

EXPLORE ✦ CONNECT
LEARN

Welcome!

San Juan Nature Academy
Homeschool Enrichment Program





San Juan Mountains Association

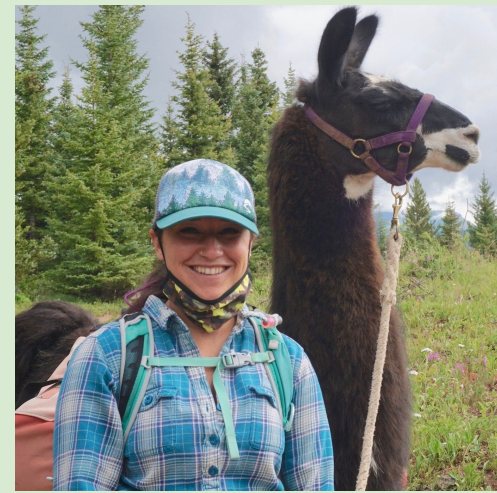
EXPLORE ♦ LEARN ♦ PROTECT



Who is SJMA?

Meet our Instructors:

- **Adriana Stimax (she/her)**,
Education Director
- **Sage Cramer (she/her)**,
Education Specialist
- **Thomas Fritz (he/him)**,
Education Specialist
- **Anson Brown (he/him)**,
Field Educator
- **Julie Campbell (she/her)**,
Field Educator



San Juan Nature Academy Program

San Juan Nature Academy is a place-based homeschool enrichment program that brings learning to life through weekly field trips across the ecosystems of Southwest Colorado. Students engage in hands-on ecology lessons, build practical outdoor skills, and explore the natural world with curiosity and care. Our program blends academic standards with environmental education, emphasizing inquiry, stewardship, and social-emotional growth. By connecting deeply with the land and one another, students gain both knowledge and confidence in outdoor and academic settings.



Logistics:

- Wednesdays: 8:00–3:30 pm
- Starts September 3rd – Ends May 13th
- Off: 11/26, 12/17–1/7, 3/11, 3/18
- Overnight for whole family on last day: 5/13–5/14
- 2 groups – upper and lower elementary
- Free!*





LOCATIONS

Every other week at
the Nature Center

Field trips out on the
landscape every other
week



Curriculum

Establish goals in each of the 3 core program areas to work toward:

1. Outdoor skills and stewardship
2. Leadership/teamwork/social emotional skills
3. Natural science/place understanding - standards based





2024-2025 Monthly Topics

*topics for 2025-2026 year will be similar

September: Finding Our Place

- Leave No Trace
- Geography & Landforms
- Navigation with maps and compass

October: Nature's Bounty

- Foraging and sustainable harvest
- Plant life cycles
- Shelter Building
- Wood whittling

November: Earth Cycles

- Fire ecology
- Fire starting

December: Earth Cycles (continued)

- Rock cycle
- Water cycle

January: Surviving and Thriving in Winter

- Heat transfer and animal adaptations
- Animal Tracking

February: Snow and Water Science

- Winter watersheds
- Snow structure and snowflakes
- Snow pits and shelter building

March: Special Project

- Building bird, bee, and bat boxes
- Woodworking skills

April: Web of Life

- Food web and energy flow
- Biodiversity of life
- Living things grow and change

May: Life Zones

- Montane, riparian, and desert life zones
- Water day

Outdoor Skills Offered:

- Adventure skills and Respecting Nature (LNT)
- Hiking and Camping Skills
- Basic First Aid
- Hydration and nutrition
- Wild Food/Plant ID
- Snowshoeing
- Woodcraft Skills
- Shelter Building
- Basic Hitches and Knots
- Local Animal and Plant ID
- Map Reading & Navigation
- Social and Emotional Skills
- Archery



Community Engagement & Field Trips:

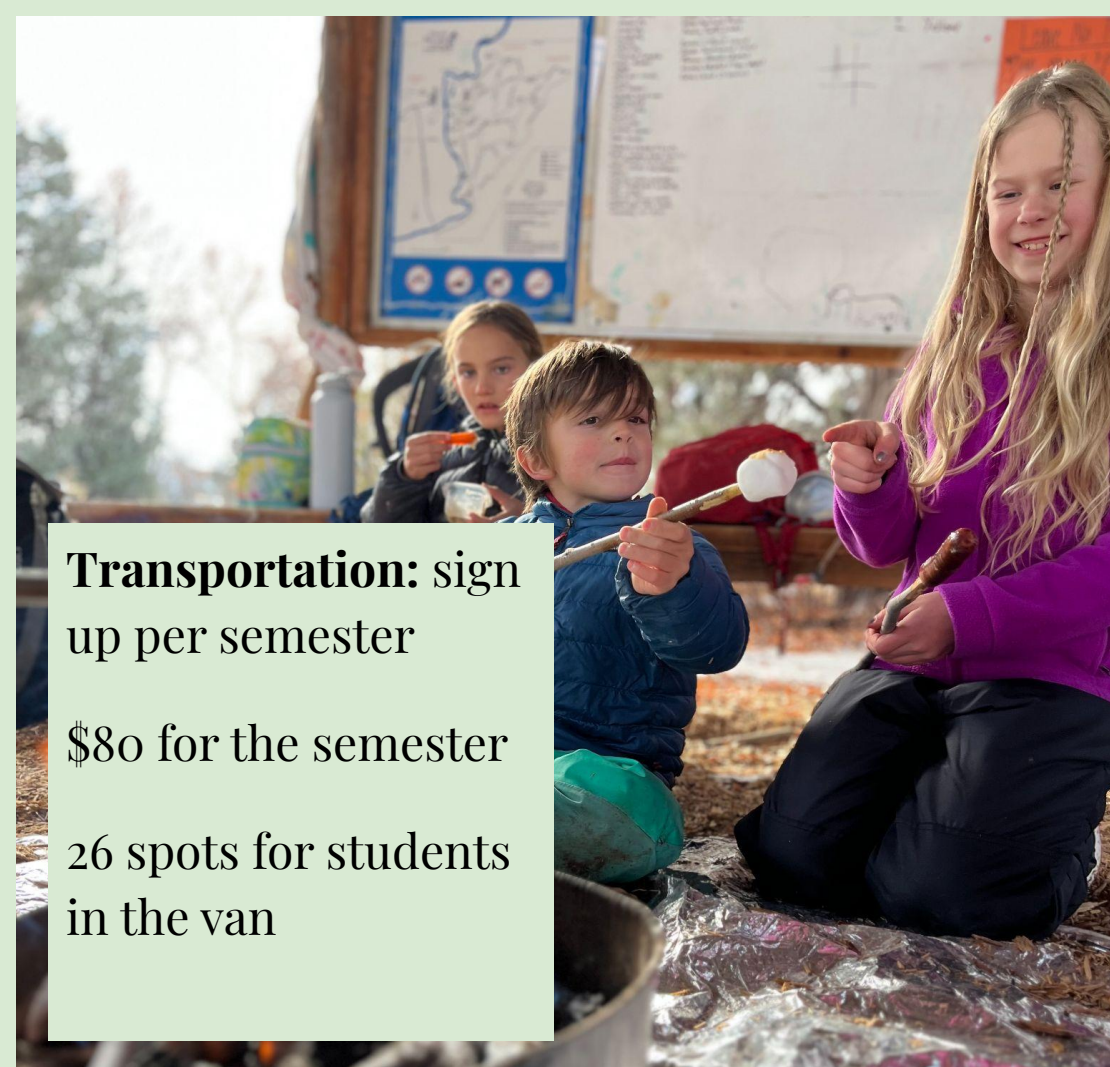
- Fish Hatchery with Colorado Parks & Wildlife
- Gleaning with The Good Food Collective
- Turtle Lake Refuge
- Wolfwood Refuge
- Tierra Vida Farms
- SOIL Learning Lab
- Canyons of the Ancients Monument
- Aztec Ruins National Monument
- Ice Fishing with Go Fish Durango!
- La Plata Open Space Conservancy– Conserved Properties
- Exploration of the San Juan National Forest





Tentative Day Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. – Drop-off, structured play, intro to the day, and warm-up
- 8:30 a.m. – Introduce the question(s) for the van ride, Load vans and depart for the day's location
- 9:00 a.m. – Arrive at location
- 9:10 a.m. – Morning circle and snack
- 9:20 a.m. – Morning lesson/activity (Part 1)
- 10:10 a.m. – Group game
- 10:30 a.m. – Morning lesson/activity (Part 2)
- 12:00 p.m. – Lunch
- 12:25 p.m. – Structured play
- 12:40 p.m. – Group game
- 1:10 p.m. – Afternoon electives (nature journaling, themed game or craft, self-exploration, hike, etc.)
- 2:30 p.m. – Afternoon circle and snack
- 3:00 p.m. – Introduce topic for return drive and return to Durango
- 3:30 p.m. – Pick-up in Durango

A group of children are sitting on a picnic table outdoors, roasting marshmallows over a fire. A young girl in a purple shirt is smiling and pointing at the camera while holding a stick with a marshmallow. A boy in a blue jacket is also roasting a marshmallow. In the background, another child is visible, and there is a map on a board.

Transportation: sign
up per semester

\$80 for the semester

26 spots for students
in the van



Coming Up:

Parent/Instructor Meet & Greet Night

Monday, August 26th at
the Public Lands Center

Start Date: September 3rd



Contact Info:

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Adriana Stimax: astimax@sjma.org





Questions?