



C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids

Cultivating Outdoor Adventures and Scientific Thinking through Active Learning

Parent Handbook
(updated January 2025)

Brought to you by:
Nemours Wildlife Foundation
&
Spring Island Trust



Welcome to C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids

Thank you for your interest in C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids brought to you by Nemours Wildlife Foundation and Spring Island Trust. We are thrilled to be able to provide a unique education program that gives your children the opportunity to learn about and explore the natural world through engaging, hands-on, outdoor-focused activities.

The Parent Handbook provides parents with an introduction to our program, application procedures, expectations for a successful program experience, and much more. Please read through the handbook to help prepare you and your child for your outdoor adventure with us.

If you still have any questions or comments, please reach out to hkraus@nemourswildlife.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Kraus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather Kraus
Education & Outreach Coordinator

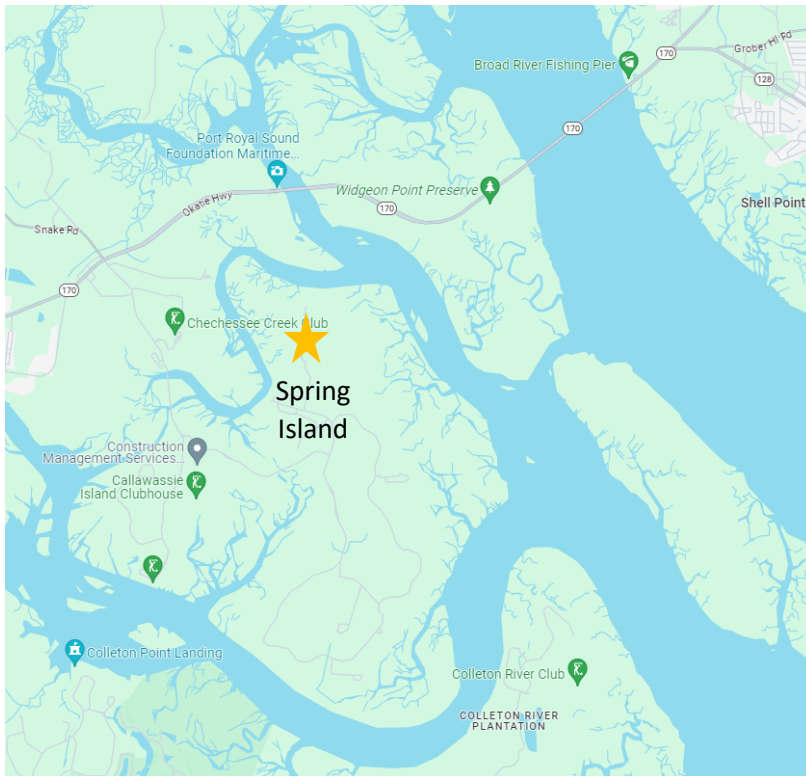
About Nemours Wildlife Foundation

161 Nemours Plantation Drive
Yemassee, SC 29945

The Nemours Wildlife Foundation was founded in 1995 as a living laboratory for wildlife conservation, education, and land stewardship. With over 9,000 acres of fields, forests, and wetlands, the Nemours property offers bountiful opportunities to explore the diversity of life within the Lowcountry.

For more information:

www.nemourswildlife.org



About Spring Island Trust

40 Mobley Oaks Lane
Okatie, SC 29909

The Spring Island Trust provides environmental educational programs, specifically Master Naturalist and Coastal Kingdom, that teach people about South Carolina's flora and fauna. Spring Island Trust has miles of trails to explore the wildlife found in fields, freshwater wetlands, salt marsh, and much more.

For more information:

www.springislandtrust.org

Neither Nemours Wildlife Foundation nor Spring Island Trust is open to the public, except as part of organized and pre-approved groups.

Mission of C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids

To provide the children of the Lowcountry with fun and engaging hands-on nature experiences inspiring lifetimes of muddy boots, outdoor joy, and conservation advocacy.

Program Structure

A. Age of participants

The program is for children aged 7 through 12. One session of C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids is for children aged 7 through 9. Another session of C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids is for children aged 10 through 12.

Note: Children must be of age on the first day of the program.

B. Date and Time

C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids' sessions are held during the first two weeks of June on three consecutive weekdays (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). The first week of June is for children aged 7 to 9. The second week of June is for children aged 10 to 12. Sessions run from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM each day.

