

The G.I.R.L.'s Guide to CAMP *Mary Atkinson*



Nature and Property Activities for Troops and Groups



and so the adventure begins

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Welcome to Camp Mary Atkinson! We are so excited that your group is taking a trip to our flagship camp in Johnston County. The G.I.R.L.'s Guide to Camp Mary Atkinson has lots of helpful information for planning your trip, activity suggestions, and helpful reminders. This information is here to help you start planning your trip, so feel free to use it as a starting point and expand on the ideas in the pages to come.

Camp Mary Atkinson sits on 278 acres of land – a gift from Mary Atkinson in 1954. This space provides us with so many options for activities, whether it is being used for troops, service units, or summer resident camp. From walking the trails to climbing the Alpine Tower, Camp Mary Atkinson has something for everyone!

Our property is home to beautiful wooded trails – take a hike and look for frogs and fish by the lake, birds in the trees, and turtles in the woods. If boating is more your speed, our lake offers opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, and paddle boarding. For those looking for a swim, our pool is open from May 15 – September 15 and the lake has a swimming area that can be used when the weather conditions allow. The archery range is perfect for beginning or experienced archers, with moveable targets that can help to increase the level of difficulty. Our bouldering grotto and 50-foot Alpine Tower provide an opportunity for individual challenge while getting your feet off the ground! There are a variety of hiking trails used to explore the woods surrounding camp. To top it all off, we have grassy areas and an airnasium for games, a gaga ball pit, and shelters that are perfect for crafts or other activities.

We can't wait for you to come to Camp Mary Atkinson and explore all that it has to offer. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us using the contact information below.

Happy Camping!

Camp & Outdoor Program Team
outdoorprogram@nccoastalpines.org
1-800-284-4475

Camp Mary Atkinson Ranger
919-219-6384



Certification Activities

At Camp Mary Atkinson, there are several activities that will require a certified instructor for your girls to participate. This is a brief overview of the certification requirements – please be sure to refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints for full requirements and recommendations. To request activity instructors/facilitators, please submit the following online form: <https://gsnccp.wufoo.com/forms/q111j6uo0txy011/>.

Outdoor Skills Training:

Each troop staying overnight or cooking outdoors at Camp Mary Atkinson must have a volunteer who has completed the Let's Go Camping course, including the online and in-person portions. For day use at Camp Mary Atkinson, it is recommended that each troop has a volunteer who has completed the online trainings Let's Go Outside and Let's Go Exploring.

Watercraft:

The waterfront must be reserved separately for your group to participate in watercraft activities.

- Canoeing – Must have a certified facilitator with American Red Cross Small Craft Safety Canoe/Kayak. Required ratio of certified facilitators to participants is 1:12, plus an additional adult watcher/helper.
- Kayaking - Must have a certified facilitator with American Red Cross Small Craft Safety Canoe/Kayak. Required ratio of certified facilitators to participants is 1:10, plus an additional adult watcher/helper.
- Paddle Boarding - Must have a certified facilitator with American Red Cross Small Craft Safety plus Paddle Boarding experience. Required ratio of certified facilitators to participants is 1:5.

Fishing:

Fishing can be done on the dock that juts out to the right from the H-dock at the waterfront at Camp Mary Atkinson.

- Must have a certified instructor with American Red Cross Basic Water Rescue. Required ratio of certified instructors to participants is 1:10.

Swimming:

The pool or waterfront must be reserved separately for your group to participate in swimming.

- Swimming in the pool at Camp Mary Atkinson is available from May 15th – September 15th. There must be certified lifeguards and watchers that follow the ratio chart below.
- Swimming in the lake is allowed in the designated area of the H-dock as long as the water temperature is 70 degrees or higher. There must be certified lifeguards with waterfront certification and watchers to follow the ratio chart below.

