

















Here's some of the latest News from Singing Creek for our campers:

We had a short session of short days in August that was so much fun that I am considering having a Session 3 every year. One week for all ages. Complete with a special campout at Azalea Rocks. You, our campers, can let us know what you think of the idea.

We didn't have much time during our August "Nature Immersion" session for work on this year's News from Singing Creek. Hence this retrospective issue. We hope you enjoy it.

The house next to the Bamboo Patch was struck by lightning during a storm in September. It burned to the ground. Luckily, no one was home.

All of our magical creatures—the White Horse, Ghost Owl, Puckwudgies and others—are still here, watching and waiting. The Ghost Owl (our resident Great Horned Owl) somehow lost his mate and was a bachelor for a season. Now he has found a new mate. This morning at dawn, the owls perched close by and hooted a duet for me (or each other?) as I sat and waited where the house used to be. But, as usual, even though they were right in front of me, I could not see them. Their muffled singing was varied and very beautiful. They made sounds I had never heard before.

SO... The magical Open Circle that is our camp is still here. Let's be sure to keep our circle open, with a big space for those among us whom we may not see sitting with us at our Story Circle. Some of those in our camp community have moved away, or have begun their life's work in a new home. Some of them have died. And there are many who have not yet joined our camp community—our future campers and camp leaders. They are part of our circle, too.

This is a good opportunity to introduce a future camp leader who will be joining our circle this summer. Greg Czekaj will be playing a special role at our camp. What will that role be? Come to camp and find out!

As you read some of these stories from past camp sessions, think of that immense circle in the night sky that we call the Zodiac, with all its magical animals travelling together in their starry habitat. They are there in the daytime too, whether we see them or not. And think of the Rainbow Circle, with its mysterious, invisible part that circles around through the ground, carrying its shining colors to the dark world below. The part of our camp circle that is mysterious and invisible is what we call "the future." What will our future be like at camp? Will there be a circle? Will you and I be a part of it?

Yes, of course, there will always be a circle at camp—an Open Circle, with a big space for all of us. Because as we all know, a circle never ends!

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Delving into the uncharted territory of a new interest has always been one of my favorite parts of the learning process. The excitement of understanding something unexpectedly intricate, and realizing that there is a lifetime of discovery ahead is both satisfying and humbling. The satisfaction, it seems, stems from feeling as though a whole new perspective of Earth has been unlocked; a new way of connecting to the people, places, and things around me. The humbling part comes when I realize that no matter how well I understand something, or what I'm able to discover, there will always be more to learn. Joining the Rapp Nature Camp team has filled me with the same excitement, as this new adventure together will open my eyes to so many new interests, people, places and possibilities.

Greg hekej

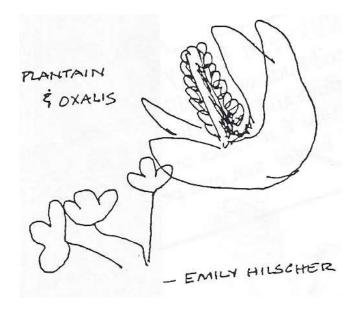
In memory of

EMILY HILSCHER NICK HALGREN DUGALD DAY ROBIN PURNELL





great serenity
enters my soul as I write
resting in nature
—Nick Halgren





1986 - 1989

FIRST "RAPPAHANNOCK NATURAL HISTORY DAY CAMP"

HOLSCHUH'S SHAW HOUSE, ROCK MILLS Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council,

Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection

Directors: Lyt Wood, Hunt Harris, Tutt Stapp-Harris, Nancy Utz

1990 - 1991 HAZEL RIVER CAMP

Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council,

Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection Directors: Tutt Stapp–Harris, Nancy Utz, Laurie Marshall





1992 SHARP FAMILY'S MOUNTAIN GREEN

Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council, Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection

Directors: Tutt Stapp-Harris, Laurie Marshall



1993 - 1994 BIRD FAMILY'S HORSESHOE HOLLOW FARM Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council, Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection Directors: Tutt Stapp-Harris, Laurie Marshall, Robin Purnell