Exact dates for summer 2025 sessions are as follows:

- June 3-5, 2025: children aged 7-9 are eligible
- June 10-12, 2025: children aged 10-12 are eligible

C. Location

The program is held at alternating locations: Nemours Wildlife Foundation and Spring Island Trust. The address for Nemours Wildlife Foundation is 161 Nemours Plantation Drive, Yemassee, SC 29945. The address for Spring Island Trust is 40 Mobley Oaks Lane, Okatie, SC 29909. Location for each day is as follows:

- Tuesday location: Spring Island Trust
- Wednesday location: Nemours Wildlife Foundation
- Thursday location: Spring Island Trust

D. Class Size

Class size is capped at 16 participants. The program maintains a 1:5 staff to participant ratio or lower.

E. C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids Topics

Each day focuses on a different theme. All themes deal exclusively with local ecosystems and animal groups (i.e. salt marsh, birds, reptiles and amphibians). We want participants to better understand, appreciate, and care for the amazing diversity of life present in the region. Themes for each day are as follows:

- Tuesday: Marsh Madness
- Wednesday: Birds of a Feather
- Thursday: Snakes, Salamanders, and Turtles Oh My

F. Drop-off and Pick-up

Morning drop-off is from 8:45 AM – 9:00 AM. Afternoon pickup is from 3:00 PM – 3:15 PM. Participant safety is our priority. To ensure safety we require all participants to be **checked in and out** with a staff member on our attendance log.

During pick-up, children will only be released to individual(s) designated in the child’s files as approved for pick-up. Staff are encouraged to check IDs if someone they do not recognize comes to pick up a child. Therefore, all adults should bring a form of ID to pick up, even if they are on the authorized pick-up list.

If a family would like to add or remove names from the list, they may do so by contacting Heather Kraus at hkraus@nemourswildlife.org.

G. Sample Daily Schedule

We will explore our wild, wonderful world! Armed with curiosity, participants will explore habitats and connect to nature through activities, hikes, lessons, games, and crafts. All participants hike and explore the landscape each session. We will spend almost the entire day outside if the weather allows, rain or shine. Children are expected to participate meaningfully in all activities.

Sample Daily Schedule	
8:45-9:00	Drop-off
9:00-9:30	Introductions, Icebreakers, What If Scenarios
9:30-10:00	Design a Fish Challenge
10:00-10:15	Snack
10:15-11:30	What’s in These Waters (check aquatic traps)
11:30-12:00	Scavenger Hunt
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Crawl, Walk, Run Game
1:00-2:00	Fiddler Crab Roundup
2:15-2:45	Nature Journaling
2:45-3:00	Clean Up, Closing Out the Day
3:00-3:15	Pick-up

What to Expect

A. What to Wear

- Comfortable outdoor clothing that can get dirty and wet
- Close-toed shoes such as sneakers or boots, with socks
 - NO open-toed shoes (such as flip flops or crocs)
- Sunscreen
- Hat

B. What to Bring (labeled with participants name)

- Extra set of clothing (pants, shirt, underwear and socks, as clothing may get wet or muddy)
- Rain gear (weather dependent)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Reusable water bottle
- Lunch
 - Hearty, non-perishable lunch
 - We do NOT provide refrigeration
 - If possible, minimize waste in participants lunch by using reusable containers
- Snacks (for example pretzels, trail mix, fruit)
- Sunglasses
- A backpack in which to store all items
- Any required medications (see Medical Release and Consent form and, as applicable, provide clear instructions to program staff)

C. What to Leave at Home

- Anything breakable, easily lost, valuable, or sentimental
- Electronics
- Gum or excessive candy
- Games or toys
- Knives and other weapons are prohibited
- Money

D. Labeling Personal Items

All personal items need to be labeled including backpacks, water bottles, lunches, and clothes. The Nemours Wildlife Foundation and Spring Island Trust are not responsible for any lost/stolen personal items.

E. Meals and Snacks

Children attending C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids should be provided with his/her own snack by a parent or guardian, such as a light, non-perishable, healthy food. If the child fails to bring a snack, program staff keep a supply of non-perishable snacks in stock that can be given to children as needed.

Participants must also bring a sack lunch to eat at lunchtime. Sharing food is strongly discouraged amongst the participants for health and safety concerns. Safe drinking water is available at all times if water is forgotten, or more is needed.

