What is a Junior Assistant Naturalist?
Junior Assistant Naturalists (JANs) are very important members of the Tamarack summer day camp team. Like a camp counselor, they serve as fun, friendly companions and mentors to our younger participants. JANs assist with all aspects of day camp including preparing activities, leading games, and helping supervise campers to make sure everyone has a fun and safe experience.

What are the requirements for being a JAN?
- Volunteers must be 14-17 years of age. (Applicants must be age 14 by September 1, 2020 to be eligible.)
- Enjoy working with children, be willing to play, get your hands dirty and be an active participant.
- Be a responsible, trustworthy and dependable volunteer. Be able to take direction and feedback, follow through with assigned responsibilities, and maintain a mature, positive, service-oriented attitude.
- Attend a required information session with a parent.
- Complete an in-person interview with Tamarack Staff.
- Participate in a mandatory 2-day JAN training.
- Commit to volunteering for at least 3 weeks of camp.

How do I apply to be a Junior Assistant Naturalist?
Complete the enclosed application materials and return them to Tamarack by the deadline. You will receive an e-mail notifying you that your application was received and an invite to the required information session. If accepted as a new JAN, you will be placed with camps according to your availability, skills and interests, but we will also work to give you a well-rounded experience. Final camp assignments will be sent to you by the middle of May (or earlier if possible).

JAN Applicant Checklist:
Complete the enclosed application materials and return them to Tamarack by Saturday, April 18
- JAN Volunteer Application
- Letter of Recommendation
- Personal Contract
- Availability & Preferences
- Parental Consent & Emergency Contacts

What are the benefits of being a JAN?
- Make new friends and be part of a team.
- Build leadership skills; gain valuable, fun, hands-on experience working with children and nature.
- Volunteer time may be eligible for service learning credits and is always great for resume building.
- Get a Tamarack Summer Camp t-shirt and water bottle.
- Enjoy an exclusive JAN Campfire Celebration at the end of the season.

Mark Your Calendars!
- Required Information Session (with a parent): Wednesday, May 6, 6:30pm
- Required In-Person Interviews: Saturday, May 9 and Saturday, May 16
  15 minute interviews from 9am to 4pm
- Required Training Dates: Wednesday, June 17 & Thursday, June 18
- JAN Campfire Celebration: Thursday, August 6
2020 Junior Assistant Naturalist
NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Last Name: ___________________________ First: ____________________________ Date of Birth: ______________

Address: _____________________________________ City: _____________________________ Zip: ______________

Home Phone: ______________________________________ Cell Phone: _____________________________________

Grade Level: _____________ School: ______________________________________ Adult T-Shirt Size: __________

How did you hear about the JAN program at Tamarack? _________________________________________________

We communicate with our volunteers extensively through e-mail. Please list the e-mail address you want us to use when communicating with you throughout this application process and throughout the summer. If you need us to send communications to both parent and student e-mail addresses, please list both.

Email Address(es): ________________________________________________________________________________

Please tell us what interests you. Check all that apply:

- Water Recreation
- Character Role Play
- History
- Arts & Crafts
- Mud & Mayhem
- Fossils & Geology
- Outdoor/Survival Skills
- Gardening & Plants
- Exploration & Adventure
- Storytelling
- Cooking
- Experiments
- Animal Care
- Birds
- Insects
- Hiking
- Others (please describe): ________________________________________________________________________

Do you have any previous volunteer experience? What did you do and where?

Do you have any experience working with younger children (babysitting, camp counselor, younger siblings, etc)?

What skills, interests, and abilities would make you an asset to Tamarack’s summer day camp team?

Why do you want to be a Junior Assistant Naturalist with Tamarack Nature Center?
The student listed below is applying for a Junior Assistant Naturalist volunteer position with Tamarack Nature Center, where he/she will be assisting with our summer day camp program. One of the requirements of the program is a recommendation from a teacher, counselor or mentor. We are looking for youth who are mature enough to work with younger children, are dependable and have a positive attitude, but who are also fun and friendly. If you can provide a reference for this student, please complete this form and return it to him/her or to the address or email listed above. (If you prefer to substitute a letter for this form, please be sure to address the questions listed below.)

Thank you!

Tamarack Nature Center Staff

Name of Youth Applicant: ____________________________________________________________

Name of Reference: ____________________________ Relationship to Applicant: ___________________

Address: ______________________________________ City: __________________ Zip: _____________

Phone: ____________________________ E-mail: __________________________________________

How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

Describe this student with the first words that come to mind.

How do you think volunteering in a summer day camp program might help this student grow?

Additional Comments (use other side if needed):

Please rate the applicant in the following areas:

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Needs Improvement
- I Don't Know

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Signature: __________________________________________ Date: ____________________________
2020 Junior Assistant Naturalists

AVAILABILITY & PREFERENCES

Name of JAN Candidate: _______________________________________

How many weeks would you like to volunteer as a Junior Assistant Naturalist this summer?