1995 - 1997 SINGING CREEK

Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council, Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection

Directors: Robin Purnell, Karen Henderson, Trish Drake, Bobbette Swindler

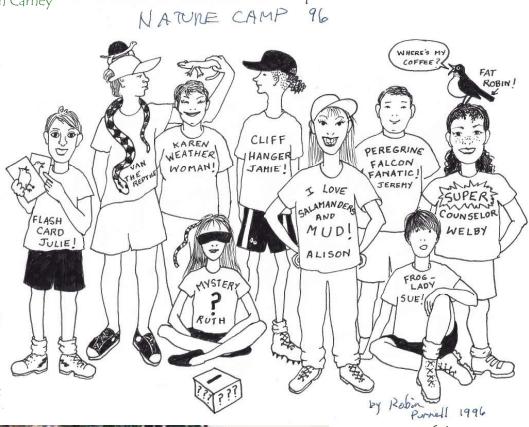
Counselors: Welby Lynn, Allison Lofton, Forest Rogers, Kyle Apple, Julie Bankston, Jamie Harris, Ruth Purnell,

Jeremy Slack, Adam Haase, Van Carney

This year we moved to a new location on the property of the camp's founder, Lyt Wood. Our new site includes a garage which we've converted to a nature classroom, several additional outdoor assembly areas, running water, plenty of forest trails and easy access to the Hazel River. Van and Jennings Carney gave a presentation on the use of animal parts in Indian clothing and ceremonial dress.

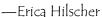
—Welby Lynn

Long ago people would meditate about plants to help them know how to use that plant. If you harvest a plant, you should give a little prayer or present in return. —Eleanor Fort (on visit by herbalist Kathleen Maier)





We went on a field trip to Jordan River Farm. We milked cows and fed the calves. Most campers wanted to milk the cows again but we couldn't anymore. After that we went to the lake. We looked around and talked about the medicinal plants and animals we saw. We heard all sorts of sounds like rain falling on the lake and birds. One of the birds we heard was a Red-winged Blackbird. The other was a Bobwhite.





-Forest Rogers -Jacob Stilley

1998 - 2004 SINGING CREEK

Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council, Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection

Director: Lyt Wood

Assistant Directors: Joy Sloane, Pam Wilson, Lucile Miller, Mary Wagoner, Lainie Morgan,

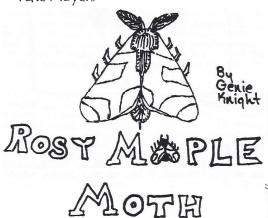
Beth Nealon, Trista Scheuerlein (Grigsby)

Counselors: Van Carney, Jamie Harris, Ruth Purnell, Jeremy Slack, Robin Purnell, Tom Fort, Alex Purnell, Arlen Sherwood, Lainie Morgan, Shawn Robertson, Ali Polkowske, Jenny Wood, Kara Corbin

Lara Kreyling, Stephen Dowell, Genie Knight, Sheena Rye, Hannah Morgan, Devin Sherwood,

When we were setting animal traps at Singing Creek some people said we wouldn't catch anything but on Wednesday of the second week we caught an opossum. The people who "caught" the opossum named him Otto O. Possum. He got caught in the big trap with dog food for bait. He usually winks at the girls. He does tumbles. Even though the song we wrote says he is a stupid possum, he was smart enough to escape Wednesday night!

—Kate Moyers



HAIKU

rocks and river fight rocks stand stern, the stream pushes neither one can win

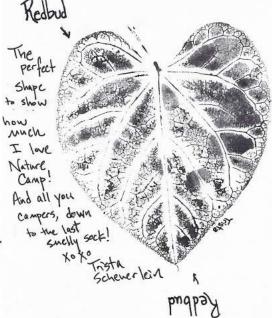
—Emma Sartwell

clumps of soft padding scattered on the forest floor light green silken moss —Lara Kreyling

the green blanket of moss how soft and cozy for a bed except for the rocks —Devin Sherwood

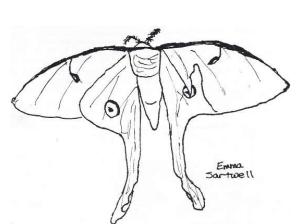






So far, we have found and caught 11 animals: 2 possums, 5 toads, 1 salamander, 1 black widow, 2 worm snakes, 1 click beetle. The two possums were caught with sandwiches in our trap. Alex is taking care of the baby possum and our spotted salamander. Joe found and is taking care of the click beetle. We also have fish and crawfish in the aquarium.