Health and Safety

A. Safe Outdoor Play

We will be outside in various types of weather. To ensure that children are protected during our outdoor exploration in all weather conditions, we follow these guidelines:

- Parents are asked to pack clothing to allow layering.
- Parents are asked to apply sunscreen to their child before arriving at camp. We also ask that parents bring sunscreen for afternoon reapplication. Sunscreen should be labeled with the child's name and stored in their backpack.
- Light rain does not exclude the possibility of outdoor play, appropriate clothing should be packed for such eventuality. However, in the event of severe storms, suitable indoor activities will be substituted.
- Staff will make every effort to keep trails free from hazards.
- Educators will carry phones while outside.

B. Bruises, Scratches and Stings

Participants may come home with minor scratches, bumps, and bruises as a result of active play outdoors. We treat these minor injuries with soap, water, and bandages for scratches, icepacks for bumps and stings, and care and compassion. The most common plant and insect hazards are poison ivy, mosquito and chigger bites, and wasp stings. We teach children how to recognize poison ivy and do our best to keep the kids from playing near it. This being South Carolina there is not much we can do to combat mosquito and chigger bites except apply parent provided insect repellent. We typically do not call parents if their child is stung (unless s/he is allergic), or gets bumps, bruises, or scratches, as they are simply a part of outdoor play, but we do notify parents of the incident at pick-up.

C. Food Allergies

If your child has a known food allergy, please inform staff and complete an Allergy Action Plan, which provides guidance in prevention and outlines steps to take in case of exposure. This program is not peanut/nut free; however, if we have a child in the

program with a peanut or other severe food allergy, we may restrict certain foods from being sent by parents for the safety of that child. To provide a safe environment for all our participants, the following guidelines and steps are followed:

- Participants with allergies are supported in taking responsibility to be knowledgeable of their allergies and avoid foods containing a harmful ingredient.
- When an Allergy Action Plan is in place, children, parents and staff will adhere and follow the set plan. If the plan includes restriction of certain foods in class, all parents will be notified of this restriction and expected to adhere to it.
- We ask that parents remain flexible if special health accommodations come up. Our main concern is the health and safety of the children and with the help and support of families we can ensure a safe environment for all.
- All children who are in a session with a child who has a life-threatening allergy should wash hands after eating.
- Children are discouraged from trading or sharing lunch, snacks or drinks.

D. Behavioral Expectations

During sessions we strive to create a safe environment for both participants and staff. All participants deserve to try new things, make new friends, explore and have fun in a safe environment. Staff will work with a child individually to resolve minor behavior issues. If more significant behavioral issues arise, staff will work with guardians to create a behavioral plan to best support their child. We appreciate your support and cooperation.

E. Participant Code of Conduct

We follow Five Rules that inform all our actions. Read over these guidelines with your child to help them understand expectations and behave appropriately in the program.

1. **Be Safe:** Respect the health and safety of participants and staff. Understand that fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, and bullying are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Cooperate with staff instructions. Work out disagreements with other participants and staff in a non-violent manner. Ask for help.
2. **Be Kind:** Communicate appropriately. Inappropriate language or gestures shall not be used. Listen to others when they try to communicate with you.
3. **Be Respectful:** Show respect to other participants and staff and treat them with courtesy. Respect the property of others. Use program equipment, natural areas, and facilities properly.
4. **Be Responsible:** Know and follow behavior guidelines and program rules. Take responsibility for your own actions, and work towards solutions with others.
5. **Have Fun:** Don't knock it till you try it. Try everything at least once! As we like to say, don't yuck someone else's yum. Let everyone enjoy what they like, even if it's not for you.

F. Grounds for Dismissal

The C.O.A.S.T.A.L. Kids program is expected to be a safe place for all participants and staff. We cannot accommodate children that display unprovoked or persistent violent behavior or who jeopardize their own, or others, safety. This behavior includes, but is not limited to bullying, physical assault, inability or refusal to follow safety guidelines, vandalism, theft and bringing weapons or other inappropriate items to sessions.

G. Medication Policy

All medication must be labeled and be accompanied by an Administration of Medication Authorization Form (provided upon request). Participants must be able to administer medication with limited assistance. Once on site, please give all medication directly to staff. If your child requires an EpiPen or Inhaler they may carry it on them with parent authorization.