Thank you for choosing the Aquatic Science Adventure Camp for your child this summer! No matter what program they are signed up for, they can look forward to a fun time filled with science and water activities.

The Aquatic Science Adventure Camp is one of the longest-running science summer camps in Texas. Since 1988, the Edwards Aquifer Research and Data Center at Texas State University in San Marcos has hosted thousands of campers from all across the state to come experience the wonder of discovery and the thrill of adventure! During this weeklong camp, campers will have the chance to learn through exploration and hands-on activities related to water and the environment. We believe in the power of experiential learning and self-directed discovery. Whether it’s on a bug hunt in the creek, getting dirty in a cave, or reaching the top of the ropes course, all of our activities are designed to engage our campers’ minds and bodies and impart a lasting understanding of the world around them. Our goal is for campers to have the chance to experience what real scientists do for a living and learn in a university environment using professional-grade equipment. Our motto is “real science, real fun!” for a reason!

This document will provide important information about participating in an ASAC program as well as information specific for each camp type. Please look over this information before coming to camp. If you have any questions, you may reach out to EARDC_education@txstate.edu or call 512-245-6176.

Table of Contents
Camp Descriptions .................................................................................................................................. 2
Information for all camps .......................................................................................................................... 3
Camp Specific Information ........................................................................................................................ 8
   Overnight Expedition Camps ................................................................................................................ 8
   Explorer Day Camp .............................................................................................................................. 10
   Aquatic Investigator Camp .................................................................................................................. 10
   Discovery Day Camp .......................................................................................................................... 11
Camp Descriptions

Overnight Expedition Camps – The overnight camp runs from Sunday afternoon through Friday afternoon. Campers will spend the first part of the week on the main Texas State University campus staying in a residence hall. The last 3 days of camp are spent at scenic University Camp, a Texas State-owned property located along the shores of the beautiful Blanco River. Campers will experience a wide variety of exciting, educational activities including river rafting, scuba diving, exploring a wild cave, ropes course, and even a natural water slide! Throughout the week, campers will engage with our knowledgeable staff by participating in scientific investigations related to water and the environment.

Explorer Day Camps - We offer a week-long day camp for campers who would like the camp experience without an overnight component. The camp runs from 8:30am to 5pm Monday-Friday and features many of the daytime science and recreational activities from the overnight camp including river rafting, caving, scuba diving, and more. Lunch is provided during camp.

Aquatic Investigators Day Camp – This year for the first time, there will be a camp for 15-16 year old campers with a passion for science. The camp runs from 8:30am to 5pm Monday-Friday and features a variety of adventure and science programming. Campers will get the opportunity to learn lab and outdoor research skills, engage in conservation efforts, and meet a variety of professionals in the field of Aquatic Science. This camp is geared towards campers who are interested in science as a career pathway and/or are just passionate about learning science. Lunch is provided.

Discovery Day Camps – This year for each age group there will be two independent single day programs that will be offered. Discovery Day Camps run from 9am to 4pm. The Habitat Day will include a mussel hunt in the Guadalupe River and an aquatic plant ecology class. The River Runner Day’s main activities will be tubing down the San Marcos River and a macroinvertebrate lab. Lunch is not provided; campers will need to bring their own food for the day.
Registration

Camp registration opens mid-January through our website: https://www.eardc.txstate.edu/camp.html. Most camps will require a deposit to hold a spot for your child and full payment will be due a month before the camp begins.

Camp Visitation

Visits to camp are not allowed except in emergencies. Phone calls are also discouraged because we have found that this disrupts the camp experience and can exacerbate homesickness issues.

Cancellations

There is a mandatory $100.00 cancellation fee for overnight sessions and the week-long day camp sessions if cancellation is made at least one month prior to the beginning of the session. If cancelling within one month of the camp program no refund will be given. Once the camp session has started, refunds will not be given in the event a camper is withdrawn due to homesickness, discipline or other reasons.

**EARDC reserves the right to cancel any session which does not have a minimum of fifteen (15) participants registered 3 weeks before the session start date.** In case of EARDC cancellations, all money will be refunded.

Registration Packet

Each camper must bring all completed consent, release, and medical history forms included in the registration packet. The university does not accept scanned/printed/facsimiles. Original signed documents only, please.

Camp Safety & Staff Training

We take safety very seriously and all activities will be facilitated by experienced and appropriately licensed staff. ASAC staff are certified in First-Aid and AED/CPR. All swimming/aquatic activities are supervised by a certified lifeguard. Our staff have all been background and reference checked and are
required by the State of Texas to take the Safe Camps child abuse prevention training.