—Mairead McLoughlin

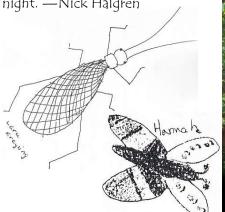






Yesterday we went on a field trip to Bruce Jones's wildlife habitat ponds. Mr. Jones had 80 acres of woods, ponds and flowers. He also has a bunch of bird houses—at least 100 bird houses! We took a long walk. Mr. Jones opened 3 of the bird houses and we saw baby bluebirds. They were so cute! -Osha Kondori

At 9pm on Wednesday, we ventured to Secret Pond to see what we could see. As Sheena, Michael and I paddled along the edge of the pond, we heard a chorus of croaks. One frog had "croaked" earlier in the day—Forrest had been following it when an enormous water snake caught it. The poor frog was still alive as the snake slowly swallowed it. It was amazing to see. We saw two frogs along the edge and paddled towards the biggest island in the pond. When we got out, we were lucky enough to find a huge Green Frog. We were able to get less than a foot away from it. Then Lyt called us back and we returned to our campsite. Around the campfire, Lyt and Michaux played "Waterbound" on banjo and violin. After the concert, we watched the embers glow, listened to stories, and told some jokes. It was a great night. — Nick Halgren







2005 - 2006 SINGING CREEK

Sponsors: Piedmont Environmental Council, Hearthstone School

Director: Lyt Wood

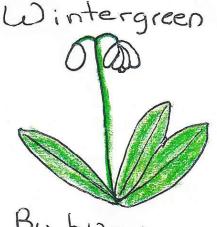
Assistant Director: Trista Scheuerlein

Counselors: Anna Oehser, Alex Purnell, Kara Corbin, Dylan Dwyer

Theme for Study: "BABY ANIMALS"



By; Natoline Bosch



By Lucy I saw this in my quiet place.





We visit Azalea Rocks each year. It has many rocks, and azalea flowers. There are also many Mountain Laurel bushes. There are many animals, wildflowers, birds, trees and snakes. The most important visit is when we camp out. I think it is a really pretty place.





2007 - 2012 SINGING CREEK

Sponsor: Piedmont Environmental Council

Director: Lyt Wood

Assistant Director: Trista Scheuerlein Counselors: Dylan Dwyer, Alice Babcock, Mason Stickley, Alex Purnell, Leah Tester, Rosie Nealon, Jane Purnell, Allen Miley,

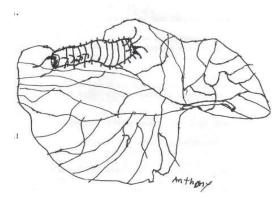
Caleb Brown, Brier Clough

Themes for Study: "CYCLES," "NATURE OBSERVATION," "BAD NATURE," "GARDENS,"

"COMMUNITIES," "EXPLORATIONS,"

"STORIES," "MORE STORIES"

Pipevine Swallowtail Caterpillar



Me llamo Lulu y quiero hablar de mi tortuga. Mi tortuga se llama Luli. Tiene un nombre de mujer pero es hombre. Mide cinco pulgadas. Luli no tiene suerte porque le duele bajo del caparazón y no camina. No se puede ver. Espero que se mejora pronto.

—Lulu Zuñiga

I watched the butterfly fly gracefully in the sky. If the butterfly doesn't fly, then how would the flowers live? I can't imagine our world, or even worlds beyond worlds, without butterflies.

