

SUMMER CAMP CATALOG

James River Association



MUD ON THEIR SHOES.
CONFIDENCE IN THEIR STRIDE.
STORIES THEY WON'T STOP
TELLING.



05

GENERAL INFORMATION

UPPER JAMES CAMPS

Serving Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell, Lynchburg

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MIDDLE JAMES CAMPS

*Serving the Greater Richmond and Tri-Cities
(Petersburg, Colonial Heights, and Hopewell)*

LOWER JAMES A CAMPS

*Serving New Charles City, James City, New Kent,
Prince George, Surry, and Williamsburg*

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LOWER JAMES B CAMPS

Serving the Greater Hampton Roads and Tidewater region

FAQS

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LEADERSHIP

*Serving the Greater Richmond and Tri-Cities
(Petersburg, Colonial Heights, and Hopewell)*

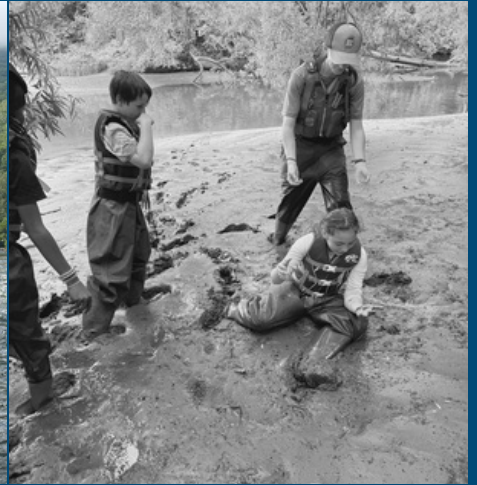
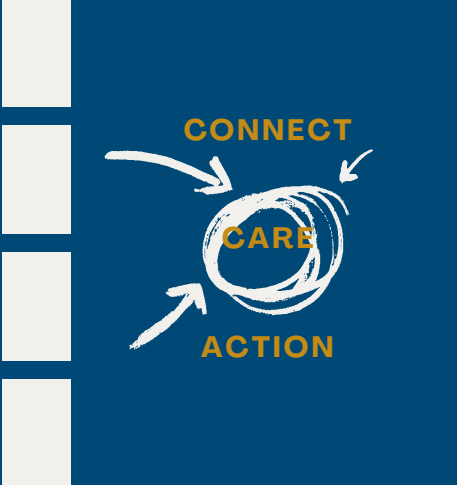
EXPEDITION

Serving the entire watershed, from Lynchburg to Hampton

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CAMP STAFF



Who are we?

The James River Association is devoted to safeguarding the James River and fostering connections with it. Since 1976, JRA has championed the vast 10,000-square-mile watershed, engaging in advocacy, education, and community involvement. Our immersive water programs, including youth summer camps, offer a unique way to explore. We provide day camps focused on paddling, fishing, biology, art, and more in Lynchburg, Richmond, Williamsburg, and Hampton for ages 5 - 17, alongside overnight expeditions and leadership programs for high schoolers.

JRA's education team is committed to offering year-round programs, ensuring everyone in the watershed feels welcomed on the James River, learns from it, and plays a part in its preservation. We believe that connection builds understanding, belonging, and stewardship.

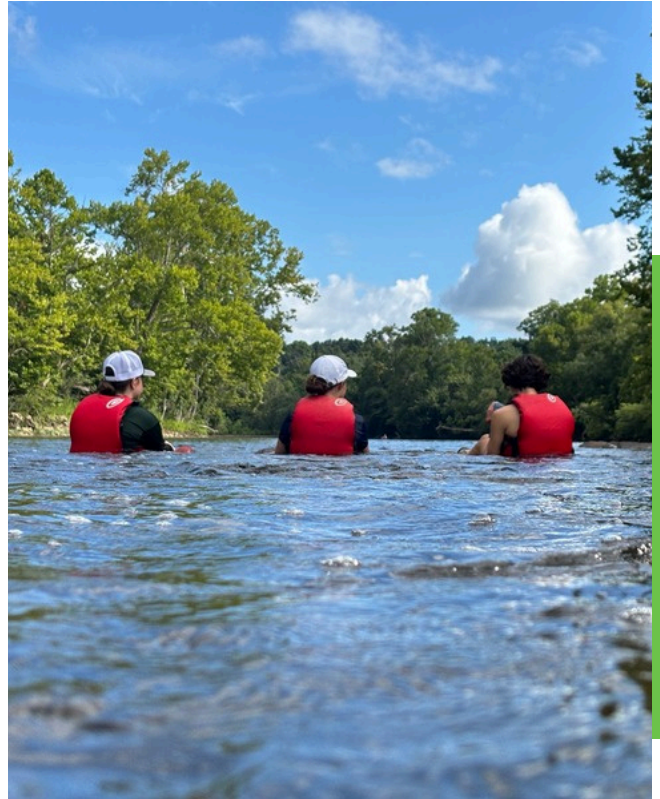
Our team comprises caring professionals skilled in environmental science, experiential education, and outdoor recreation. Our camp instructors are certified in river safety, first aid, CPR, and paddle safety, ensuring a safe and enriching experience.