Number of Swimmers	Lifeguards	Watchers
1–10	1 adult (see exception for pools above)	1*
11–25	1 adult (see exception for pools above)	2*
26–35	2 persons, at least 1 is an adult; others may be 16 years of age or older.	3*
36–50	2 persons, at least 1 is an adult; others may be 16 years of age or older.	4*

Archery:

The archery range must be reserved separately for your group to participate in archery.

- Must have an instructor certified by USA Archery with a minimum Level 1 certification. Required ratio of facilitators to participants is 1:10.

Alpine Tower:

The Alpine Tower at Camp Mary Atkinson must be reserved separately for your group to participate in climbing.

- Must have a certified Alpine Tower facilitator.
- Must have certified belayers.
- Girls must be in at least 4th grade to participate in this activity.
- Must have completed, signed waiver form for each girl (this can be obtained once reservation is made).
- Participants must wear required safety gear, including helmets and harnesses.
- **Note that all Alpine staff must be approved by Council for each use.**
- Please allow at least 1.5 hours per 15 girls participating.

Nature Hike

There are several fun trails at Camp Mary Atkinson, and you can create an epic hike by connecting a few of them for even more time on the trail!

Here's one of our favorite routes:

- Start your hike on the Lauren Trail, between the Leadership Center and Fox Leap. This trail will take you through the woods and around part of the lake, and is a great place to spot frogs (both big and small). The trail will end at the fire circle with the stage at the far end of the lake (if you have time to spare, pause here to create a group skit about taking care of the environment, taking an adventurous hike, or pretending to be the creatures you've seen).
- From the fire circle, walk along the path to the boathouse. From here, follow the gravel trail up to Owl Hollow and look for the trail into the woods next to cabin three. This trail will take you through the woods to the Alpine Tower Field, and is a perfect trail for seeking signs of water (you'll have a bit of a hill and may have to step across a tiny stream, depending on the weather and time of year). This is the best spot to look for garden spiders (they're pretty distinctive, so the girls may want to look up photos for recognition before they come).
- When you get to the Alpine Tower Field, hike straight past the shelter to the gravel path. From here, you have two options: follow the gravel path all the way past the archery field and the pool, or look for the path on your left that will take you through the woods to Lady Slipper and continue through to the parking lot across from the staff house. No matter which way you go, you'll end up near the same parking lot and can return to you unit or hike back to the start by following the gravel trail to the left of the staff house.

Each section of this trail will take approximately 20 minutes, for a total of approximately 1 hour. This estimate can alter greatly depending upon the age of your girls, the number of finds along your way, and stops you make for activities or hydration. If you're looking for something shorter, just pick part of the loop to hike!



Nature Sketching Scavenger Hunt

This scavenger hunt has a fun twist – drawing! When you find one of the items on the chart, sketch a picture of it. This may take a bit longer than your typical scavenger hunt, and requires a pencil or something to draw with. You can take a clipboard (or make your own out of old cardboard and a binder clip/paper clip) for extra support.

Insect	Bird	Fish
Tree	Clouds	Flower/Leaf
Something rough	Something fuzzy	Something light
Something hard	Something moving in the breeze	Something that came from a tree
Something really big	Something very small	Something you really liked

Soil Percolation Activity

Soil is a very important part of a forest community, and provides nutrients and water to the plants and animals that grow and live in it. This activity is designed to introduce girls to the impact humans have on soil and the amount of water it can hold. For a shorter activity time, you may have girls perform the activity tests in one area – utilizing a trail, field, and undisturbed area that are very close together. You are encouraged to take your group on a hike around Camp Mary Atkinson, repeating the activity test in as many locations as you wish, for a longer and more in-depth activity.

Time: 20-60 minutes

Materials:

- Percolation cans (you can make a percolation can by using a can opener to remove both the top and bottom from any
- canned good. The remaining tube is your percolation can...if you are planning to have several available, try to use cans that
- are the same size – it will allow you to do comparisons without worrying about the can size being a variable)
- Water (at least 32 ounces)
- Stopwatch or timer
- Paper and pen to record data

Vocabulary:

- Soil – the upper layer of earth in which plants grow, a black or dark brown material typically consisting of a mixture of organic remains, clay, and rock particles
- Percolation – the process of liquid slowly passing through a filter. Percolating waters ooze, seep, or filter through the soil beneath the surface, without a defined channel.

