



Orientation for Overnight Visits:

PRINT and READ this document BEFORE you arrive

We look forward to sharing this new and unusual contrast to your regular, daily life. Your time here will be spent experiencing the outdoors, learning antiquated methods of survival, with hands-on involvement on our farm and nature preserve. We would like everyone to enjoy it as much as possible. Therefore we offer the following information to prepare you and set clear expectations.

****Please refer to the What to Bring List and label everything you pack so it is easily identifiable.****

Weather: For an accurate and updated weather forecast for our local Boone, NC area, please refer to Ray's weather: <http://booneweather.com/Forecast/Boone> or weather.gov for zip code: 28618. Scattered showers are very common in this temperate rainforest. Warm days & cool nights can be expected during summertime stays.

Driving Directions, Parking, Arrival & Departure: Turtle Island Preserve is 8 miles east of Boone, NC. (less than 2 miles from the Blue Ridge Parkway: Bamboo Gap exit). We cannot accept early arrivals, so you might need to book a room for the night before your camp starts. There are many local hotels and air b&b. We are in a remote location, so flying without renting a car, or taking a bus is not practical at this time. 30 minutes before the workshop begins, we will meet you in the parking area and walk down the trail into camp as a group. Your gear will be trucked down so you can just enjoy the hike. We will be spending the weekend in base camp, which is approx. 2 miles from the parking area, so it's a good idea to have your gear pre-organized before you arrive with: labeled overnight/camping gear in your big water-proof duffel, pack, or bin - ready to load into our gear truck. Have sturdy walking shoes already on and your daypack (w/ full water bottle and rainjacket) handy and ready for the walk in. Unless you choose to walk 2 miles uphill, participants will not return to the parking area until the workshop has ended. ***Please let us know in advance if you cannot commit to the prearranged arrival and departure times.**

Living Quarters: You will camp outside, in one of our rustic Adirondack-style cabins or wood floor shelters. You will fall asleep listening to the rushing waters of our streams and feel the breeze on your cheeks. Pay close attention to the "What to Bring" list; a great guide for your comfort and needs while staying at "your home away from home."

Meals: are announced by the blowing of a large conch shell, and eaten community-style in our outdoor kitchen "Nacho-Mamma's Cafe." Turtle Island is renowned for its excellent meals! Campers and staff alike often brag about how delicious the food is. We serve well-balanced meals of tasty heath food fare. We use fresh, healthy ingredients and stay away from processed foods. All you can eat, nutritious, well-balanced meals are the tradition at Turtle Island Preserve. There should be no additional food brought to camp. **Please indicate dietary restrictions/needs and or food allergies on your medical form.** Our delicious food is cooked exclusively over wood fire and our water is heated the same way. You might have the chance to eat food from our gardens, or learn about our dairy goats. Since we are actively engaged in acquiring and growing our own food we consider it sacred, so we try very hard not to waste it. You can always come back for an extra helping, but uneaten food on your plate means we'll have to take good "people-food" and put it in our compost pile. You can wash and store your dishes and utensils in the dining area.

Drinking: Our delicious water comes from deep inside our mountain well. Please keep your water bottle full of it, and drink often. Staying hydrated is very important. There are designated water fill up stations in camp. **DO NOT drink water directly from the streams – EVER!** (alcoholic beverages & tobacco are not allowed in base camp)

Restrooms: We have two types of outhouses at the Preserve, sitting & squatting. You can choose where to go. You may also notice an outhouse with a sawdust bucket. Most humans pass about 7 lbs of nitrogen each year through their urine, and nitrogen really helps crops grow. We collect the urine in sawdust buckets and then add that to our compost heap. (Please do not poop in the sawdust buckets.) Our outhouses are stocked with toilet paper and receptacles for feminine needs. Hand washing stations are set up throughout camp so you can always wash up after a trip to the outhouse and before entering the kitchen. Please wash your hands frequently.