OVERVIEW

Every day is an adventure. Every experience builds connection.

Dive into discovery with The James River Association summer camps. Here, youth transform into explorers, artists, and adventurers, gaining skills and confidence while forging a deep connection with the river. Whether they're paddling under the sun, sketching the vibrant wildlife, or learning to fish with seasoned educators, each camper leaves with a newfound curiosity and a sense of belonging to the James River.

Join us for an unforgettable week of full or half-day camps in Lynchburg, Richmond, Williamsburg, and Hampton, where every moment is an invitation to explore and grow.



ABOUT CAMP



Ages 5-8

*Playful
Otter
Camps*

Ages 9 - 11

*Mighty
Sturgeon
Camps*

Ages 12 - 17

*Soaring
Osprey
Camps*

CONNECTION → CARE → ACTION

Optimists

Kids learn that their actions matter. Through hands-on experiences on the river and in nature, campers build confidence, curiosity, and a sense of hope—discovering that caring for the environment can be positive, empowering, and fun.

Catalysts

At camp, every moment beckons you to uncover something new. Curiosity guides campers as they engage in activities that ignite interest and creativity. Together, they face challenges, learning not just skills but also laying a foundation for lifelong growth and inspiring waves of positive change.

Credibility

Dive into discovery with our camps, where trained educators guide young explorers through hands on, science based adventures. Designed with safety and best practices in mind, our programs ensure that every child feels secure, empowered, and eager to learn.

Community

JRA camps offer inviting spaces where every child feels at home. By joining in shared outdoor activities, campers form friendships, learn teamwork, and establish social bonds, all while reaping mental and emotional benefits from being in nature.



LOCATIONS

James River Association

LOWER JAMES - Williamsburg

The Colonial National Historical Park
1335 Colonial National Historical Pkwy
Williamsburg, VA 23185

UPPER JAMES

Riveredge Park
150 Rocky Hill Rd,
Madison Heights, VA 24572

MIDDLE JAMES

James A Buzzard River Education Center
2825 Dock Street
Richmond, VA 23225

LOWER JAMES - Hampton

Hampton Marina
710 Settlers Landing Rd
Hampton, VA 23669

DROP OFF AND PICK UP INFO

Drop Off: At all locations on the first day, please walk up with your camper and check them in with camp staff. On all other days, camp leaders will be at the drop off location to greet you and your camper. Please do not get out of your car at drop off and to ensure traffic flow continues smoothly. Camp staff will not be available before camp start times.

Pick Up: At all locations, you will be required to walk up to camp and check your camper out by showing your ID and signing your camper out. Only adults listed on the registration as approved adults will be allowed to pick up your child. Please plan to arrive no more than 5 minutes early and we appreciate you not being late.

SCHEDULE



Full Day Camps

9AM

DROP OFF

9:10PM

MORNING SESSIONS

12PM

LUNCH

12:45PM

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:55PM

PICK UP



Half Day Camps

9AM/1PM

DROP OFF

9:05AM/1:05PM

SESSIONS

11:55AM/3:55PM

PICK UP

REGISTER

James River Association

Join us for an enriching experience running for 8 weeks at each location. Campers are welcome to sign up for multiple weeks to fully embrace the adventure. At Lower A, some camps are specially reserved for Williamsburg-James City County Schools students, who should register through their school to participate.



EVERY CAMPER RECEIVES A JRA CAMP T-SHIRT AS PART OF THEIR CAMP REGISTRATION.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

We use JotForms for registration and require information about your camper, caregivers, and emergency contacts, as well as health/medical information and a liability waiver. We also ask about your camper's swimming ability and comfort with water activities, as many of our camps involve spending time on and around the river. If you are applying for financial assistance, additional information is required.