Instructions:

1. Gather the girls into a circle in a field (the field near the program building or airnasium are ideal spots). Push the edge of one side of your percolation cylinders below the surface of the soil. It is important that the can edge is below the surface, not resting on top of the ground.
2. Ask the girls what they think will happen if you pour 1 cup of water into the can (will it sit there? Get absorbed? Why do we think what we do?)
3. Ask one of the girls to measure 1 cup of water and pour it into the can and have the group time how long it takes for all the water to be absorbed into the ground.
4. Record the location and time on your paper.
5. Ask the girls:
 - ⇒ Do you think the same thing will happen in other locations? (Hard dirt trail, spot in the woods that's not walked on, gravel path, etc)
 - ⇒ What makes those location listed above different from one another? (type of soil, amount of plants, hard and compact, loose soil, near water, etc)
 - ⇒ How did they get that way? (people walking/playing, vegetation cleared for trail, rain washing away soil, etc)
6. Take a walk around property and find spots where the ground is different (compacted dirt trail by Lady Slipper or on the Lauren Trail, small gravel path near the pool, off-trail near the lake, etc). Have the girls guess how long they think it will take for 1 cup of water to be absorbed at each spot. Repeat your percolation test at each location, making sure to use the same amount of water each time, and record your results.
7. Take a look at your recordings as a group:
 - ⇒ Are there any times that surprised you?
 - ⇒ What location had the fastest absorption time? Longest?
 - ⇒ What may have affected the rate at which the water was absorbed?
8. If you haven't already, try to find a spot that is already pretty wet (a low area of soil near the lake, or close to puddled water. What might be different about the causes of a slower absorption time at these locations? (saturation of soil)

Did You Know:

- 1 tablespoon of soil has more organisms in it than there are people on earth!
- There are 70,000 different types of soil in the United States!
- A large tree can pull up to 100 gallons of water from the soil in a day!



GO PLAY!

We want to encourage girls to play with nature, not just in nature. Creating opportunities for unstructured play will allow girls direct access to real nature while allowing girl to explore, discover and create their own activity. Check out these ideas for unstructured nature play as well as group games. These ideas are sure to get your girls up, outside, and having fun in the outdoors!

Build shelters, fairy or gnome houses, bridges, castles, mazes, and art pieces out of natural materials

Create your own games, run through fields and grassy areas or lay down and cloud watch

Pretend to be animals and make up stories and acting them out.

We want to be stewards of our environment, so encourage girls to only use nonliving materials found on the ground. Be sure to check areas for safety hazards prior to allowing girls to use the space for free play. Once play is finished, remember to Leave No Trace by returning all materials to their original locations.



Group & Field Games

GaGa Ball:

Gaga Ball is a form of dodgeball that is played in a "pit." The GaGa Ball pit at Camp Mary Atkinson can be found in the field between Craft Hut and the parking lot across from the Staff House. You will find a ball in the mailbox near the ring, with rules posted next to the mailbox.

The game's roots originated in Israel. The word 'Ga' means Hit or Touch, so 'Ga-Ga' means Hit-Hit. There are several variations on exactly how the game is played, but we find these rules to be the most common and fair, while keeping the game competitive and fun:

- To start, everyone in the pit must be touching the wall. Someone tosses the ball in the center of the pit, and it must bounce twice on the ground. As it bounces, everyone can say "Ga" for each bounce. After the second bounce ("Ga-Ga"), the ball is live.
- Slap-hit the ball with your hand, aiming it at another player's leg at the knee or below. If the ball hits or touches anyone at the knee or below, that player is out and must exit the pit. At any time, if a player makes any type of contact with the ball at the knee or below, that player is out.
- Anytime the ball goes out of the pit, the last person the ball touched is out.
- You can only hit the ball one time until it either touches another player or the wall, then you are able to hit it again. You can bounce the ball against the wall to position it if necessary; and, you can move around anywhere inside the pit during the game.
- The game ends when the last person is eliminated or, to speed up the end of the game, the last few players can be given a count-down for a tie game. Once the game is over, everyone else re-enters the pit to start a new game.
- You can add variations to the game such as playing with more than one ball, play in teams, expand the 'hit' area to above the knee, catching the ball to eliminate the person that hit it, and any other variation you can come up with! A suggestion to keep girls engaged is to play rotation instead of elimination. This is done by allowing a certain number of players in the pit, and forming a line for the rest that want to play. Then, as one person gets out, the next person in line goes into the game. This way, everyone that wants to play should get a chance during a short period of time.



Captain's Coming

Start with an adult acting as the "Captain." The role of the Captain is to call out the actions and dismiss the players who don't do the actions quick enough or who break from character.

Once the captain calls an action, each player has 3-4 seconds to start performing the action. If they don't find a group fast enough or perform the right action, they are out of the game.

Actions:

- ⇒ **Captain's Coming:** Everyone stands at "attention" (in a salute), and they can't move from this position until the caller says, "At Ease!" If they laugh or break from the attention, they are dismissed.
- ⇒ **At Ease:** Relax
- ⇒ **Starboard:** Players run to the right.
- ⇒ **Port:** Players run to the left.
- ⇒ **Girl Overboard:** One person drops to one knee the other stands behind them, puts a hand on their shoulder. Both scan the ocean for the overboard girl.
- ⇒ **Crow's Nest:** Three players stand backs to each other and lock arms at the elbows to form the crow's nest.
- ⇒ **Walk the Plank:** Five people stand in a single-file row, hands on the shoulders of person in front of them
- ⇒ **Mermaid:** each player individually thrust out right hip, places right hand on that hip, takes left hand and makes a big exaggerated wave and yells out "howdy sailor!"
- ⇒ **Hit the deck:** fall to the floor on your stomach
- ⇒ **Grub Time:** Five people turn towards each other and pretend to be eating at a table
- ⇒ **Octopus:** Four people lean against each other back to back and wave their arms as if they are a giant octopus
- ⇒ **Swab the Deck:** Pretend to mop.
- ⇒ **Row Your Boat:** Get in a line of three and pretend to row a boat while singing "row, row, row your boat."
- ⇒ **Porthole:** Two people form a circle with their hands (like a porthole window) and a third person looks through it.

Play continues until there is only one girl remaining – she can be the new captain!



Waa Master

- Everyone stands in a circle.
- Have an adult be the "Waa master."
- Explain that the Waa Master will do one of three different actions: a fire ball (make a vertical circle with your arms, like you're a wizard making a fireball), a snake (put one elbow in the palm of the other hand like a cobra standing up) or a bear (put both hands up in front of your shoulders like bear claws)
- The Waa Master bows to the group and says "waaa." Everyone else will then bow back and say "waaa."
- The Waa Master then says "1-2-3 Waa!" and everyone does one of the actions. If someone in the circle does the same action as the Waa Master, they are out.
- Play continues until there is one person remaining with the Waa Master....it's now time for a Waa-off!
- The Waa Master and remaining player stand back to back, and then take three steps away from each other while counting 1-2-3 aloud.
- The two players then do an action as they turn to face one another, saying "Waa" as they do.





Campfire & Songs

No camping trip would be complete without a campfire! Campfires can include songs, skits, poems, performances, ceremonies, or any variety of activities. Of course, don't forget the s'mores!

At Camp Mary Atkinson, there are fire circles by each group of cabins. Additionally, there is a large fire circle located by the stage at the far side of the lake. At each fire circle, make sure there is a water bucket full of water, a rake or shovel, and an appropriate amount of firewood. These items should be checked in the daylight.

