



Leaders in Training  
Handbook

# Program Overview

We ask that both the parent/guardian and potential LIT read and review this document together.

**Overview:** Teenagers who enjoy working with younger children and would like more opportunities to be outside this summer will find a great fit in this camp program. Inspired by campers from previous summers who were eager to attend other camps and give back to their community, the Leaders in Training (LIT) program is designed to provide opportunities for older campers to increase their leadership skills by sharing their passion, knowledge, and enthusiasm for birds and the natural world with younger campers. LITs will assist camp staff in providing a caring and exciting experience for younger campers by acting as mentors, and will assist with on-site conservation projects providing exposure to various careers and approaches in the fields of biology, ecology, education, and natural resources.

**Ages:** 13-17

**Location:** Bird Conservancy of the Rockies Environmental Learning Center located at 14500 Lark Bunting Ln. Brighton, CO 80603.

**Cost:** Free

**Application Process:** This program's enrollment is dependent on an application process. If accepted, you may choose to send your child to one or more sessions. To apply, please fill out an online application. You will be contacted within two weeks regarding the status of your application and, if accepted, instructions on how to register. Applications can be found on our website under the Leaders in Training program page.

Applications must be received no later than **May 1st 2023** for full consideration.

## **COVID-19 Policy for Bird Conservancy of the Rockies**

As Bird Conservancy of the Rockies prepares for camps to return we want to share the steps we are taking to protect our campers and staff. The safety of campers, families and staff has always been a priority. **During this time of COVID-19 we are taking extra precautions to ensure this safety.**

- Staff is doing daily temperature checks and symptom assessment.
- We have increased our sanitization for restrooms, camp materials, and public spaces.
- For the health and safety of campers and staff, masks may be required
- Meals will be consumed in an outdoor setting
- One way travel is promoted when possible.
- Soap and water, hand sanitizer, or disinfecting wipes are available at all entrances and at all high-contact surfaces.

**We ask that your camper and family help us maintain this level of safety.**

- Encourage your camper to self-monitor for 14 days prior to coming to camp. (temperature, symptoms of COVID-19, exposure to others who have or may have COVID-19)
- Remind your camper to stay at home if they:
- Have a temperature of 100.4 or more
- Are experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle aches, a sore throat or a new loss of taste or smell
- Have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- All families will need to provide Bird Conservancy with contact information (primary phone and/or email).
- Masks are required at all times when in public spaces.
- 6 feet social distancing required.
- Frequent hand washing, for 20 seconds with soap and water, is encouraged – particularly when entering the building, and before and after eating meals.

**These policies will be evolving as needed per state and county health guidelines. Parents will be notified of any pertinent changes**

# Important Dates

The following dates are crucial for the development and growth of your child throughout the Leaders in Training program. These days are set aside solely for LIT instruction and will not include younger campers.

If you are unable to attend any of the following dates, please contact Becky Heath at [becky.heath@birdconservancy.org](mailto:becky.heath@birdconservancy.org)

- LIT Camp Training: Friday, June 2nd

- 8 am – 3 pm

# LIT Session Options

We highly encourage LITs to be present for the entire duration of a Bird Camp day (see below). This allows them to establish relationships with other LITs as well as campers creating a more enjoyable experience. Please indicate which camps your teenager is interested in and available for and Kathleen will be assigning each LIT to specific sessions\*. For all camps, LITs are expected to be present from 8:30am-4:15pm.

- Birding Adventure Camp LIT Session: This camp includes field trips off site

Dates: June 5 - 9

Camper ages: Ages 12 to 13

Camp Duration: 9am-4pm

- The Big Week Camp LIT Session: This camp includes one evening campfire

Dates: June 12 - 16

Camper ages: Ages 10 and 11

Camp Duration: 9am-4pm

- Raptor Camp LIT Session:

Dates: July 17 - 21

Camper ages: Ages 8 to 9

Camp Duration: 9am-4pm

- Budding Birders Camp LIT Session:

Dates: July 24 - 28

Camper ages: Ages 6 to 7

Camp Duration: 9am-4pm

- Wild Nestlings LIT Session:

Dates: July 31 - August 4

Camper ages: Ages 4 to 5

Camp Duration: 9am-12pm

\*Requesting specific camps does not solidify your teenager for the camp. Please wait for a confirmation email to be sent out prior to the start of camps.

# A day in the life of an LIT...

It is sometimes difficult to pinpoint exactly what a Leader in Training does because LITs do so much. At times being an LIT feels like being a coach, naturalist, doctor, entertainer, and a waiter.

