world of Minecraft and make the game a reality through imaginative role playing. Campers will work together in a self-directed quest for survival by collecting resources, crafting natural tools, and building shelters, all while using their imaginations to uncover the magic that hides along the trails around the Kassler Center. Once they are ready, we will switch out of "peaceful mode" and the adventure will really begin. Campers will have opportunities to test their survival skills and their self-constructed fortress against the elements and will work as a team to face the challenges of the natural world, including things like natural disasters and noxious creatures. Technology and video games will be left at home, but campers will come home with greater skills and knowledge of how to survive in a real life Minecraft world.

# Pathfinders "Camp Experiences" Ages 9-11 (cont.)

## Wild Skills

Campers will practice the expertise needed to live primitively in the wild as they learn the important and fun skills of survival. They will build debris shelters, locate and filter water, and practice safe fire-building outside with primitive tools. Campers will also learn wilderness navigation skills, tracking, and plant and wildlife identification. Through interacting with nature to find the things humans need to survive, campers will develop an appreciation for the bounty that the natural world provides.



# Trailblazers "Camp Experiences"

## Ages 12-15

"Camp Experiences" for our Trailblazers age group enable campers to sharpen specific adventure and natural science skills. Beyond expanding knowledge and proficiency in activities like biking, fly fishing, and survival skills, these "Camp Experiences" help campers deepen their connection to the natural world and learn how they can be stewards of nature. While these "Camp Experiences" offer no shortage of fun, we make sure that emphasis is placed on educating our most experienced campers to make informed decisions as stewards of the Earth.

In Littleton, because of the diversity of the natural areas with the Bob Taylor Ecological Area and Waterton Canyon, all campers meet daily at the Kassler Center and travel by trail to the sites best suited for their skill-based camp.

### Fly Fishing

This "Camp Experience" is for all levels, including the camper who has little or no experience in fly fishing and those with many years as an angler. Campers will split into two groups based on skill level and will explore the Waterton Canyon watershed and tackle the waters around the Kassler Center. Those newer to fly fishing will learn first how to assemble, use, and care for fly fishing gear and then learn the fundamentals of fly fishing: casting, knot tying, and reading the river, while experienced anglers will spend more time on the water and will be challenged with more advanced skills like new knots, different casting techniques, and selecting the proper flies. All campers will get plenty of time to fish, but will also learn about the ecology of fly fishing, such as understanding hatches, the life cycles of insects and fish, and ethical approaches to interacting with the natural world. This "Camp Experience" is for campers ages 9-15.



### Fly Fishing by Bike

Designed for intermediate fly fishers, this "Camp Experience" will blend the fun and technical challenge of Fly Fishing with touring on Mountain Bikes to find choice locations in the Watershed around the Kassler Center. Having the freedom of riding bikes to get to these locations will provide our group access to new places, with exciting possibilities for discovery and better fishing locations. Campers will be challenged with more advanced skills like new knots, different casting techniques, and selecting fishing locations and the proper flies. Campers learn about the ecology of fly fishing, such as understanding hatches, the life cycles of insects and fish, and ethical approaches to interacting with the natural world. For the safety and learning of all our campers, this "Camp Experience" has a maximum camper-instructor ratio of 6:1, and is for ages 9-15.

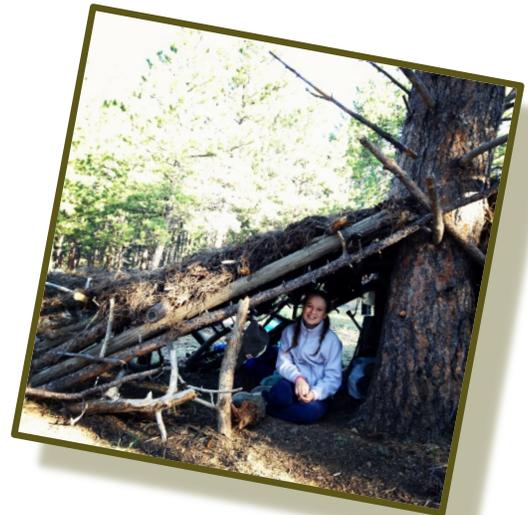
# Trailblazers "Camp Experiences" Ages 12-15 (cont.)

## River Ecology by Bike

Campers will bike the South Platte River and its tributaries to explore, discover, and identify aquatic critters and their habitats. Through fun activities they'll study water quality using testing kits and learn about conservation issues related to the River. This "Camp Experience" will ride an average of 15-20 miles per day to get from place to place along the South Platte. To ensure the safety, fun, and learning of all participants, this "Camp Experience" has a maximum camper-to-instructor ratio of 6:1.

## Survival Skills

Campers will gain a thorough understanding of what it takes to survive and be comfortable in the wilderness. They will learn to blend in with surroundings and move silently through the woods as they learn stalking and natural camouflage techniques. Campers will learn fire safety and ecology, then learn how to build a fire without a match using fire-from-friction methods. Instructors will cover the necessity of shelters and build debris huts. Water purification methods, edible plants, tracking, and natural navigation techniques will also be taught. Most importantly, campers will learn awareness in nature and their role as stewards of the earth.



# Extended Care Ages 5-11

Thorne's flexible, low-cost Extended Care option allows campers to spend the whole day with Thorne in a safe, fun, and educational environment. Parents can pick up their kids any time between 3:15 and 5:30pm, leaving time to run errands, work, exercise, or simply relax knowing that their children are having fun with friends.

Campers participating in Extended Care spend the first six hours of their day at their morning "Camp Experience," then get a healthy snack before they continue their nature explorations. Extended Care offers camper-driven outdoor investigations as well as respite from the elements in one of our environmental education centers which are chocked full of interactive exhibits and nature books and games. Extended Care campers explore nature, play games, tell stories, sing eco-tunes, and make nature crafts, all under the guidance of an experienced Thorne instructor.

Extended Care takes place at the Kassler Center.