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...Overnight Visitor Orientation Continued

Cleanliness: Keeping clean helps us stay comfortable and safe. A messy floor leads to nasty tripping hazards in the night and edible items in cabins attract marauding wild animals from the forest. Keeping your sleeping area neat and rolled up each morning will keep your bed dry and cozy. Do not litter! We will also make sure that everyone has the opportunity and skills to practice good hygiene without having a negative impact on the forest. Each meal is preceded by a thorough hand washing with soap and water. Each night ends with a good tooth washing – mountain style. (Be prepared – we do not have hot running water or shower facilities on site yet.)

Danger: Imagine that the forest is a friend you can get to know – a good, peaceful place. There are some dangers like snakes, poison ivy, yellow jackets, etc. but our staff will teach you how to learn about and deal with them. Leaving them alone, running away and telling a staff member if you encounter them are good first measures. Ignorance and fear are the most dangerous things humans encounter. So we'd like to empower you and teach you how to be safe. Fire and sharp tools are examples of dangerous things we rely on here. With respect and caution you will be able to learn while staying out of harm's way. Please be very mindful of your own role and responsibility with the hazards and danger of fire. Your presence on the property means that you assume all liability for yourself & your possessions.

Safety: is always top priority at camp. Most of our staff have been trained in first aid. There will be a first aid kit at each activity area, as well as the "mother first aid kit" in the kitchen. The Watauga County Hospital, in nearby Boone, serves as our professional medical service should a serious accident occur. Turtle Island will carry no health or accident insurance for you so we require your medical info in advance and permission to seek professional attention in the event of injury. Staying out of restricted areas and using the buddy system are part of your Turtle Island responsibilities. Be aware of your new surroundings. Please don't go wandering alone without letting a staff member know. Do not approach an animal without a Turtle Island senior staff member's direction. Remember to carry your small flashlight, raincoat & water bottle in your day pack at all times. Rain showers show up out of nowhere around here, please be prepared. Keeping dry is crucial, not only for comfort but for safety from problems such as hypothermia. Keep shoes and clothes dry, if they do get wet, hang them and put dry clothes on. Turtle Island, its volunteers and staff are not liable for your health and safety.

Appropriate Behavior: Do not enter any building, residence or personal quarters without the invitation of a senior staff member. Be kind and sensitive to others needs. NEVER intentionally try to scare someone, or react negatively to a new experience. Be polite. It is very different to be outside without walls and personal space. You must learn to understand the "tribal community" – ideas our Indian ancestors knew well. Harassment of any kind and being under the influence of intoxicating substances are grounds for immediate dismissal without refund.

Unplug: For millennia all of humanity thrived without digital technology. Here, we intentionally choose an off-grid lifestyle. There is no electricity, artificial lighting, wireless signal or cell phone service. Please do not use electronic devices, other than cameras in base camp. Make arrangements ahead of time with people you stay in contact with so you won't "need" your phone for the weekend. We ask visitors to lock their electronic devices in their car for the weekend. Please respect the cellular-free zone of base camp. This is a rare opportunity for our visitors to have a non-digital nature experience.

Make the Most of it: You will get to do things at Turtle Island that you won't be able to experience anywhere else. Challenging yourself will be a daily opportunity. Please try to keep an open mind and a positive attitude to get the very most out of your time. Good attitudes, role modeling and self-discipline are your entrusted responsibility.

If you cancel your reservation, \$150 will be retained as a nonrefundable deposit.

Turtle Island Preserve is a 501c3 non-profit education center and a fully-operational, year-round, non-electrical, Appalachian Farmstead founded in 1987 by renowned naturalist Eustace Conway. We live and work as many folks in this region did 100 years ago – hunting and growing food, raising livestock, and using an outhouse instead of a modern bathroom. We host summer youth camps, school field trips, college work-service learning projects, adult workshops, scout excursions, and numerous other events dealing with traditional living and a close relationship to the natural world. To learn more about our unique nature preserve and environmental education center, our founder, services, and mission please explore our website - turtleislandpreserve.org. If you have questions, concerns, needs or comments, please contact the Turtle Island Office.

