

Position Description

Working Title:	Day Camp Lead Wilderness Instructor
Classification:	Association Temp Program (Non-Exempt)
Start Date:	6/23/2025
End Date:	8/29/2025
Duration (months):	Less than 3
Hours per week:	40
Days per week / schedule:	Monday-Friday
Work Location:	4-H Acres; Ithaca, NY
Compensation:	\$18.50-\$19.50 per hour, depending on experience
Supervisor Name & Title:	Rachel Bortin, Camp Director
Benefits Eligibility:	Not Benefits Eligible
Employment Type:	Temporary

Position Summary

The mission of Primitive Pursuits is to steward the health of our community by fostering life-long relationships with the natural world through exceptional mentoring and nature education.

A Lead Wilderness Instructor facilitates 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 fun way that sparks a deep, meaningful connection to the natural world, themselves, and each other. The key role of a Lead Wilderness Instructor is to design and implement the flow of the week centered on assisting and instructing youth on outdoor and naturalist skills, including but not limited to primitive technology, fire making, shelter construction and procurement of food and water. Lead Wilderness instructors act as mentors who share their naturalist skills and knowledge, promote stewardship and build healthful relationships in the outdoor environment. Lead Wilderness Instructors may work with Growing Wild (3-5 yr olds) or Day Camp (5-16 yr olds).

Required Qualifications

- 18 years of age or older
- Must pass all required screenings for working at a NYS Summer Camp
- Must have RTE First Aid **OR** WFR Certification, and CPR for Professional Rescuer or higher **OR** be able to attain it before the start of camp
- Attend and assist in staff training June 23-26, 2025
- Commit to working at least 5 weeks of the camp season June 30-August 29, 2025 in addition to staff training week
- Driver's license and/or ability to arrange transportation to various camp locations on time
- Minimum 1 year experience as a naturalist/wilderness instructor **OR** camp counselor working with youth ages 6-16 in an undeveloped setting
- Minimum 1 year experience in mentoring **OR** coaching staff members in problem solving, organization and day to day coordination
- Experience in planning daily and weekly wilderness survival/naturalist activities, projects, and games for youth ages 5-16
- Experience instructing youth on primitive technologies and wilderness survival/naturalist skills

- Able to work in a changing outdoor environment and tackle new problems each day
- Ability to learn and convey skill sets efficiently
- Demonstrate a high level of comfort and curiosity in the natural world
- Developing skills in specialized areas pertaining to wilderness living, primitive or naturalist skills **OR** seeking to learn specialized skills pertaining to wilderness living and primitive or naturalist skills
- Ability to inspire and relate positively with youth and teens
- Previous experience with primitive technologies and wilderness survival or naturalist/outdoor skills
- Aim to uphold the 4 Values of camp: Belonging, Gratitude, Awareness, Getting Outside, in all interactions with campers, staff, families and parents and within programs, and activities
- Other Duties as Assigned

Preferred Qualifications

- Ability to thrive in rigorous outdoor physical education activities
- Passionate about learning new material and practicing skills outside of work
- Past experiences working with people of diverse educational and cultural backgrounds
- Experience with Coyote mentoring

Responsibilities

- Arrive to work on time and ready for the day ahead
- Create and model an emotional, social, and physically safe environment in which campers and staff can thrive
- Develop and implement experiential environmental immersion experiences for diverse groups of youth in the context of wilderness survival, living skills, outdoor/naturalist skills and knowledge
- Facilitate planning sessions and provide support for co-instructors
- Actively give and receive feedback to your co-instructors and summer leadership team
- Plan and lead daily and weekly activities and skills alongside your co-instructor
- Role-model passion, enthusiasm and comfort around engaging with the elements of nature
- Role-model appropriate footwear, clothing, and outdoor gear for the summer camp experience
- Facilitate group energy and responding swiftly to group needs to effectively manage and engage each participant in a positive experience
- Actively contribute to efforts of summer leadership team in planning, preparing, delivering, and evaluating each week and each day of programming
- Represent the high caliber of the organization when speaking to parents, staff and participants
- Ability to speak to family members regarding camper behavior, conflicts, or situations
- Deliver 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
- Work with ages between 3-16, day camp and potentially overnights too (one night)
- Other duties as assigned

How to Apply

Please complete our online employment application including cover letter and resume.

Applications will be accepted until May 1, 2025 or until a suitable candidate is found.

Contact

Rachel Bortin, Camp Director, primitivepursuits-opportunities@cornell.edu

Additional Info

Please be sure to read the Notice to Applicants found on the Jobs with CCE page:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-cooperative-extension/join-us/jobs>

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