

Desert Survival Program Information

Our week will be packed with exciting modern outdoor survival skills and those used by ancient humans. During the morning field studies, you may be preparing a meal over an open fire, navigating with a map and compass, or making a shelter out of natural materials. In the afternoon we will take a break to enjoy a refreshing swim in the shallows of the cool John Day River. The late afternoon holds opportunities for tracking animal sign, scaling the climbing wall with ropes and helmets, or practicing with early American Indian tools. Evenings will be filled with short hikes to observe wildlife, games to increase awareness, observational astronomy, and songs by the campfire.

One night, we will be doing a backpacking campout. We will strap our sleeping bags and sleeping pads to our packs and take a short hike out into the desert. Campers will get to practice their skills at building tarp shelters to sleep under, or just lay their sleeping bags outside on a tarp and fall asleep beneath the stars.

The program will stress outdoor ethics, modern wilderness skills, and aboriginal skills/primitive technologies. During the week we will concentrate on building participants' confidence in the outdoors by focusing on the skills and knowledge required of an individual who is working or recreating outdoors. Our goal for the week is to introduce the great outdoors to participants in a positive way that will encourage curiosity and enthusiasm for camping and for primitive living skills. It promises to be a fantastic week! We look forward to your participation.

Course Syllabus

OBJECTIVES: Outdoor training goals

- ◆ To understand long-term and short-term human survival needs and how to prioritize and meet those needs
- ◆ To be able to identify and discuss potential hazards in a remote area
- ◆ To understand strategies of surviving in different ecosystems and how to apply skills learned in the semi-arid desert to other locales
- ◆ To increase the ability to understand the challenges of surviving in the natural world

ACTIVITIES: Hands on learning in the field

- ◆ Practice survival skills: use of compass, emergency shelter building, fire making techniques, water safety and proper water purification techniques
- ◆ Practice primitive technologies used by American Indians in this region
- ◆ Explore both Native American and pioneer history in the John Day Country
- ◆ Practice taking care of yourself properly in the semi arid environment
- ◆ Investigate the John Day Basin and surrounding semi-arid grasslands

SCIENTIFIC CONCEPTS: Scientific Principles to be introduced

- ◆ Human populations and their use of available natural resources
- ◆ Ecology, adaptations, and behavioral studies of native plants and animals
- ◆ Astronomy: familiarity with the lunar cycle and constellations for basic navigation
- ◆ Differences in habitats from valley bottom to hilltop

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE*

Desert Survival

7:00 a.m.	General camp wake-up
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Field activities (Lunch included)
2:00 p.m.	Rest hour
3:15 p.m.	Snack
3:30 p.m.	Interest groups
5:00 p.m.	Recreation and free time
6:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:15 p.m.	Evening activity
8:30 p.m.	Campfire
9:15 p.m.	Return to cabins, prepare for bed
9:30 p.m.	Lights out

***ALL SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Programs that are partly or entirely field-based will follow a unique schedule each day, depending on the activities planned. Drive times between field sites and campgrounds will include stops for short hikes and games, meals, and bathroom breaks.

TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

Cell phones are not allowed on any OMSI Science Camp program. Cell phones are too easily lost or damaged. Campers have an excellent support system at camp including their fellow campers, the counselors, the instructional staff, and the lead staff. We will ensure that any necessary communication between parents/guardians and campers can take place through the main phone at each site. Instructional staff carry cell phones during transportation and on off-site programs for emergency purposes only. An important part of the camp experience is for each camper to gain independence, develop greater resilience, and enjoy the unique opportunities offered by OMSI Science Camps without technological distractions. We are grateful for the trust parents and guardians put in our staff to care for each camper, and we appreciate the time taken in discussing this important issue with your camper before his or her program begins.

Digital cameras are allowed, but remember that, at camp, things can easily be lost or damaged. We recommend single use cameras or film cameras. Please keep in mind cell phones with cameras will not be allowed.

For the safety of your child and OMSI Science Camps staff, we strongly discourage our staff from having contact with your child after camp since we cannot supervise it. Making new friends is one of many positive outcomes of OMSI Science Camps programs, and campers who want to stay in touch with each other may exchange phone numbers, addresses, or e-mails. Please understand that any communication between your child and another camper or a staff member after the camp session is over is the responsibility of the camper's parent or guardian to oversee.

If your child would like to contact a staff member, then email letter to: hancock@omsi.edu.

Equipment List

Please note: this program includes a backpacking camp-out, and campers will need a sleeping bag and sleeping pad, which they will carry to the campsite strapped to, or in their own pack.

- SLEEPING GEAR: ___ warm sleeping bag
 ___ small insulating sleeping pad
 ___ pillow (optional)
 ___ pajamas/sleeping clothes
- CLOTHING: ___ 2 pairs of long pants
 ___ 2 pairs of shorts
 ___ fleece or wool long underwear (one pair, tops and bottoms)
 ___ 2 warm, long-sleeved sweaters/sweatshirts (wool or
 synthetic that are warm when wet)
 ___ 1 medium weight jacket
 ___ 2 long-sleeved shirts – at least one heavyweight and one lightweight
 ___ 4 t-shirts
 ___ socks (non-cotton socks (“warm when wet”) are important
 ___ rain jacket and pants
 ___ tennis shoes for in-camp use
 ___ well fitting, broken-in hiking boots or sturdy hiking shoes
 ___ warm hat and gloves (it **will** get quite cold at night)
 ___ swim suit
 ___ hat with brim
- PERSONAL GEAR: ___ sunglasses
 ___ toiletries: soap and container, toothbrush/toothpaste, comb/brush
 ___ wash cloth and towel
 ___ sunscreen (SPF 15 or SPF 30)
 ___ lip balm with sunscreen
 ___ personal hygiene items
- EQUIPMENT: ___ large daypack to carry lunch and field equipment
 ___ 2 water bottles (at least 1 qts. size. Be sure it does not leak)
 ___ field notebook and pencils/pens
 ___ **sack lunch for the first day**

ALL CLOTHES AND EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE MARKED WITH THE CAMPER'S NAME.

OMSI IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ITEMS.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING SNACKS OR CANDY (Squirrels enjoy searching tents for food.)

**NO ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE BROUGHT (CELL PHONES, CD PLAYERS,
RADIO, BLOW DRYERS, COMPUTER GAMES, ETC.)**