PAYMENT

FULL DAY <i>5 Day Mon - Fri</i> \$399	FULL DAY <i>4 Day Mon - Thur</i> \$320	FULL DAY <i>2 Day M/T or Th/F</i> \$150	HALF DAY <i>5 Day Mon - Fri</i> \$200
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PAYMENT

Payment is collected securely via Stripe at the end of the registration form. Full payment is due at the time of registration in order to reserve your camper's spot.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If you are applying for financial assistance, a 20% non-refundable deposit is required at the time of registration. Once financial assistance decisions have been made, if there is a remaining balance, payment will be due at that time.

CANCELLATIONS

- If you are no longer able to attend your scheduled week of camp, please contact us as soon as possible. Your camper can be transferred to another comparable camp for no additional cost, if space is available.
- Camp registration fees are fully refundable if cancelled more than three weeks before the start of camp. After three weeks, 50% of the registration fee will be refunded.
- No refunds will be available for cancellations made less than a week before the start of camp.
- If you are experiencing extraneous circumstances that prevent you from attending camp, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss alternate options.

UPPER JAMES

PLAYFUL OTTER CAMPS

James River Association

(Ages 5-8)



Creek and Canopy

JUNE 15-18

9AM - 12PM

Do you like bugs, salamanders, or fish? Get ready for a week full of slimy, crunchy, swimming, and flying creatures! We will explore the lifecycle of insects we find in the water and on land and spend a day hunting for frogs, salamanders, toads and turtles. We will also have the chance to hold and touch the critters we find!

Art in the Wild

JUNE 29 - JULY 2

9AM - 12PM

Campers will paint watercolor masterpieces inspired by the James River, create unique tie-dye using natural materials, and much more! They'll also explore local plants and animals while keeping a nature journal to showcase their artwork and record their discoveries. Throughout the week, campers will work on a special, one-of-a-kind art project that will be displayed at the River Center.

MIGHTY STURGEON CAMPS

(Ages 9 -11)



Tangled Anglers Camp

JUNE 22 - 26

9AM - 3PM

Join JRA staff for a fun-filled week all about fishing! You'll discover different fish species that live in the James, learn about their habitats and diets, and practice various fishing techniques. Each camper will receive their own rod and tackle to use throughout the week—and keep! As a special treat, a DWR conservation officer will join us for a day of fishing.

River Ambassadors

JULY 6 - 10

9AM - 12PM

Whether you're passionate about clean water or simply curious about the James River, become a River Ambassador this week! Dive into on-the-water adventures exploring everything the river has to offer—from fishing to water quality testing and beyond. Our River Ambassadors will learn professional stream sampling techniques and build a deeper connection with the river.



Art in the Wild

JULY 27-31

9 AM - 12PM

Campers will paint watercolor masterpieces inspired by the James River, create unique tie-dye using natural materials, and much more! They'll also explore local plants and animals while keeping a nature journal to showcase their artwork and record their discoveries. Throughout the week, campers will work on a special, one-of-a-kind art project that will be displayed at the River Center.



UPPER JAMES

SOARING OSPREY CAMPS

(Ages 12 - 15)

Paddle Camp

(Ages 14-17)

JULY 13 - 17

9AM - 3PM

Join JRA for a week of paddle skill instruction! We will explore canoeing, kayaking, SUP, and even take a ride on a Batteaux! Students will complete an exciting downriver paddle putting to use all of the skills that we have learned! As a part of this camp, participants will earn their ACA (American Canoe Association) level 1 fundamentals, taught by an accredited instructor.

Master Anglers Camp

JULY 20 -24

9AM - 3PM

Join JRA staff for a fun week filled with everything fishing. You'll learn about different fish species living in the James River, their habitat, diet, and fishing techniques. You'll get your very own rod and tackle to use during the week and keep! As a part of this week, a Department of Wildlife Resources conservation officer and a biologist will join us for one day of fishing.

River Ambassadors

AUGUST 3-7

9AM - 3PM

Whether you're passionate about clean water or simply curious about the James River, become a River Ambassador this week! Dive into on-the-water adventures exploring everything the river has to offer—from fishing to water quality testing and beyond. Our River Ambassadors will learn professional stream sampling techniques and build a deeper connection with the river.