When it comes to leading a group of kids in the outdoors anything is possible and although we try our best to stick to organized schedules we never know exactly where a day will take us! As a leader, you do not have to worry about creating a schedule. Staff will provide you with one. Staff takes care of the big picture and what happens by the hour, and you take care of what happens by the minute. That means that staff has scheduled activities for you, but it is your job to be attentive to the kids and to lead some of the activities staff present.

At the start of your camp session, you will be assigned a group of kids. Typically, you will not have over 5 campers in a group. This is your group to connect with, lead, and have fun with. You will have the opportunity to play name games with them, and teach your team basics of binocular and field guide use. You will need to get to know each camper in your team by name and on an individual basis.

Throughout the day, you will remain with your group unless otherwise instructed. It is your responsibility to make sure they are safe and are getting their basic needs met. You will learn to be attentive of their needs and learn to check for the little, but important things (check if they are carrying water on hikes, or if they are wearing sunscreen etc.) You will know where each member of your group is at all times. If conflict arises within your group, you can refer to staff whenever needed. Staff will often be checking in with you and providing you with feedback throughout the day. At the end of each day you will be nominating a camper (or all) to receive the "Golden Binoculars", which represents a camper that emulates behavior requirements that the campers come up with as a group at the beginning of the week.

We understand that this is a big challenge, and we will be there to assist you along the way. We know that being a Leader in Training means that you will be doing a lot of activities for the first time. We are not looking for perfection, we are only looking for a positive attitude, a willingness to try, and motivation to grow!

# Expectations

You are about to begin a challenging and rewarding experience as a Leader in Training (LIT) for Bird Conservancy of the Rockies' Bird Camps. In the LIT role, you're somewhere in the middle between a camper, and a staff member. Your main jobs are to support Bird Conservancy staff throughout the day, practice your leadership and role model skills and facilitate a positive outdoor camp experience for the campers. Below are some important expectations about the LIT program.

- Attend the Leaders in Training Camp training on June 2nd
- Follow instructions from Bird Conservancy staff.
- Arrive on time with a positive attitude ready to receive instructions for the day. Please arrive by 8:30am on your scheduled camp days so we can review the schedule for that day. (If you are unable to attend on a day you are scheduled, please let Becky know as soon as possible.)
- Come prepared for the day's activities in your LIT uniform and bring personal care items with you (lunch, hat, sunscreen, water bottle, jacket, etc.)
- Complete journal pages independently throughout the summer and check in if you have questions
- Act as a "group leader" for a group of 2-5 younger campers during LIT lead activities.
- Provide clear and enthusiastic instruction to individuals and small groups during LIT lead activities and when assisting Bird Conservancy staff.
- Keep your group in sight and count them regularly.
- Listen to campers and their needs.
- Communicate with the Bird Conservancy staff when issues/challenges come up.
- Bring all issues regarding disciplinary policies to staff and refrain from taking them on yourself.
- Help keep campers safe and treat all campers and the natural world with respect and kindness. Failure to do this can result in removal from the program.
- Self-reflect, grow and adapt as needed.
- Be willing to receive feedback and understand that feedback is essential to learning.
- Have Fun!

# Project

In addition to daily activities, campers will be given a field journal to complete throughout the summer. This journal is meant to give the LIT time to reflect on their experience as an LIT. LITs will also complete a project that enhances our camp programs. This project will be done as a group and throughout the year.

The project will be introduced at the Leaders in Training Camp Training on June 2nd and is to be completed over the duration of the program. Although there will be no “grade” associated with this project, it will be treated as an essential part of the Leaders in Training program and completion of the project is required.

# Tips for Success

- Show desire to be a leader.
- Treat the LIT program as an opportunity for you to develop skills and grow.
- Read your binder! Every LIT will receive a binder at training with useful information, tips, games, and more.
- Work to develop rapport with campers – the best way to do this is through games.
- Use questioning when teaching, to review and reinforce information – What do you notice? What does this remind you of? What does it make you wonder about?
- Ask questions if you don't know. This is a learning experience and we don't expect you to know all the answers.
- Let Becky or camp staff know if you are struggling with your project or just need to bounce ideas off of someone. We are here to help you!
- Communicate with Bird Conservancy staff regularly with both struggles and achievements. Our ultimate goal is to see you succeed in this program.

Please contact Becky Heath with any questions or concerns at [becky.heath@birdconservancy.org](mailto:becky.heath@birdconservancy.org)