

Dear Parents and Campers:



Welcome to the *Spring Bioblitz* overnight 2023—April 6 (9:00am) thru April 7 (9:00am).

Please go over the packing checklist together so that campers will be fully prepared for camp – this will be especially important for this camp with the wild swings in the weather this time of year. *We will be holding camp with some rain, snow, or shine; warm temperatures or freezing cold – please be sure that your camper is dressed appropriately for the weather and has extra clothes packed. If it looks like a total wash out, camp would be canceled.*

This camp will begin on Thursday, April 6 at 9am at the Flag Ponds Education Building. We will have camp all day Thursday and overnight to 9am Friday, April 7. The park will be closed to the public on Thursday when you arrive for camp and the front gates will be pulled closed. Let yourself in outgoing gate (on the left as you come into the park - it will be closed but unlocked), close it after you, and proceed then to the education building (that's the larger of the two buildings in the main parking lot).

For camper pick up Friday morning – please wait at the gate until the park opens at 9am.

Wondering what we'll be doing at camp? Here's a smattering of our activities:

Hiking, playing games, taking part in the 5th Annual "Flag Ponds Great Log Roll Off" – searching for salamanders and other animals just waking up for the year, putting on chest waders and wading into the swamp for a night search for amphibians ...not to mention, making our dinner over a fire-including s'mores for dessert and spending the night with our new friends in the park. It promises to be an adventure!

We will be setting up tents in the education building – two campers per tent. Tents will be provided.

This camp involves a lot of food - dinner Thursday, breakfast Friday, and some snacks will be provided. If your camper has any food allergies/issues it is important to let me know ASAP.

****If your camper will need to take ANY medication during camp (including OTC), please let me know ASAP so I can get you the proper paperwork. A doctor's signature is needed. All medications must be sent in their original packages please.**

If your camper or anyone else in your family is at all feeling unwell, please stay home.

Questions or concerns? Please send me an email at tania.gale@calvertcountymd.gov

I know I'm looking forward to our spring camp adventures – hope you are too!
See you on the 6th!

Sincerely,

Tania Gale

Naturalist

Spring Bioblitz Packing List

What to bring – in a duffel bag or backpack to leave in the building

- extra socks (ideally wool, not cotton socks, tall ones will be better than ankle)
- extra full set of clothes (including long pants, long sleeved top, and underwear)
- extra sweater or fleece (not a cotton sweatshirt)
- long johns (if you have them for the night walk)
- plastic bag for wet clothes
- rain gear or rain poncho
- warm knit hat for night walk

- pajamas
- slippers or slip on shoes to wear in the building
- headlamp or flashlight that works
- personal toiletries in a Ziploc bag labeled with camper's name
- medications (if needed – must be accompanied by proper paperwork)
- extra pair of shoes – sneakers or hiking boots
- towel
- sleeping bag and pillow
- sleeping pad (optional)

In a backpack to carry on the trail Thursday:

- bag lunch for Thursday
- small snack for Thursday (trail mix, granola bar)
- refillable water bottle (1-liter size or similar)
- sunscreen
- insect repellent

What to wear -

Head

- ball cap or visor (or warm knit hat if it will be cold out)
- sunglasses (optional)

Upper Body: wear layers – avoid cotton if possible, layers will work best

- T-shirt or long sleeved shirt depending on weather forecast (a fabric with as little cotton as possible, could be 50/50 blend)
- Wool or poly fleece or sweater (not a cotton sweatshirt)

- Warm coat (not a cotton sweatshirt)

Lower Body: - avoid cotton if possible (jeans will get wet and be cold)

- Nylon or poly fleece long pants (again, even a poly cotton blend is better than 100% cotton)
- **not shorts, as we will be walking off trail****

Feet:

_____ tall wool socks, if you have them, or a fuzzy polyester is better than cotton (with tall socks we can tuck everyone's socks into their pants and avoid getting ticks and will keep pants legs down while wearing waders)

_____ Comfortable shoes – sneakers or hiking shoes

****Chest waders, Tents, dinner Thursday, and breakfast Friday will be provided – please do not send extra snacks****

Take the “Unplug Challenge” - Please *do not* bring any electronics.

Why Not Cotton clothes?

Once wet, cotton clothes tend to stay wet. Wet cotton clothes will not insulate and do their job of keeping the person wearing them warm. So jeans and cotton sweat shirts will not make great camp wear especially in the spring when the weather is so unpredictable. The weather at Flag Ponds is often quite different from the weather at home. Because it is on the water, spring at Flag Ponds is almost always windy and damp - and it will be chilly, especially at night. Campers will, of course, be much happier if they are comfortable and warm. Here are some other fibers to consider -

1. Wool - derives its insulating quality from the elastic, three-dimensional wavy crimp in the fiber that traps air between fibers. Depending on the texture and thickness of the fabric, as much as 60-80% of wool cloth can be air. Wool can absorb a fair amount of moisture without imparting a damp feeling because the water "disappears" into the fiber spaces. Even with water in the fabric wool still retains dead air space and will still insulate you.

2. Poly Fleece fabrics - synthetic material often made of a plastic (polyester, polyolefin, polypropylene, etc.). This material has a similar insulative capacity as wool. Its advantages are that it holds less water (than wool) and dries more quickly. Poly fleece is manufactured in a variety of different weights (thicknesses) offering different amounts of loft and insulation. This allows for numerous layering possibilities. The disadvantage of most fleece fabric is that it has very poor wind resistance and hence a wind shell (raincoat or windbreaker) on top is almost always required.