PLAYFUL OTTER CAMPS

(Ages 5-8)



Living Rainbow

JUNE 22 - 26

9AM - 12PM

JULY 6 - 10

9AM - 12PM

Bring color to your child's summer! This playful, nature-based camp introduces young learners to the vibrant colors of native plants and animals. Campers explore color mixing through hands-on activities and discover how animals use color as an adaptation. Through games, art, and outdoor exploration, children build creativity, curiosity, and an early love of nature and science.

River and Trails

JULY 20 - 24

9AM - 12PM

Does your camper love to play, explore, and discover in nature? This is the camp for you! Campers explore the river through swimming, games, wildlife discovery, short hikes, and hands-on nature art. The focus is curiosity, comfort outdoors, and having fun in nature. They'll spend plenty of time moving, imagining, and having fun outdoors.

Wild Ways Jr.

AUGUST 3-7

9AM - 12PM

A skill-building adventure camp for kids ready to build confidence and outdoor know-how! This camp is focused on developing independence, leadership, and responsibility in outdoor settings. Campers will practice age-appropriate, real-world river and trail skills while learning how to care for natural spaces.



MIDDLE JAMES

MIGHTY STURGEON CAMPS

(Ages 9 -11)



Wild Ways

JUNE 15 - 18

9AM - 3PM

A skill-building adventure camp for kids ready to build confidence and outdoor know-how! This camp is focused on developing independence, leadership, and responsibility in outdoor settings. Campers will practice real-world river and trail skills while learning how to care for natural spaces.



River & Trails

JUNE 22 - 26

9AM - 12PM

JULY 27 -31

9AM - 3PM

Does your camper love to play, explore, and discover in nature? Campers enjoy the James River through swimming, wildlife exploration, hiking, games, and creative nature art. They'll learn about local plants and animals, explore river habitats, and spend time moving, imagining, and having fun outdoors. Perfect for kids curious about nature who thrive on hands-on discovery.

Jr. Backyard Biologist

JUNE 29 - 22

9 AM - 3PM

JULY 20 - 24

1PM - 4PM

Give your child a summer adventure rooted in nature! Campers explore the world of birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and fish through animal-themed crafts, live electrofishing demonstrations, checking cover boards for reptiles, and hands-on fish anatomy. This camp blends learning, discovery, and outdoor fun while sparking lasting curiosity about the natural world.

SOARING OSPREY CAMPS

(Ages 12 - 15)

Sr. Backyard Biologist

JULY 13 - 17

9AM - 3PM

Give your child a summer adventure rooted in nature! Campers explore the world of birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and fish through animal-themed crafts, live electrofishing demonstrations, checking cover boards for reptiles, and hands-on fish anatomy. This camp blends learning, discovery, and outdoor fun while sparking lasting curiosity about the natural world.



LOWER JAMES A

James River Association

MIGHTY STURGEON CAMPS

(Ages 9 -11)



Crafty Creatures

JUNE 15 - 18

9AM - 3PM

Where creativity, art, and outdoor adventure meet! Campers can dive into various art forms and engage in hands-on projects. Along the journey, they'll discover the unique wildlife of the James River, using nature as both a classroom and inspiration. Through art-making, exploration, and imagination, campers will forge a stronger bond with the natural world.

Growing Wild

JULY 27-31

9AM - 3PM

Come and explore the garden's marvels! Campers will craft their own gardens while delving into the world of plants, pollinators, and beneficial insects. Through engaging activities and crafts, they'll learn about plant anatomy, encounter helpful garden creatures, and connect closely with nature.





LOWER JAMES A

SOARING OSPREY CAMPS

(Ages 12 - 15)

Exploring Ancient Virginia

JUNE 29-JULY 2

9AM - 3PM

Embark on a journey to Explore Ancient Virginia! Dive into the past as you hunt for fossils, study rocks, and reveal the stories of Virginia's earliest environments and inhabitants. This camp weaves together history, geology, paleontology, and archaeology, bringing ancient Virginia to life through engaging exploration and scientific discovery.

Junior Ranger Angler Camp

JUNE 22-25 (Y)

9PM - 2PM

JULY 6-9 (W)

JULY 13-16 (W)

JULY 20 - 23 (W)

Get ready to reel in an unforgettable summer at Angler Camp! Learn how to cast a line like a pro, build paddling skills on the water, and explore the James River and Chesapeake Bay from our amazing floating classroom, The Longview. Along the way, you'll discover the incredible fish and wildlife that call the river home and learn about the history of fishing in this area. Explore, learn, paddle, and fish to earn your Junior Ranger Angler badge as you become a true river adventurer!

