

Outdoor Family

Activity & Resource Guide

Brought to you by the collaborators of



For more information about Outdoor Family Weekend, visit our [web page](#) or like us on [Facebook](#).

Explore Vermont State Parks on Your Own

- **2020 Venture Vermont Outdoor Challenge [activity]** - You and your family will never run out of fun things to do when you participate in the Venture Vermont Outdoor Challenge. Download the score sheet with over 50 ideas that get you moving, exploring, creating, and having fun outside! Earn 250 points and you will receive free entry to a state park for the rest of the 2020 season and all of 2021!
- **Vermont State Parks Camping How-to's [videos]** - Check out these helpful, short videos that cover topics ranging from choosing a campsite and setting up a tarp, to building a fire. Sharpen your skills for your next outing!
- **Why We Love Vermont State Parks [videos]** - Videos that tell you what is special about specific parks across Vermont.
- **Trail Maps and Guides [downloadable maps]** - Your one stop shop for hiking, mountain biking, and nature trails across Vermont. Where will your next adventure be?
- **Into the Woods [activities]** - Weekly challenges posted to get families out to explore.



Cook Up Some Fun

- **Campfire Cook-off Recipes [videos]** - Breakfast moon pies, apple tarts, pulled pork, and poutine? Campfire meals have never been so good! Learn how to bring these treats to your next campfire feast with video how-to's.
- **Vermont Wild Kitchen [videos]** - Fun adventures in cooking wild foods. Brought to you by #rootedinVermont, a collaboration between VT Fish and Wildlife and VT Farm to Plate Network.
 - **Fresh Fish Tacos and Nettles**
 - **Foraging Nettles**
 - **All Things Wild Turkey and Berries**
 - **Wild Turkey and Foraged and Farm Fresh Sides**
 - **Cooking Wild Foods Demo: Trout and Farm Fresh Sides**



Explore Science and Conservation

- **Fish with a Warden [in-person event]** - Join your local warden and outreach staff for a relaxing evening of fishing. Wardens will be available to answer any fish and wildlife related questions you may have and to help you hone in on your fishing skills! This is a perfect opportunity to meet your local warden while learning a little bit about a local body of water. Each session will last an hour or more. You need to bring your own fishing equipment. Face masks, social distancing and fishing licenses are required. Locations include Brattleboro, Burlington, Cavendish, Newport, and Montpelier area. Registration required.
- **Vermont Hunter Safety [online course]** - Online only certification for hunter education is now available and free for Vermont residents. Online certification will only be available temporarily. Students will receive their online certification card when they complete the online course. After that they will be eligible to purchase a hunting license in Vermont or any of the 50 US states, Canada, and Mexico.
- **Bowhunter Education Course [online course]** - Offered on a limited basis, in-person bowhunter education courses are still available, but students will now have the option to take an in-person or online-only bowhunter education course to obtain their bowhunter certification. Students who want to take the bowhunter education course will need to complete the online homework and then sign up for the course. The curriculum consists of a video presentation, several demonstration videos and a final exam. Upon completion, a certification card will be mailed to students.
- **Trapper Education Course [online course]** - Trapper education focuses on ethical, humane and wildlife management based trapping instruction and principles. Follow this page for upcoming courses as they are scheduled. Students must first complete the online course or have a completed manual and workbook before attending one of the small in person trainings.
- **Natural Resource Management Academy [videos]** - Presentations geared towards teens interested in learning about natural resource management and conservation. Hear from a wildlife biologist, county forester, naturalist, returned Peace Corps volunteer, and more.
- **Understanding the 4W's of Trail Stewardship [video]** - Now more than ever, we realize how much we need trails and access to natural space. Join staff from Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation.
- **Project Learning Tree Activities** - Several free activities and lessons for youth in grades k-12 that get youth outside and exploring their natural environment.



Shelter Making Contest

The Scenario: You and your family are out for a hike in the woods to enjoy a fall day. Like the prepared hikers that you are, you have brought provisions for the unexpected but are not planning to camp over night. Due to unforeseen events, you lose your way and the sun will be going down shortly. You must make a shelter and create a plan to get back to safety within 24 hours. You have the following materials in your backpack: a space blanket, tarp, compass and map, fire starter, para-cord, poncho or rain jacket, survival knife/multi-tool, whistle, first aid kit, compass, mirror, and garbage bag or dry bag. You also have an extra granola bar for each member in your party but no one remembered to bring a headlamp and you are out of range of any cell phone service!

The Challenge: Because you do not have a headlamp it is too risky to attempt finding your way out of the woods in the dark. You and your family must make a shelter to stay the night until dawn the next day. You can only use what you have in your backpack and any natural materials that you would find in your natural environment to create your shelter. The goal of the shelter is to provide you protection from rain and wind to keep you warm and dry till the morning comes. Next you must create a survival plan using the tools at your disposal to either send for help or find your way out of the woods. Remember to use the tools that you and your family brought with you!

How to play: As a family, build a shelter and make a plan! You do NOT have to spend a night in your shelter. Snap a photo of your family near the shelter. Write a short paragraph outlining your plan for self rescue or navigating to safety. Complete the entry form and submit alongside your photo to Allison Smith, UVM Extension 4-H, by emailing to allison.smith.2@uvm.edu. Deadline to submit is Friday, November 6th, 2020. Be sure to download the entry form and "save as" before completing. One entry per family. Have fun!

Little Camper Challenge: Do you have youth at home under the age of 7? Try this variation of the challenge! As a family, build a mini sized shelter for a toy or pet using similar criteria outlined in the scenario above and considering the evaluation criteria below. Those participating in this challenge will also be eligible for the prizes outlined below.

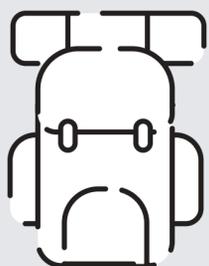
All submissions will be judged by the Outdoor Family Weekend committee. The top three entries will receive a set of four 4-H Outdoor Adventure Activity books and the Project Learning Tree Nature Activities for Families booklet to expand your knowledge of the outdoors as a family. Shelters and plans will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

Does your shelter:

- Keep you dry and out of the elements?
- Demonstrate craftsmanship and sound construction to withstand wind and the weight of materials used?
- Use materials creatively?
- Limit its impact on the natural environment? No log cabins!

Does your survival plan:

- Use resources wisely?
- Minimize risk to you and your party?
- Reflect good judgement, logic, and thoughtfulness?



Shelter Making & Wilderness Survival Resources

[U.S. Forest Service, If you get Lost and Self Rescue Tips](#)

[U.S. Search and Rescue Task Force, Child Survival Education](#)

[Reserve America, How to Teach Your Kids Wilderness Survival](#)

[Survival Shelters: 15 Best Designs and How to Build Them](#)

[14 Wilderness Survival Tools You Should Always Have in the Backcountry](#)

[How to Find Your Way Out of the Woods without Tools - or Your Phone](#)

[New Hampshire State Parks, Basic Orienteering Skills \[video\]](#)

[7 Family Activities to Improve Compass Skills](#)



*Be sure to check your local library for books on wilderness survival, bush craft, and outdoor skills as well.