—Jon Streu

As I stare at the creature it stares back at me, with serious black eyes, its shiny coat as beautiful as the sea. Little white dominoes rest on her back. Her tail flicks back and forward, warning her young to stay away. Her long basketball legs, thin as a pencil, are rooted in the moist ground. The world is quiet, until......*SNAP*!...... Her precious ears perk up. Her long legs lift to the planets as she prances off. She screams, warning her young to stay away.

-Jane Purnell



The White Horse has been around for hundreds of years. At camp, he was first spotted on a cliff during the River Hike two years ago. Some brave campers caught him before he got away. The White Horse comes to life every night. Every time the moon shines, he appears. He hides and we have to find him and tie him up. When he is running free, he is very wild and can disappear like magic. When in captivity, he is very tame. But he can escape even though we tie him up with a strong rope. We don't know where he came from, but we are glad when we see him. Would you like to see the White Horse? Come to camp!

-Breda Clough and Kayla Butler



Here at Lyt's and many other places, I've seen many forms of nature. From creek to mountain, from forest to beach. And I've found to adapt, learn from it, and respect it. It's all just great. Even if it's bad like poisonous snakes or biting bugs, it's all just nature. The creek teached me about life. Everyone is a stick that falls into the creek. You flow through life hitting bumpy rapids with problems. When the stick is stuck on land or between two rocks then life is over. It's the fact that we're all sticks in the creek, it can keep moving or it can stop at any time. A place I went to during camp was my Quiet Spot. It was a place that I could spend time and have time to myself. My spot was on a big rock at Azalea Rocks. The sun all was shined onto it making it good and warm. When I meditated there I always felt refresh with my thoughts clean. I'll always remember it. I have learned a lot from nature. I hope I see lots of people again next year, and a lot of nature. —Joe Willette

Here are some newts transforming from baby to adult. A baby newt is called an eft. It lives in the woods and crawls on land. It is red. Older newts live in the water. They are green, but newts of all ages have red spots. —Damion Stewart







We were all having a Community Circle and a baby phoebe flew down and landed right in the middle of our circle! Lyt picked it up. We let it fly away. Why did the phoebe land in our circle?

—Preston Stonecipher

During our Snake Hunt I found a Black Widow. I turned over a rock and the spider was there. I recognized it from its distinct red hourglass marking. Lyt said that Black Widows have unique irregular webs. This was an amazing experience in my opinion. —Josh Sabol

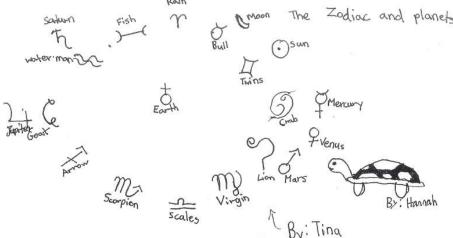
During Quiet Time, You use your five senses, Then you observe Nature. The crackling river talks to you., Bubbling and hissing a song. The fragrance of flowers, During their blossom all spring long. The softness of moss on my finger Reminds me of my bed at home. The taste of juicy berries, Rich of flavor. Then the butterfly flies by, And you want to go with it. Many of these things People don't notice. Like the song, Your life, Your home, Where you belong. This is Mother Earth. —Taylor Jones



We found a Puckwudgie's tree house in the woods and we made a garden under the tree. We left a pineapple for them in the tree. When we went back to the tree house, they had moved the pineapple and put stuff in their garden. Also we went back for a second time and we played music for them. We saw a few of them after we played the music!

—Grace Babcock





The Zodiac includes 12 constellations. The word "planet" means "wanderer." In ancient times, the Sun and Moon were considered planets because they moved, or "wandered," among the 12 constellations. The ancient people saw 7 planets: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. The Earth was not considered to be a planet because it was considered to be the center of the universe. —Tina Yirgu

2013 - 2014 SINGING CREEK

Sponsor: Piedmont Environmental Council

Director: Lyt Wood

Assistant Directors: Jen Rattigan, Sarah Grenzeback

Counselors: Caleb Brown, Brier Clough, Isaac Parrish, Tina Yirgu, Jacob Love

Themes for Study: "STORIES," "MORE STORIES"