NOTE: These camps are only for students in York Co (Y) or Williamsburg James City County (W) Schools. They are offered for FREE and registration is available through individual school divisions. Please reach out to your school for more information.



LOWER JAMES B

SOARING OSPREY CAMPS *(Ages 12 - 15)*



Estuary Explorers

JUNE 25 - 26

JULY 20- 21

9AM - 3PM

JULY 6- 7

JULY 23- 24

JULY 13 - 14

AUGUST 3 - 4

JULY 16 - 17

AUGUST 6 - 7

Join us aboard the James River Association's floating classroom, The Longview, for an inspiring two-day adventure in estuary science! Dive into hands-on exploration with scientific tools like trawl and plankton nets, sediment samplers, and water testing kits to discover the vibrant ecosystems of the tidal James River. Engage directly with scientific instruments, learn from JRA staff about data tracking for river health, and acquire basic maritime skills. Experience the wonder of river wildlife firsthand. Our mornings will be spent on the Longview, followed by a return to the dock for a lunch break and a closing activity.

River Researchers

JUNE 29-JULY 2

JULY 27-31

9AM - 3PM

Join us aboard the James River Association's floating classroom, Longview, for an inspiring four-day adventure in river research! Dive into the world of aquatic ecology and experience life as a marine scientist on a research vessel. You'll have the opportunity to use professional tools like trawl and plankton nets, sediment samplers, microscopes, and water testing equipment to discover the rich diversity of the tidal James River's plants, animals, and habitats. Learn essential maritime skills, encounter remarkable river wildlife, and enjoy an exclusive day at the VIMS aquaculture research lab. Embark on this journey with us and become an advocate for a healthier river and stronger community!



CAN I SIGN MY CAMPER UP FOR A CAMP THAT IS ABOVE OR BELOW THEIR AGE?

To create an enjoyable experience for all campers, we kindly ask you to follow our age guidelines. Please register your camper in the correct age group to ensure they are in the proper category on the first day of camp.

HOW MANY CAMPERS PARTICIPATE IN EACH CAMP?

Our camps are lovingly crafted with a limited capacity: 23 campers at most, 20 for the Upper James, and just 12 for the Lower James Camp B. The Upper Paddle Camp also invites only 12 participants, as guided by the American Canoe Association. These carefully set limits ensure we offer an enriching and safe environment, fostering an ideal camper-to-leader balance for all.

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF CAMPERS?

Our camps require at least 10 campers to run. If a camp doesn't reach this number two weeks before it starts, we'll let you know and offer options to transfer to another camp, if space allows, or get a full refund. While we strive to accommodate transfer requests, the popularity of our camps might limit availability if a camp is canceled.

WHAT DOES MY CAMPER NEED TO BRING?

- A packed lunch and snacks
- A reusable water bottle
- Closed-toe shoes that can get wet (sorry, no Crocs)
- Swimsuit
- Sun protection - hat, UV protection such as long sleeves shirts
- Weather-appropriate clothing
- A change of clothes (recommended)
- Sunscreen or bug spray (optional)



WHAT IF THERE IS EXTREME WEATHER?

Rain or shine, our camps welcome everyone! For light to moderate rain, we equip students with the right gear to relish the outdoors. In case of heavy rain or thunderstorms, we offer engaging, nature-inspired indoor activities until the skies clear. During extreme heat, we prioritize hydration, provide river and shade breaks, and offer indoor rest as needed.

LEADERSHIP

James River Association

FUTURE LEADERS FOR OUR WATERS (FLOW)

Join us for a transformative, year-long leadership journey tailored for high school students passionate about safeguarding the James River and inspiring change in their communities.

Who is this program for?

High school students (Rising Grades 10–12) who are curious about:

- Environmental science
- Community change and civic engagement
- Leadership and teamwork
- Protecting the James River and their local watershed

No prior experience required – just curiosity, commitment, and a willingness to learn.

Program Commitment

- Weeklong Summer Leadership Institute
- One full day per month (8 hours), September–April
- Work in teams to design a real-world capstone project
- Optional free multi-day river paddle experience

This is a selective, cohort-based program. Students must commit to the full year.