Ability to swim

Each participant will be required to take a simple swim test upon arrival. **Due to the nature of the camp, the ability to swim and tread water is mandatory for all campers.** Campers who are poor swimmers will be required to wear a life jacket during any swimming activities, or be required to sit out the activity, depending on the nature of the activity. The swim test consists of being able to swim 20 yards in a flowing river without stopping or touching the bottom. It is required that all campers wear life jackets during the raft trip. Lifeguards will administer the swim test and be present for all swimming activities.

Physical requirements

Although the level of physical activity at the camp is not excessively challenging for a healthy child, several of the camp activities do require a considerable amount of walking. We suggest that students who are enrolled in the camp be accustomed to at least a moderate level of physical activity.

Camp Participation

All of our activities are ‘challenge by choice’ - we do not force participation. However, we are not able to provide alternate activities for campers who do not desire to participate. Your camper should WANT to come to camp. Please do not sign-up campers that are unenthusiastic about our camp.

Schedule

A general schedule is available online to gain an understanding of the type of activities that camp offers. A detailed schedule of activities will be given to each camper, campers are responsible for readying themselves for each day’s activities and ensuring they have the appropriate clothing and equipment for the day. Minor schedule changes may be necessary due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.
Cell Phone Policy

We ask that campers leave cell phones at home. While we understand that cell phones and mobile technology are a fact of life, they can be a distraction for campers, detract from other campers’ experience, and be misused (e.g. consuming/ sharing inappropriate content). Camp is also very active and many of our activities take place in or near water.

Families will receive a phone number in their registration packet so that campers may be contacted in the event of emergency. Please do not use the camp cell number for check-ins. The EARDC office can be contacted at (512) 245-2329 during business hours for non-emergency inquiries. Additionally, camp staff will have cameras on hand so that campers can request pictures taken and shared, and campers may bring a camera-only camera.

If you still choose to have your camper bring a cell phone to camp the following rules will be applied:

- Camper agrees to take full responsibility for their phone and phone usage
- Camper agrees to use their phone only when given explicit permission (mainly to call or text home in the evening)
- Camper agrees not to consume or share inappropriate content (including music and videos), engage in virtual bullying, or use phones during scheduled activities.

***Camp and camp staff are not liable for damaged, lost, or stolen cell phones. Failure to comply with phone rules may result in confiscation of phone or expulsion from camp.

While we sympathize that our cell-phone use policy may cause anxiety for some parents, we ask that parents please provide campers with a good example of following camp rules by respecting the cell phone policy. Mobile device usage can ‘sabotage’ a campers’ overall experience at camp. Please don’t hesitate to contact us at eardc_education@txstate.edu for questions or concerns about our mobile use policy.
Packing Lists

Packing lists for each camp are available on our website. These are guides to help campers be appropriately prepared for camp.

Medication

If your child needs to take medication while at camp, please make sure to fill out the necessary medication forms. The following are the procedures concerning medication at camp:

1. During check-in campers will turn in all medication (prescription and over the counter) for safekeeping in locked storage.
2. All medication needs to be listed on the medication form in the registration packet. We will not administer any medication not listed on the form.
3. Medication must be in the original container and if prescription, must have the name of the camper. We will only follow instructions on the container or instructions from a medical professional.
   a. If pills need to be cut, it must be done by the parent before meds are turned in.
4. Expired medication will not be administered.
5. The health officer or a designated, trained assistant will be responsible for all medication distribution during camp.
6. During check-in of camp, the health officer will meet with each camper that brought medication to go over when they need to take their medication and who they should report to.
7. Medication will be stored in the Education Office or with the Health Officer. During days at University Camp, medication will be held onsite by a staff member.
8. Camp staff will carry camper’s emergency medications and the medication will travel with the camper.
   a. If an Epi-pen or glucagon is administered, then 911 must be called.

Food/meals

If your child is attending a camp that provides meals, please contact us if your child has food allergies or a restricted diet.
Discipline

Campers are expected to follow campus rules and regulations, to respect university property and facilities and to respect the persons, dignity, and property of other campers. **Parents/guardians will be billed for any damages caused by their children.** Campers will be expected to participate in all scheduled class and recreational activities and to conform to acceptable rules of conduct as outlined in the behavior policy to be signed by campers and guardian during registration. Failure to do so may result in the camper being expelled from the camp. Campers who violate the rules outlined in the behavior contract or fail to follow staff instructions will be given a verbal warning. On the second infraction, parents will be notified. If a third incident occurs, parents will be asked to come get their camper **WITHOUT A REFUND!** This is for the safety of all campers and staff. **Due to the nature of many of the activities at the camp, failure to comply with staff instructions could result in serious danger to campers or others.**
Camp Specific Information

Overnight Expedition Camps

Mail for Campers

Campers may receive letters or gift packs. These can be left with camp staff upon registration or mailed to the address below. Please note that mailed items must be received before Wednesday afternoon to guarantee receipt by campers. Please note “Prohibited Items”.