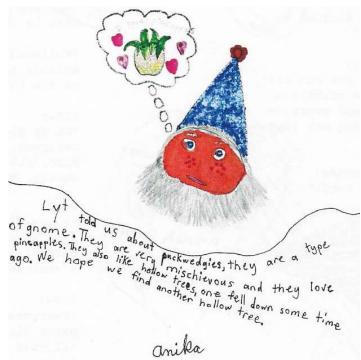


Jen

200 DLe Buck

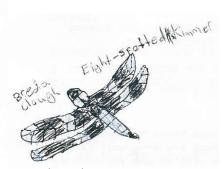
I am going to tell you about a stinging caterpillar. It is called the Saddleback because the brown skin on its back looks like a saddle. It really stings! Even the eggs can sting you because they are sometimes covered with stinging hairs from the mother's abdomen. I have gotten stung and so I know that it really hurts. So do not touch it!

—Jacob Lieb



There was a nest of Bald-faced Hornets in the barn. Lyt took down the nest one night and put it in the freezer! Then we looked at it the next day. Inside the nest, we found one queen and 8 workers and 8 baby bees!

—Anna Alldredge



The Gray Tree Frog is very! cool! to have at camp. It is gray with little spots on it and the underside is bright yellow. It was very cool to see it lay eggs in the Frog Pond. What it does is this: The frog sticks its head underwater and its backside in the air while it lays eggs. This frog is really awesome to look at and I love frogs. —Dom DelGrosso

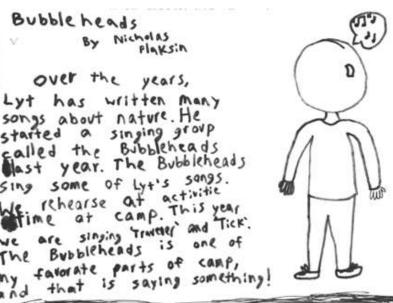
2015 - 2016 SINGING CREEK Sponsor: Headwaters Foundation Director: Lyt Wood Assistant Directors: Kat Habib, Sarah Moore Counselors: Dylan Dwyer, Julian Cordero, Tina Yirgu, Jackson Heverly, Beth Hilscher Themes for Study: "FLYING THINGS," "EARTH, WATER, AIR, FIRE"





Dobsonflies spend most of their lives in water as "Hellgrammites." During that period they are predators and can grow really long. They have pinchers to catch prey. Then they come out of the water and become "Dobsonflies." They don't live very long afterward. They come out to mate and now, their

pinchers are completely useless. However, the males use them for ONE thing and that is to hold the female so she can't get away while they are mating. The male's body becomes shriveled up but the female's stays big and she lays eggs. — J Switzer





Every morning my friend Anna and I go to the Moth Light. The Moth Light attracts many different types of moths and some Dobsonflies. Later in the day, my friend Liza also checks the Moth Light. We keep them for awhile in the Moth Tent. My favorite type of moth is the Leopard Moth. The Leopard Moth is white with black spots on its wings. Its body is orange, cobalt blue and it has dark blue antennae. The Moth Light helps you study and learn about the moths. —Anika Pruntel

Butterflies have very delicate wings. If you touch their wings lightly, then you will have a print of scales on your finger. Scales are these colorful dots that combine to make beautiful colors on a butterfly's wings. —Mezgeb Babcock

2017 - 2020 SINGING CREEK

Sponsor: Rappahannock Nature Camp

Director: Lyt Wood

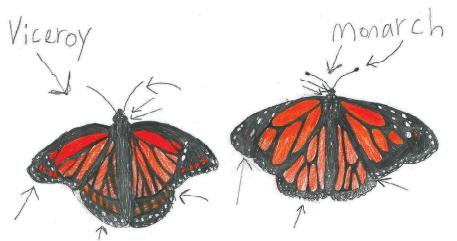
Assistant Directors: Kat Habib, Sarah Moore, Nina Anderson, Tessa Crews