By the end of the program, FLOW participants will have built confidence as leaders and collaborators, understand how environmental issues connect to justice, policy, and community well-being, gain real-world experience in field science, advocacy, and project design, and feel more comfortable and connected in outdoor environments.

APPLICATIONS OPEN MARCH 1 AND CLOSE APRIL 30, 2026 AT 5PM. NOTIFICATIONS WILL BE SENT OUT BY MAY 15, 2026.



EXPEDITIONS

MULTI-DAY CANOE & CAMPING TRIPS

(Ages 14 - 18)

Embark on a captivating five-day, four-night adventure along the James River. Campers can choose one section—or take on all three—experiencing the river up close while camping along its banks and discovering the landscapes, wildlife, and history that connect the watershed.

Upper James - *Advanced*

JUNE 15-18

Our most advanced trip, this section of the James River challenges paddlers to take on Class I–III whitewater. Campers learn to read the river, and work as a team to navigate moving water. Days are spent paddling through scenic stretches of the James, building canoe skills and learning about river history and ecology. This trip is perfect for campers ready to challenge themselves and experience the river in a whole new way.



Lower James - *Beginner*

JULY 6-10

New to river adventures? The Lower James expedition is the perfect place to start. This beginner-friendly trip explores the tidal James River from Richmond toward the Chesapeake Bay, combining three days of canoe paddling with time aboard our motorized boats, The Spirit of the James and The Longview. Campers will learn about the unique challenges of the Lower James, participate in a hands-on fish trawl, and discover the species that call this stretch of river home. With riverside camping and a final night indoors, this trip is an exciting and supportive introduction to river exploration.

Middle James - *Intermediate*

JULY 27-31

Ready to level up your river skills? The Middle James expedition runs from James River State Park to Bremono Bluff and is perfect for campers ready for a longer adventure. This stretch features steady Class I riffles with the possibility for Class II, great fishing, rock skipping, and long days of paddling through beautiful scenery—including a trip through historic Scottsville. Along the way, campers learn how riparian buffer restoration helps protect the river and its banks, with evenings spent camping at a mix of established campgrounds and primitive riverside sites.

*The expedition fee is \$650 per student, which is significantly reduced from the true program cost of over \$2,000 per participant, thanks to support from grants, partners, and donors. **Financial assistance is available to ensure all students can participate, regardless of ability to pay.***

CAMP STAFF

UPPER JAMES



Aдаiah Bauer

Canoeing is my favorite activity to do on the river. I love seeing the herons and otters along river as I paddle.



Hanna Cooper

My favorite thing to do on the James is watching the turtles bask on the rocks!



Jenni Nolan

My favorite thing is going on a downriver paddle and scouting wildlife!

MIDDLE JAMES



Maya Anderson

I love swimming in the river and hopping the rocks! I always see so much amazing wildlife



Joanne Sims

I love any chance to see a river otter!



Gabe Thornton

I love paddling a canoe on the James. The sound of flowing water past my boat and wildlife existing around brings me joy



Logan Andrews

I enjoy the sight of a cormorant's goofy flight pattern while cruising along the river



Hannah Dahl

My favorite activity is watching birds make their homes and find their food along the James River.



Kerri Gentius

My favorite thing about the river is paddling and observing wildlife

CAMP STAFF

LOWER JAMES A & B



Bella Hartz

I love getting to see dolphins jumping and playing in the James River!



James Abbott

My favorite part of the river is where it meets the Bay and getting to seeing dolphins and sea turtles from the deck of the Longview



Melissa DeHart

Seahorses are some of my favorite James River residents because they're small and curious, just like me.

CAMP ADMIN



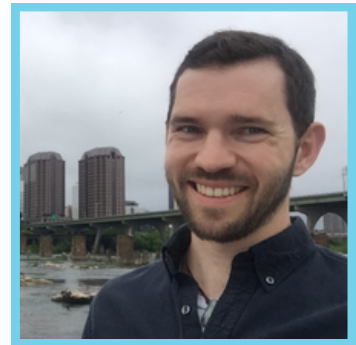
Katie Ferrell

My favorite activity on the James is to kayak to secret spots to look for sharks teeth.



Anne Self

I like to sit quietly and disconnect next to the moving water while watching nature.



Matt Scott Stone

I love to hunt for minerals and fossils that find their way into the river on its path.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE



Protecting the James River and connecting people to it since 1976.