



2019 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.

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 to Thorne Camp for budding nature lovers. Campers will become Eco-Explorers by tuning in to observations and using all five senses. Curiosity and love of learning abound as campers discover what it is that excites them about being outside! In this introduction to exploration, campers will connect with nature through daily activities like games, songs, storytelling, art creations, and most importantly nature exploration. Each week will focus on a different nature theme, so kids can return 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 cultivate their survival skills and put them to the test while exploring in the wilderness! Throughout the week they will practice introductory survival skills such as making mini debris shelters out of sticks, purifying drinking water, cooking with a solar oven, practicing plant and wildlife identification skills, and more. Campers will also focus on developing their skills of observation and learning important safety techniques to become both comfortable and confident as they go on wild adventures through the woods!

Nature Superheroes

Each day campers will embark on a new superhero mission to learn about local plants and animals with real "creature power technology" in nature (think Wild Kratts)! The creatures and their adaptations that we study are the superheroes that teach us how they use their powers to sneak up on prey, escape danger, or survive through incredible feats of nature. Campers will also practice their own nature superpowers like being "invisible" by walking through the landscape undetected or using their "deer ears" and "owl eyes" to predict danger long before it arrives, all while exploring the magical trails around the Kassler Center. This "camp experience" will be full of imagination, creativity, games, storytelling, and exploration of the natural world, while focusing on the extraordinary superpowers of nature's creatures.



Wanderers "Camp Experiences"

Ages 6-8 (cont.)

The Ultimate Thorne Experience – Wanderers – NEW!

With over 60 years of practice leading nature programs, The Ultimate Thorne Experience combines the very best of what kids love to do in camp! Curiosity is activated through an inspiring story, a lesson is taught through a lively game, then the real magic happens as Instructors guide campers into activities that integrate learning with "children's passions"- the universal stuff that kids the world over love to do. Tapping into our love of play, campers will go on epic adventures, explore new places through the eyes of an animal, build a dam in the creek, and catch any critter we happen upon. Because there is always more to discover in nature, and because children's passions are always thrilling, this is a "camp experience" to enjoy again and again, getting a healthy dose of summer fun each time!



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.

Bike the Platte

There are some adventures that you can only have on two wheels! 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! To ensure the safety, fun, and learning of all participants, this "Camp Experience" has a maximum camper-to-instructor ratio of 6:1.



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.



Pathfinders "Camp Experiences"

Ages 9-11 (cont.)

The Ultimate Thorne Experience – Pathfinders – NEW!

With over 60 years of practice leading nature programs, The Ultimate Thorne Experience combines the very best of what youth love to do in camp! This "Camp Experience" focuses on adventure, skill-building, teamwork, and both nature connection and social connection within the group. Middle childhood provides the opportunity to go deeper with learning, build lasting friendships, and tap into kids' universal love of play. A daily theme is woven through learning that is designed to inspire curiosity and engagement, but the real magic happens as Instructors guide campers into activities that follow the discoveries and interests of the group. Because there is always more to discover in nature, this is a "camp experience" to enjoy again and again, getting a healthy dose of summer fun each time!

Wild Skills

Campers will take on the wild as they practice essential survival skills and learn to live primitively! Track an animal through the woods, build a fire without a match using primitive technology, identify plants and local wildlife, all while knowing where to go using wilderness navigation skills. Campers will also build debris shelters, locate and filter water, and much more! Through interacting with nature to find the things humans need to survive, campers will develop self confidence and 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.



River Ecology by Bike

Harness some pedal power to experience more of the South Platte River and its tributaries! Campers will bike to exciting destinations to explore, discover, and identify aquatic critters and their habitats. Through fun activities, games, and teambuilding challenges they'll learn about the life the river brings to this region. 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.

Trailblazers "Camp Experiences"

Ages 12-15 (cont.)

Survival Skills

Want to have what it takes to survive in the wild? Campers will spend a week developing their skills to survive in the wilderness. Learn how to build a fire without a match using fire-from-friction methods, blend in with surroundings and move silently through the woods using stalking and natural camouflage techniques, and build a debris hut that is comfortable and dry! Campers will also explore water purification methods, edible plant identification, tracking, and natural navigation techniques. Most importantly, campers will build confidence and strengthen their awareness in nature. The week will culminate in a day of survival skills challenges where campers will practice the skills they have honed throughout the week and will have a chance to test their comfort in nature!



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.