❑ 3 weeks (minimum)  ❑ 4 weeks  ❑ 5+ weeks

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<tr>
<th>Camp Week</th>
<th>Dates: 8:15am-4:30pm, Mon- Thurs</th>
<th>Please Check all the weeks you are available:</th>
<th>Please check all weeks you are available for Before Camp Care (7:30-9am)</th>
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If you are scheduled for a half-day preschool camp in the morning or afternoon, will you have transportation to or from Tamarack at lunchtime?  ❑ YES  ❑ NO

During weeks you are not working as a JAN, are you interested in helping with Backyard Bunch, a play-based, drop-off program for preschoolers on select Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings?  ❑ YES  ❑ NO

Some of our camps are held at Snail Lake Regional Park. If transportation will be an issue for you on those days, please let us know so we can schedule you for camps that do not go to Snail Lake. Can you be dropped off and picked up at Snail Lake Regional Park if you are scheduled for a camp that is held there?  ❑ YES  ❑ NO

Review the enclosed document called “Connecting Children with Nature” to see what you can expect for each age group of campers. Then, tell us the top 3 age groups you would like to work with this summer. We will consider your preferences when scheduling, but will also try to give you a well-rounded experience.

#1 Choice _________________________  •  Sprouts & Critters = 3, 4 & 5 years old
#2 Choice _________________________  •  Discoverers = 1st—2nd grade
#3 Choice _________________________  •  Explorers = 3rd—4th grade
❑ I am comfortable with any age group!

•  Trekkers & Adventurers = 5th—8th grade

Please provide any other information about your summer schedule that you think would be helpful to us.
## Sprouts (3 years old)

### Developmental Characteristics:
- Need opportunities to explore
- Beginning to develop a sense of independence
- Enjoy dramatic play with others
- Learning how to share
- Enjoy sensory learning and play
- Need clear and consistent rules and consequences
- Can make simple choices between two things
- Practicing their words and expression of feelings

### Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:
- Pick flowers and berries
- Feel fuzzy leaves
- Play Hide & Seek in the bushes
- Balance on a log
- Run through a field
- Splash in puddles
- Sing silly songs
- Play I Spy

## Critters (4 & 5 years old)

### Developmental Characteristics:
- Very talkative and enjoy discussion
- Ask a lot of “how” and “why” questions
- Developing classification skills and reasoning
- Working on fine motor skills
- Enjoy a hands-on learning approach

### Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:
- Listen to and discuss a story
- Make a tree bark boat and sail it
- Blow dandelion seeds
- Go for a blindfold walk
- Start a rock collection

## Discoverers (1st & 2nd grade)

### Developmental Characteristics:
- Enjoy doing and exploring
- Wrapped up in self
- Incorporate senses into activities
- Have a short attention span
- Lots of energy
- Can focus on teamwork rather than competition
- Need specific, clear instructions
- Beginning to reason logically
- Enjoy collecting, organizing, and sorting

### Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:
- Dig for worms
- Hunt for wild edibles
- Run through sprinklers
- Play organized games
- Go pond dipping
- Gaze at the clouds
- Read a book
- Paint with watercolors
- Make leaf rubbings
### Explorers (3rd & 4th grade)

**Developmental Characteristics:**
- Need recognition & praise for good work
- Have rapidly changing interests
- Enjoy activities that use the whole body
- Easily motivated
- Beginning to define self through accomplishments
- Enjoy imaginative play
- Learning to plan ahead and evaluate
- Starting to consider the perspective of others

**Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:**
- Make walking sticks and use them
- Go on a nature scavenger hunt
- Go pond dipping
- Have a cookout
- Skip stones at the lake
- Go canoeing
- Play organized games
- Make paper

### Trekkers (5th & 6th grade)

**Developmental Characteristics:**
- Beginning to desire independence
- Very concerned with fairness
- Good listeners
- Like rules and logic
- Prefer new tasks and experiences over reflection
- Developing a more mature sense of right and wrong
- May shrug off responsibility
- Difficulty making decisions
- Developing ideals and selecting role models
- Good with teamwork, but can also be competitive

**Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:**
- Build a fort with friends
- Go canoeing
- Write a poem
- Build a fire
- Design a tree house
- Paint with watercolors
- Search for wild edibles and make a salad
- Play team building games
- Learn about animal tracks
- Have a relay race

### Adventurers (7th & 8th grade)

**Developmental Characteristics:**
- Capable of abstract thought
- Capable of longer, more active adventures
- Enjoy interacting with peers
- Enjoy solving real-life problems
- Capable of independent, critical ideas

**Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:**
- Design and construct a garden
- Use GPS units to navigate
- Debate an environmental issue with peers
- Go on a canoeing adventure
- Create a nature challenge for younger kids