Camp Nurse: Robyn Murray

Counselors: Jackson Heverly, Dom DelGrosso, Grace Babcock, Anne Archer, Molly Swartwout, Amanda Puskar, Tristan Sonnett



There are many different kinds of critters in Lyt's orchard. After finding as many as I could, I counted them and there were 12 kinds of critters. They were: bees, wasps, hornets, beetles, assassin bugs, birds, ants, lightning bugs, flies, gnats, webworms, and plum curculios. As you can see, some of these critters were pollinators. But one pollinator was not listed because it is not a creature. It is... THE WIND! The wind is an actual pollinator. —Webb Furbush



Last Monday, Mr. Lyt found an Eastern Box Turtle in this orchard. It was digging a hole and in the hole were eggs! The eggs were dirty white and and inch an a half long. I find it interesting that the turtles walk so slow. The turtle's nest is in the Upper Orchard and that is where it dug a nest. Mr. Lyt put a cage with pink ribbons around it, so he knows where the eggs are, and to protect it from raccoons.

—Sarah Johnson

Near the footbridge there is a tree that fell and produced a habitat for many creatures. Specifically, tadpoles, lizards, snakes, bugs, and a wide variety of animals. Ripped up from the ground, the roots produced a hole filled with rainwater where most of the animals live. It has a large amount of tadpoles and frogs hiding in the grass surrounding the pool. —Declan Perrot and Caden O'Bryant



Peaceful, or loud, buzzing with the sound, you say nothing lasts forever but Nature stays year round.

The silent, the dead, donate their bodies now to Nature, king of beast and leaf all year round.

The tree, the rock, they stay but do not talk they wait and they grow all year round.

—Mac Wofford

When you look at a rainbow, you only see a part of it. A rainbow is really a whole circle. So if you try to look for a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, you will never succeed. If it's a double rainbow, it will be fat like a giant donut. Rain and sunlight make rainbows, so if it rains, look outside and you might see one. Millions of people and things might be looking at the rainbow, but it will never be the exact same rainbow that you see. —Evelyn Babcock and Reagan Scoville

The story of our last day at camp is one of past memories, present joys and anticipation of our future. As the smoke from our campfire drifts quietly away, it spreads our story far and wide. The clear yellow Tina James Magic Evening Primrose opens its blossoms at the end of another magical day.

—2018 Session 1 Story of the Last Day at Camp

Primrose blooms before our eyes.
Campfire ignites.
Marshmellows melt.
All together, frogs and friends.
Nature Camp, it never ends.

—2019 Session 1 Story of the Last Day at Camp

We lament for the end of camp but look forward to the next year. Camp always lives within us, when we're here and when we're gone. —2019 Session 2 Story of the Last Day at Camp



Every flower, every moth
Every camper, every counselor
Every single thing in Nature
We all have a story to tell
Every day.

—2020 Story of the Day

Nature's song cannot be, unless we help each other and care for nature all together, helping wild things flourish. Frogs croak, trees rustle, birds chirp, butterflies hustle... This is the Nature Camp story. —Evelyn Babcock

Reflections from Former Campers

Drawings by Everlyn Babcock and Isaac Plaksin

Rappahannock Nature Camp is a camp where children have fun—while learning so many life lessons! Through personal plant projects they learn about the land. Campers come to appreciate "quiet time" in nature; a daily ritual. Their last-day presentations, to parents and friends, shows the confidence gained in just two weeks. And let's not forget the singing! Lyt inspires a joy for life, the land, all earth's creatures. We hope Rapp Nature Camp continues to change the lives of our kids for many years to come.