Some campfires have a set flow, while others are free flowing. The most important thing is to give girls the opportunity to participate in some way. With larger groups, it is a good idea to have a sign up for songs and skits to help manage the group, allowing everyone who wants to perform the opportunity to do so. It works well to start with loud, exciting songs and skits at the beginning, and work to quieter songs and skits at the end.

OH I WISH I WERE

(Tune: "If You're Happy and You Know It")

Oh, I wish I were a little bar of soap.
Oh, I wish I were a little bar of soap.
I would slippy and I'd slidey,
Over everybody's hidey.
Oh, I wish I were a little bar of soap.

Oh, I wish I were a little hunk of mud.
Oh, I wish I were a little hunk of mud.
I would ooey and I'd gooeey,
Under everybody's shoeey.
Oh, I wish I were a little hunk of mud.

Oh, I wish I were a little can of pop.
Oh, I wish I were a little can of pop.
I'd go down with a slurp,
and come up with a burp.
Oh, I wish I were a little can of pop.

Oh, I wish I were a little mosquito.
Oh, I wish I were a little mosquito.
I'd buzzy and I'd bitey,
Under everybody's nighty.
Oh, I wish I were a little mosquito.

Oh, I wish I were a little bitty orange.
Oh, I wish I were a little bitty orange.
I'd go squirty, squirty, squirty,
Over everybody's shirty.
Oh, I wish I were a little bitty orange

SINGING IN THE RAIN

(Chorus)

I'm singing in the rain,
Just singing in the rain.
What a glorious feeling,
I'm happy again.

Commands:

(Do the first movement and sing again, adding each movement to the previous one until all are done)

Thumbs up
Elbows in
Knees together
But out
Chin Up
Tongue out
Turn around

CAN A WOMAN?

(Tune: "She'll Be Comin' Round The Mountain")

Can a woman fly an airplane?
Yes she can, yes she can.
Can a woman build a building?
Yes she can, yes she can.
Can a woman fight a fire?
Can a woman change a tire?
Can a woman lead a choir?
Yes she can, yes she can.

Can a woman be a lawyer?
Yes she can, yes she can.
Can a woman fix an engine?
Yes she can, yes she can.
Can a woman be a drummer?
Can a woman be a plumber?
Can she play ball in the summer?
Yes she can, yes she can.

Can a woman be a doctor?
Yes she can, yes she can.
Can a woman drive a tractor?
Yes she can, yes she can.
Can a woman lead a nation?
Can she run a TV station?
Can she head a corporation?
Yes she can, yes she can.

Just you wait until we're older then you'll see,
We'll be women in tomorrow's history,
As we grow up through the years,
We will sing out loud and clear,
Can we start the process here?
Yes we can, yes we can.



Flag Ceremony

There are two flag poles at Camp Mary Atkinson. One is outside of the Leadership Center and has a flag and sashes in the mailbox next to the wall leading into the top of the Leadership Center. The second flag pole is located in the field between the Program Building and Craft Hut. There is flag in the mailbox just outside of the program building.

There is no one way to do a flag ceremony.

Things that can be included:

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Girl Scout Promise
- A Girl Scout Song or Poem

Flag Ceremony etiquette:

- Red sashes can be used, but are not necessary. If used, tie on the left side in a square knot.
- Remove items from your hands
- It is not required to remove hats and other head wear
- Girls should make a horseshoe around the flag pole
- Silence is maintained during the ceremony
- Take the flag down before sunset
- Above all, a flag ceremony shows respect for the flag and our country. If you're showing respect, then you are doing it correctly.