Send to:

Camper's Name
c/o EARDC Aquatic Science Adventure Camp
601 University Dr.
(248 FAB)
San Marcos, Tx. 78666-4684

Meals

Tentative meal times are:

- Breakfast: 8:00 - 9:00
- Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00
- Dinner: 6:00 - 7:00

We take food safety very seriously, so please let us know if your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions. Meals will include a combination of on-campus dining halls and picnic- or continental- style breakfasts and lunches. Vegetarian options are always available and we can accommodate most dietary restrictions with advance notice. Healthy balanced food options are always available and encouraged, but your camper will ultimately decide what they eat.

Dorms

Campus Dorms:
Campers will stay in double occupancy rooms with community bathrooms for each hall in one of the dorms on campus. Specific dorm building is assigned late spring.
ASAC Parent Handbook

University Camp Lodges:
During the days that campers are at University Camp in Wimberly, they stay in the Beretta and Jeffersonian Lodges. Lodges consist of bunk beds and do have air conditioning available.

Overnight Supervision:
Campers will be closely supervised at all times by the camp directors, teachers, and counselors. Camp staff will stay in the dorms with campers and will help supervise recreational activities and evening activities. Camp staff staying in the dorms will be assigned a separate room from campers. At University Camp, same-sex staff will stay in the lodge with campers but must change and shower in bathrooms when campers are not present. All staff are required to pass a background check, complete a child safety training, and abide by the camp sexual abuse prevention policy (available upon request).

Bedding:
Campers need to bring linens (twin size), pillow, blanket, bath towels, and a swimming towel. A sleeping bag may be used instead of linens if desired. Campers may also want to bring ear plugs if they are light sleepers. **Linen services are not provided.**

Room Damage:
Campers will be responsible for ensuring their room and surrounding area are clean upon check-out of the dorm. A cleaning fee will be charged to campers if their assigned areas are not properly cleaned at check-out. Any damage caused by campers to University facilities including dorms, classrooms, equipment, or vehicles will be charged to campers. Any lost keys will be charged to campers (fee $40).

Packing
Campers should pack light, and everything should fit inside their luggage! Plastic bags do not make good luggage! Campers that must carry many separate items are much more likely to misplace important items. We recommend 1 suitcase or duffel and 1 backpack that can double as a day pack. If things don’t fit inside, you might be over packing. Giant trunks that your camper cannot manage by themselves are not appropriate. A packing list can be found on our website.
ASAC Parent Handbook

Spending Money
Campers do not need money while at camp. Campers may bring spending money for vending machines if desired (no more than $30 please). Campers are expected to be responsible for their own spending money while at camp.

Arrival/Departure
Overnight Camp check-in is Sunday afternoon at a residence hall on the main Texas State campus. Overnight Camp pick up is Friday from 4-4:30 p.m. at the Freeman Aquatic Biology Building. Detailed instructions for check-in and pick-up will be emailed out two weeks before the start of your camper’s session.

Explorer Day Camp

Arrival/Departure
Check in for explorer camp sessions is from 7:45-8:30 at Meadows Center for Water and the Environment. Check-in instructions and driving directions will be emailed out 2 weeks before the start of each session. Please contact EARDC if you have not received this information before your camp session starts.

Explorer Day Camp pick up is from 4:45-5:15 at the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment. We are aware of the traffic nightmare that often exists on I35 so please allow extra time for traffic and if you are running late for pick up please call us as soon as possible so arrangements can be made for a later pick up!

Aquatic Investigator Camp

Arrival/Departure
Camp check-in and pick-up will occur at the Freeman Aquatic Building. Check-in instructions and driving directions will be emailed out 2 weeks before the start of each session. Please contact EARDC if you have not received this information before your camp session starts.

Check-in
Campers will still need to be checked in by an adult even if they are 16 and can drive. Parking around the Freeman Aquatic Building is permit only.
Discovery Days

Discovery Day Camps are separate distinct camps, you can attend either or both. Camp runs from 9am to 4pm and campers must bring their own lunch and any snacks they may want during the day.

Arrival/Departure

Camp check-in and pick-up will occur at the Freeman Aquatic Building. Check-in instructions and driving directions will be emailed out 2 weeks before the start of each session. Please contact EARDC if you have not received this information before your camp session starts.