—Kathi Dutilh for Rappahannock County Garden Club

My memories of camp reside in the bounties of Rappahannock and comprise some of the many roots of my ongoing awe of the natural world. I still love to hike and camp. In exploring the teeming woods and fields we learned to recognize common plants and trees and I recall my surprise to learn that there were flowers there which could be brewed to teas and plants which held simple remedies. I particularly loved spending days in the streams, finding clay in the banks and crayfish and turtles in the pools and enjoying the simple delight of playing and exploring in the mountain waters. —Luke Wilson



I give so much credit to Lyt and Robin for creating a really welcoming and inclusive place where campers feel welcome regardless of skills or interests. Lyt created an atmosphere of learning together about nature while keeping it truly interesting. I have such fond memories of being a camper there! -Lindsay Sonnett

My creative experiences as a kid at Rapp Nature Camp continue to influence how I see the world today. —Jacob Stilley

Working with children as a counselor gave me insight into the beauty of natural discovery. It was an incredible thing to see a child have a revelation, sensory or intellectual, when exploring the natural world. It taught me about openness. I carry that with me in my work today at Pen Druid where my brothers and I continue to explore the natural world through fermentation.

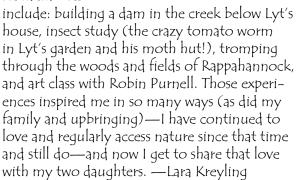
—Van Carney

"What an honor to have worked with our Natural History Day Camp kids and Rap-

pahannock artist Robin Purnell, who guided the camp for several years. Even 30 years later, I still see the influence of the camp on our nowadults. What a privilege to have been a tiny part of it!"

-Karen Henderson

My camp memories are vivid and incredibly special to me. Favorite memories



My time at camp helped me as a kid to start looking deeper into the natural world around me in terms of art, creatures and the landscape. It showed me there was a scientific approach as well as artistic beauty to be found all around. This early spark definitely carried over into earning my B.S. in Geology from Radford

University many summers after my first year at Singing Creek. I feel Rapp Nature Camp's mission becomes more and more important as the years and generations of kids pass through it. —Dylan Dwyer

Rapp Nature Camp taught me from a young age to value our planet and all the life that calls it home. It put me on an unavoidable path to environmental advocacy, something that I have incorporated into every day of my life since I first crossed the bridge over Singing Creek. It introduced me to my lifelong passion, and I will remember that no matter how far life takes me from where it all started. —Caradh Heverly







SUMMER CAMP 2019 - SESSION 1



SUMMER CAMP 2019 - SESSION 2

Many Thanks to the following organizations and donors who made our camp experience possible during the past 35 years:

Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection
Piedmont Environmental Council
Headwaters Foundation
Northern Piedmont Community Foundation
Emily Jane Hilscher Passion Fund
Greve Foundation
Richard Lykes Rappahannock Community Fund
Meade M. Palmer Community Fund
PATH Foundation
Rappahannock County Garden Club
Rappahannock County Lions Club
Nathan and Ruth Habib Foundation
Rappahannock Small Business Relief Fund

...and every one of our individual donors!

2021 SINGING CREEK
Director: Lyt Wood
Associate Director: Greg Czekaj

Associate Director: Greg Czekaj Theme for Study: "NEW THINGS"

We are planning the following day camps for the coming year. Recent campers will receive enrollment information as soon as we are able to confirm our plans. Others can call 540–987–9530, visit our website, or email rappnaturecamp@gmail.com. Meanwhile, MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Session 1: (ages 8 to 12) June 21 – July 2, 2021 Session 2: (ages 12 to 16) July 5 – July 16, 2021

Rapp Nature Camp is also happy to once again announce a series of nature education outings for adults—our "Perennial Campers!" We are planning to have a special free orientation meeting the afternoon of March 7, 2021, to be followed by springtime excursions to interesting habitats in Rappahannock and surrounding counties. Stay tuned for our schedule of events, to be announced in the Rappahannock News and at rappnaturecamp.org.

OUR MISSION: "To allow individuals, especially children, to discover for themselves the wonder and beauty of the natural world, and to understand what it means to be a part of a community of living things."



NEWS FROM SINGING CREEK
2020 Anniversary Issue
EDITOR: Lyt Wood
DESIGN AND LAYOUT: Rob Bannister
COVER GRAPHIC: Welby Lynn

For additional copies, contact rappnaturecamp@gmail.com EDITOR'S NOTE: Historical notes in this issue are based on conflicting information and dates are approximate. Early newsletter issues were entitled WA-DAT-IN-CHOO NEWS and produced by Welby Lynn.