



***Primitive Pursuits - not your typical summer camp***

Primitive Pursuits, established in 2000 and based in Ithaca, New York, is a non-profit environmental education program of 4-H Youth Development in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Our mission is to steward the health of our community by fostering life-long relationships with the natural world for children and adults.

|                           |                                     |                      |                                       |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Job Title:</b>         | <b><i>Wilderness Instructor</i></b> | <b>Date:</b>         | June - early September                |
| <b>Direct Supervisor:</b> | Summer Camp Director                | <b>Salary Range:</b> | <b>\$500-650 per week (full time)</b> |

**Position Description:**

We are seeking innovative, outdoor-loving individuals to join our bioregion’s premier wilderness skills mentoring team! With a focus on fostering deep connection to natural world, our programming empowers both youth and adults with critical life skills of awareness, curiosity and community building while discovering the beauty and mystery of the natural world. Youth aged 3-15 spend their entire days immersed in the fields, forests and waterways of undeveloped nature – gathering resources, crafting tools, navigating the landscape, mastering fire skills and surviving limitless challenges together. *Wilderness Field Instructors* help craft seasonally appropriate nature-based activities, facilitate positive group energy, and keep kids safe and engaged.

*Wilderness Field Instructors* facilitate the core aim of Primitive Pursuits; bringing groups of youth into natural areas, away from facilities and without modern gear, and engaging them in a self-directed inquiry into basic, personal and group survival needs. The key role in this task is to assist and instruct youth on survival skills in the wild including but not limited to: primitive technology, fire making, shelter construction and procurement of food and water. Field instructors also mentor youth in naturalist skills and knowledge, promote stewardship and build healthful relationships in the outdoor environment. Wilderness Instructors may work with Growing Wild (ages 3-5), Day Camps (ages 5-15), or Overnight Camps (ages 9-14).

**Employment Period:** 10 weeks plus training, typically from the end of June thru beginning of September  
*Summer season:* Week long Staff Training for new staff and pre-camp preparation. Applicants do not need to commit to the entire season, though we seldom consider new applicants who are available for less than 5 weeks.

**Responsibilities:**

- Creating and implementing experiential environmental immersions for diverse groups of youth in the context of wilderness survival, living skills, naturalist skills and knowledge
- Role-modeling passion and enthusiasm around engaging with the elements of nature
- Mentoring staff on a path to comfort and success among their peers and in potentially adverse environments
- Facilitating group energy and responding swiftly to group needs in order to effectively manage and engage each participant in a positive experience
- Actively contributing to efforts of leadership team in planning, preparing, delivering and evaluating each week and each day of programming
- Representing the high caliber of the organization when speaking to parents, staff and participants
- Delivering high-adventure experiences while keeping an unfailing eye on the safety of each activity and each participant and co-worker in accordance with risk management protocols
- Working with ages between 3-15, day camp and overnight

**QUALIFICATIONS - LEAD INSTRUCTORS**

- ***Must have RTE First Aid or WFR Certification, and CPR for the Professional or higher***
- Driver’s license and/or ability to arrange transportation to various camp locations.
- Must be at least 18 years old
- 1-2 years of experience as a naturalist/wilderness instructor working with youth ages 6-14 in an undeveloped setting with instruction specific to wilderness living and outdoor skills, and nature mentoring.
- Demonstrated experience working as part of a team and in mentoring and supporting less experienced staff.

**QUALIFICATIONS - ALL INSTRUCTORS**

- At least 18 years old – highly qualified 16-17 year olds may apply
- Affinity for naturalist, outdoor and wilderness survival skills with an emphasis on youth mentorship
- Willingness to work in a changing environment and tackle new problems each day
- Ability to learn and convey skill sets effectively
- Demonstrated high level of comfort in and curiosity for the natural world
- Passionate about learning new material and practicing skills outside of work
- Ability to inspire and relate positively with youth and teens
- Demonstrated communication skills with past experiences working with people of diverse educational and cultural backgrounds
- Value diversity and inclusion and demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural appropriation and privilege
- Determination to thrive within extended, rigorous outdoor activity