



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Old-Growth Bottomland Forest
Research and Education Center

100 National Park Road
Hopkins, SC, 29061

Congaree National Park

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Congaree 2010 Junior Ranger Ecology Camp

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What does the press release say?

Do you know a rising fifth grader who enjoys the outdoors? Does your child like to study plants, animals, and the natural world? Would you like your child to experience one of America's treasured National Parks right here in the midlands of South Carolina? Then consider enrolling your child in the FREE 2010 Junior Ranger Ecology Camp at Congaree National Park!

The Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center at Congaree National Park is offering two camp sessions this summer! Session I runs from June 28th through July 2nd. Session II runs from July 12th through 16th. Each session runs Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Each session focuses on outdoor activities including hiking, canoeing, and scientific data collection, as well as crafts, writing, and hands-on standards-based science lessons taught by National Park Service staff. The goals of the camp are to increase familiarity with the National Park Service mission; showcase the plants, animals, and ecological features of Congaree's floodplain forest; promote science education; and promote resource stewardship. Upon completion of camp, each camper will be sworn in as an official National Park Service Junior Ranger and receive a commemorative patch and pin.

The camp is free of charge, but advance registration is required and enrollment is limited to 20 campers per session. Registration for both sessions begins onsite at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, May 3rd, 2010 at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center. At that time, campers may be registered in person at the front desk on a first-come, first-served basis, with a limit of two campers registered by any one parent, guardian, or designated adult at a time. Reservations may not be made by phone. Registration will run until both sessions are full, with a waiting list for each camp in the event of any cancellations.

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

For more details, please see the link to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on our website at <http://www.nps.gov/cong/forkids> or contact David Shelley, Education Coordinator at (803) 776-4396, ext. 3966. For maps and more information about Congaree National Park, you can visit our website at www.nps.gov/cong or contact the front desk at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center at 100 National Park Road, Hopkins, SC, 29061, phone (803) 776-4396.

How much does **camp cost**?

- The camp is **FREE** for eligible campers (see below).

Who is **eligible**? Any child who:

- Is a **rising fifth grader** (i.e. completed fourth grade in the Spring of 2010 and expects to enter the fifth grade in the Fall of 2010)
- Will commit to attending all **five days** of each session
- Has independent **transportation** to and from the park
- Can bring a **sack lunch**
- Is **completely registered** at least one week in advance of the camp session

When are the camp sessions?

- Session I runs June 28th through July 2nd, 2010
- Session II runs July 12th through 16th, 2010

What is the **daily schedule**?

- Each camp session runs from **9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday**. Early arrivals and extended stay programs are not available. Campers who arrive more than 15 minutes early or stay more than 15 minutes late will not be allowed to continue to participate in camp.
- Two short, optional **pre-camp orientations** for parents, guardians, and campers will be held at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center on the Tuesday before each session:
 - Session I: Tuesday, June 22nd, 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 to 4:30 p.m.
 - Session II: Tuesday, July 6th, 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 to 4:30 p.m.

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- Parents and guardians and friends are invited to a **graduation ceremony** on Friday afternoon of each session (Friday, July 2nd for Session I and Friday, July 16th for Session II) from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Following the graduation we invite everyone to take an optional, camper-led boardwalk tour. This tour should return to the visitor center by 5:00 p.m.

How will **registration** work?

- Advance registration is required; walk-ins cannot be accepted for camp programs. Registration for both sessions begins onsite at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, May 3rd, 2010 at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center. No camper will be registered before this time. Registrations will be recorded on a first-come, first-served basis in person at the front desk. A limit of two campers may be registered by any one parent, guardian, or other designated adult at a time. No phone reservations can be accepted.
- Enrollment is limited to 20 campers per session, although the park will maintain an active waiting list. After Monday, May 3, 2010, reservations must be made in person with David Shelley, Education Coordinator, who is normally present at the park office Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Registration (including completion of forms and waivers discussed below) must be completed one week in advance of the session.
- Initial registration will only involve adding a child's name and contact information to the list. At that time, parents or guardians will receive a registration packet. **Completed and signed registration forms must be returned to David Shelley, Education Coordinator, within 2 weeks (14 days)**; otherwise the reservation may be lost to a child on the waiting list. Completed and signed registration forms will be required at least one week in advance for all campers. Campers with late forms will not be allowed to participate.

Who will **staff** the camp?

- The camp will be staffed by National Park Service rangers at the Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center at Congaree National Park, including several with advanced degrees in science and resource management. Student Conservation Association (SCA) volunteer interns will also assist with staffing. Screened volunteers may also assist with staffing (see below).

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What about **volunteers**?

- Individuals interested in volunteering should contact David Shelley at (803) 776-4396, ext. 3966. There are several potential jobs available, but working with the campers directly will involve a formal South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) background check that may take 4 weeks or more to complete. Parent / guardian volunteers will not be allowed to directly supervise their own campers.

What **activities** will campers do?

- Activities include hiking, canoeing, games, art projects, songs, writing, and hands-on Congaree-themed science lessons taught by park staff.

What about **weather**?

- Campers should be ready for fun outdoor activities in the hot and sunny South Carolina summer. Re-usable water bottles and ice water coolers will be provided. Activities are scheduled to provide breaks. Camps will run rain or shine, although activities may depend on weather conditions.

What do campers need to **bring**?

- Campers are required to wear **closed-toe shoes that attach to their feet** (i.e. no Crocs, flip-flops, sandals, etc.) and bring a **sack lunch**.
- The park will provide coolers with ice (to store lunches), drinking water, water bottles, string backpacks, and emergency rain ponchos for use during camp.
- A hat, insect repellent, sunscreen, and sunglasses are highly recommended.

For maps and more information

- For maps and more information about Congaree National Park, including directions, you can visit our website at www.nps.gov/cong or contact the front desk at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center at 100 National Park Road, Hopkins, SC, 29061, phone (803) 776-4396.