



AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

Dear VINS Afterschool Students and Families,

Thank you for choosing VINS!

At VINS Afterschool Program, our mission is to give opportunity for students to continue their learning beyond the confines of the school day by giving students hands-on exploration in the outdoors with a focus on cultivating scientific thinking and ecological awareness.

This handbook is designed to help you plan for afterschool. It contains information about our policies, pick-up, schedule and much more.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions. We look forward to sharing the wonders of the natural world with your child.

Warm regards,

Courtney Leo
Afterschool & Nature Camp Coordinator
cleo@vinsweb.org

Contact Information

Address:	Vermont Institute of Natural Science 149 Natures Way PO Box 1281 Quechee, VT 05059	Office:	802-359-5000 EXT: 208
		Email:	cleo@vinsweb.org
		Website:	https://vinsweb.org/afterschool-program/

Who We Are

Organization

Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) has been a leader in environmental education and wildlife conservation since 1972. VINS' mission is to motivate individuals to care for the natural environment through education, research, and avian wildlife rehabilitation.

We offer locally relevant and compelling environmental education programs and services designed for a wide audience. Our programs combine environmental science concepts with

hands-on exploration to build empathy for nature and empower individuals to care for local natural ecosystems. Thousands of schoolchildren, teachers, conservation volunteers, and other adult learners from throughout New England participate in VINS' environmental education, research and rehabilitation programs each year.

VINS Afterschool Program

The VINS Afterschool Program is an opportunity for students to continue their learning beyond the confines of the school day. Hosted at the VINS Nature Center or in partnership with afterschool providers in the Upper Valley, our programs offer students hands-on exploration in the outdoors with a focus on cultivating scientific thinking and ecological awareness.

In our afterschool programs, the great outdoors is our teacher; students will learn from the animals and habitats they encounter at the VINS Nature Center or the natural spaces around their school and discover the wonders of the natural world.

Drop-off & Pick-up

Afterschool students will be dropped off by the Ottauquechee school bus #12 at the VINS Nature Center.

Afterschool student's pick-up is located at the west end of the VINS Nature Center parking lot, in front of the VINS Welcome Center/Nature Store.

Important: As you enter and exit our nature center **there is a speed limit of 10 mph** to ensure the safety of students, visitors, and wildlife.

Drop-off Time: 3:15 PM Tuesdays 3/21 – 5/16 (no afterschool session on 4/11)

Pick-up Time: 5:15 PM Tuesdays 3/21 – 5/16 (no afterschool session on 4/11)

You must provide VINS with a list of all adults who are authorized to pick up your child **INCLUDING** yourself. **Each person must show an ID at the point of pickup.**

In the event that you are running late to pick-up your camper email cleo@vinsweb.org, call VINS' main line: (802) 359-5000 to notify VINS.

Late Arrivals/Early Departures

If your student will be arriving late or leaving early, please notify VINS Afterschool Program at least one day prior so staff can plan accordingly. Contact Courtney Leo, Afterschool & Nature Camp Coordinator at 802-359-5000 x208 or email cleo@vinsweb.org. All late drop-offs or early pick-ups must check in with staff at the VINS Welcome Center/Nature Store. **Adults may not go directly to any location on the VINS Nature Center campus to retrieve their student.**

Photo Release

Parents/guardians will be asked to sign a photo release permitting VINS to use photo images of their child in newsletters, on our website, in brochures, and other promotional materials. If a parent/guardian has refused the photo release, VINS staff will not take photographs of that student or if they do, must delete or crop out the image of the child.

Health Care Policies

Medication

If your child will be taking any prescribed or over-the-counter medications while at VINS Afterschool Program you must notify staff by completing the medications section of the VINS Afterschool Health and Emergency Care Form. You must provide any necessary medication for your child.

All medications, including Epi-Pens, inhalers, and any other lifesaving medications or medical devices, will be carried in the first aid kit of your afterschool program teacher.

Illness and Minor Injury

Please do not send your child to afterschool if they are ill.

If your child is injured or becomes sick or upset during the afterschool session VINS Afterschool Program staff will provide any necessary care, including First Aid. If the injury or illness limits the child's ability to participate in afterschool activities, an afterschool staff member will contact you to pick up your child.

You will be notified by VINS Afterschool Program staff at the end of that day's session of any minor First Aid administered to your child that does not limit their ability to participate in afterschool activities.

Emergencies and Serious Injury

All VINS afterschool staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR and are trained to respond to emergencies. In the event of a health emergency or serious injury, you will be contacted immediately. If VINS Afterschool Program staff are unable to reach you, your emergency contact will be notified.

If necessary, your child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest appropriate medical facility. Afterschool participants will never be transported in a VINS staff member's personal vehicle. An afterschool staff member will remain with your child, including during transport, until you or your designated emergency contact arrives.

If an emergency or last minute change may influence pick-up times or locations, parents/guardians will be contacted by the Afterschool & Nature Camp Coordinator via email broadcast as well as by phone.

Weekly Schedule

Schedule for Afterschool

Tuesday 3/21	Birds & Insulation Spring has arrived, but the days are still chilly. Investigate how birds stay warm and how certain feathers have been adapted to keep us warm too. We'll put different materials to the test to discover which is the best insulator.
Tuesday 3/28	Beaver Dams & Reservoirs Join us on a wetland adventure to explore how beavers use structures to shape water habitats, like we do with reservoirs. Put your building skills to the test to build a dam and learn how material, shape, and force effect a structure.
Tuesday 4/4	Wasps & Paper Making Let's be scientists and engineers to see what we can learn about the strength of paper and how it was inspired by wasps. Join us in experimenting with the process of how it's made and create your own paper to bring home.
Tuesday 4/11	NO AFTERSCHOOL THIS WEEK
Tuesday 4/18	Birds & Airplanes Let your imagination soar as we learn how wing shapes inspired airplane design and conduct your own experiments with shape as we construct and test our very own paper airplanes.
Tuesday 4/25	Bats & Navigation Come navigate your way through the science of echolocation. Through games and experiments we'll put our own ears to the test to see what we can learn about echolocation and how humans might navigate in similar ways.
Tuesday 5/2	Burrs & Velcro Get a grip on the nature that inspired velcro. We will work together to explore the VINS meadow to discover how other seeds are dispersed. Then put your innovation to the test as you imagine your own seed dispersal design.
Tuesday 5/9	Spider Webs & Bird-Safe Windows Join us as we unweave the mysteries of spider webs and see discover the connection of how they can help us make a world safer for birds. Bring your creativity as we make our own colorful window clings for our homes.
Tuesday 5/16	Fireflies & Lightbulbs Shine a light on the magical science behind how and why fireflies make light. Let's see how these twinkling insects have inspired human inventions and put our skills to the test to see if we can communicate like a firefly.