Flag Ceremony Calls:

Opening Flag Ceremony

- Girl Scouts, Attention (This signals everyone to stand.)
- Color Guard, Advance (This signals the color guard to advance with the flags.)
- Color Guard, Post the Colors (The Flag Bearer attaches the flag to the rope and quickly hoist the flag; the American flag is raised first.)
- Color Guard, Honor your Colors (The Color Guard salutes the Flag and then returns to attention.)
- Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. . .
- Please join me in the Girl Scout Promise. . .
- Color Guard Dismissed (The Color Guard walks away from flagpole.)
- Girl scouts dismissed

Closing Flag Ceremony

- Girl Scouts, Attention (This signals everyone to stand.)
- Color Guard, Advance (This signals the color bearers and guards to advance to the flags.)
- Color Guard, Honor your Colors (The Color Guard salutes the Flag and then returns to attention.)
- Color Guard, Retrieve the Colors (The Flag Bearer lowers the flag slowly and with dignity. The Color Bearers fold the flag.)
- Color Guard Dismissed (The Color Guard carries the folded flag to an appropriate place.)
- Girl scouts dismissed

Nature Self Portraits



Time: 30-60 minutes

Materials:

- White cardstock paper
- Craft glue (like tacky glue or hot glue guns)
- Crayons/markers/colored pencils
- Natural materials (twigs, pinecones, grass, pine straw, leaves, etc)

Instructions:

- Have the girls think about what a self-portrait might look like. Do they want to create their entire body? Face only? What type of natural materials might be good for making the shapes and parts of the body they'll need?
- Gather plant materials from outside. Try to use things that are already dead and lying on the ground. (This is a great opportunity to pair a nature hike with your craft time!)
- Give each girl a piece of white cardstock as her canvas and allow the group adequate time to make their individual self-portraits. Encourage them to be creative!
- Allow the artwork to dry.
- Take a "gallery tour" to look at each girl's self-portrait as a group. Ask each girl to tell the group about her art and what materials she used.

Clothespin Animals



Time: 20-45 minutes

Materials:

- Clothespins (one for each girl)
- Cardstock/construction paper
- Glue
- Crayons/Markers/Colored pencils

Instructions:

- Have girls draw a picture of an animal on their piece of paper (cardstock or construction paper work best). If you wish, you can print animals for them to cut out instead.
- Make the animals colorful!
- Draw a line horizontally through the center of the animal, starting at the animal's mouth (you're going to make it look like the mouth is opening) and cut along this line.
- Position the two pieces on the side edge of a clothespin and glue in place, so the animal should look entire when the clothespin is closed, and open at the mouth when you squeeze the clothespin open
- For extra fun, create a tiny surprise animal or object that you want the animal to appear to be eating. Cut out the tiny object and glue it to the opposite side of the clothespin, taking care to position it so it can be seen only when your animal's mouth opens.
- Create a show with your new animals!

Salt Dough Fossils



Time: 20-45 minutes

Materials (makes 8):

- Measuring cups (1c, 1/2c, 1/4c)
- Mixing bowl or container
- 1c Flour
- 1/4c Salt
- 1/2c Water

Instructions:

- In the mixing bowl, have the girls measure the flour and salt.
- Mix with hands.
- Measure cup of water, and add to dry ingredients.
- Mix with hands.
- Mix until the ingredients are all incorporated. It will be very sticky at first, but will become smoother and dough-like as it's mixed. You can add a little more water or flour if your dough feels too dry or wet.
- Separate the dough into 8 pieces.
- Have girls shape their dough piece into a ball, then press it flat (about 1/4 inch thick, or the same thickness as their finger)
- To make fossils, the girls can either draw on the dough or collect small rocks and twigs to press into it. Make sure to remove any materials from the dough so that they are just left with the impression.
- Allow dough to air dry (this may take a few days) or bake it in the oven on a parchment-lined baking sheet at 325 degrees for two hours. Once dry, girls can paint their fossils, if they wish.



Questions and Assistance

For questions or assistance with the resources provided in this guide, please email the Camp Program and Outdoor Education Team at outdoorprogram@nccoastalpines.org. We hope that you enjoy your time in the outdoors at Camp Mary Atkinson!