



Verde Valley Explorer Expedition Description

Friday, June 4, 2021

Ages 11 - 14

1. Receive Expedition Description

- Letter from Executive Director
- Expedition Details
- Frequently Asked Questions
- How to Pack & Packing List

2. Apply & Pay Deposit Online

- Please follow the link below to find the application for your expedition.
- www.gcyouth.org/expeditions/individual-expeditions/#apply
If you prefer a paper application, please call the GCY office.

3. Complete Pre-Trip Requirements

- Plan and carry out your Service and Youth Earnings Requirements! Engaging with and responding to weekly emails before the expedition will fulfill your Educational Requirement.

4. Final Payment & Preparation

- Your final payment, Pre-Trip Requirement documentation, travel information, and any outstanding paperwork are due **Friday, May 14, 2021**. You can submit final payments for your trip on the GCY website: gcyouth.org/expedition-payment

5. Enjoy your GCY Expedition!

Please contact the GCY Staff with any questions:
928.773.7921 • expeditions@gcyouth.org



2131 N First St Flagstaff, AZ 86004 Phone: 928.773.7921 Fax: 928.774.8941
office@gcyouth.org www.gcyouth.org

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Welcome to Grand Canyon Youth! We are so pleased to have your child joining us for a life-changing adventure.

Grand Canyon Youth (GCY) is a nonprofit organization based in Flagstaff that provides outdoor experiences to young people ages 10-19. We believe that all young people can benefit from time spent in natural places. GCY serves schools, groups, and youth from across the country.

Our programs are educational in nature: in addition to exploring the outdoors, your child's journey with us will include hands-on science, art-making, time for reflection, teamwork, and much more.

For over 20 years, GCY has run hundreds of expeditions with thousands of participants from across the country! Our office staff will guide you and your child every step of the way as you prepare for their adventure. Thank you for choosing to send your child on a Grand Canyon Youth expedition. Nature and wilderness have the power to transform lives, and we are honored to share this opportunity with your child.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions as you prepare your child for their GCY expedition.

Sincerely,



Emma Wharton, MSW
GCY Executive Director

Connect with GCY





Verde Valley Explorer Trip 1 Verde River June 4, 2021

Expedition Details

Total Price per Participant: \$100

Deposit: \$25

Due: with application

Final Payment: \$75

Due: Friday, May 14, 2021

**Financial aid is available for this expedition - everyone is eligible to apply. If requesting financial aid, your deposit is adjusted to \$50. Find the GCY Financial Aid Application at the end of the GCY online Youth Application.*

Expedition Begins

6:00 AM, Friday, June 4, 2021, Grand Canyon Youth office. Please have all your gear packed, and dress in what you plan to wear camping for the evening. Make sure you have two full water bottles and you have eaten breakfast. After a short orientation, you will get into vans and head to the Verde Valley!

Expedition Returns

Approximately 6:00 PM, Friday, June 4, 2021, Grand Canyon Youth office. Parents and pickup contacts will be called or texted if youth will be more than a half-hour late or early.

What sets Grand Canyon Youth apart?

GCY provides some of the only access to the rivers and canyons of the Southwest dedicated to youth programming. We are committed to serving youth from a variety of backgrounds, so anyone who is interested has the chance to participate. Additionally, by completing GCY's Pre-Trip Requirements - community service hours, youth earnings, and an educational component - participants gain a strong sense of ownership over their program. GCY supports each expedition financially by offsetting about half of the trip price with money from donors, grants, and other fundraising efforts. All of this makes GCY stand apart, and provide unique, educational, high-quality expeditions.

About Verde Valley Explorer

This expedition is a great introduction to outdoor adventure, kayaking, and Grand Canyon Youth. Participants sign up independently from all over and will come together to join in this shared experience. Some may already have outdoor experience, while for others it may be their first time exploring the outdoors. Everyone is welcome to participate; you will work together to develop teamwork skills and build a community. We will all learn and play together!

About the Verde River

- Verde is Spanish for the color "green". This seasonal river creates riparian habitat that allows a variety of big, green plants to grow. You will paddle in the shade of huge cottonwood trees!
- All of the Verde's water comes from groundwater that filters down through the layers of sedimentary rock. When rain falls in Flagstaff it is absorbed by the ground, slowly travels through the area's porous rocks, and ends up bubbling to the surface at the source of the Verde River!
- The Verde Valley contains archaeological evidence of the Hohokam and Southern Sinagua peoples, including Tuzigoot, Monetzuma's Well, & Montezuma's Castle National Monuments. Sites throughout the valley remain culturally significant to local indigenous peoples.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are we going to do out there?

Being on the river is taking a break from the hustle of everyday life. You will travel downstream in your own sit-on-top kayak. Everyone works together: paddling downstream, stopping at interesting sites, and learning about the area's natural and human history.

Who is coming with me?

Each expedition has a Trip Coordinator, an adult leader in charge of helping you prepare and making your expedition successful! Your Trip Coordinator will communicate with you prior to the expedition and be your main group leader throughout the expedition. At the river you will meet your guide crew. Our guides have a passion for working with youth. Many GCY guides are alumni of our expeditions!

How difficult will the expedition be?

It is important to show up mentally prepared to be outside and active *all day*. This is part of the fun, but can be challenging. Having a good sun hat and knowing how to stay hydrated are great places to start. Even if you're not 'outdoorsy,' do not know how to swim, or have never camped before, everyone can participate and succeed!

What if there is an emergency?

Most emergencies can be prevented. GCY field staff will give safety orientations once youth reach the destination. Everyone is encouraged to take extra care looking out for themselves and adhering to safety guidelines. GCY field staff are certified Wilderness First Responders, and travel with a satellite phone and first-aid materials. Field staff and Trip Coordinators will reinforce safety guidelines throughout the trip. If there is an incident, the GCY office staff will work with guides to organize support. If you are nervous about any aspect of the expedition, please contact us for more information.

What is the weather going to be like?

The weather in the Southwest is as unpredictable as the place itself. Prepare for all kinds of weather, and to be outside all day every day. Your expedition could be hot and sunny, cold and drizzly, or both! Pack layers to help you adjust to the range of temperatures and conditions. You can check the weather prior to your expedition by searching the forecast for **Cottonwood, Arizona**.

Find more Frequently Asked Questions at: www.gcyouth.org/expeditions/individual-expeditions/#FAQs



GCY Pre-Expedition Planning

Financial Aid Availability

River trips are expensive endeavors, and some families and youth may need support. GCY, along with our donors, are proud to offer Financial Aid to participants who demonstrate financial or compelling need. There are no limits or cutoffs for requesting Financial Aid – we encourage anyone who needs help to apply. The vast majority of applicants are awarded a portion of their request. Because funds are limited, please ask only for what you need. The Financial Aid Request form is available at the end of your online Youth Application, and includes fields and short answers for parents/guardians and youth to complete together and independently.

Pre-Trip Requirements

We believe you will be more actively engaged and invested in the success of the program by working for it! To achieve this, we ask you to complete 3 Pre-Trip Requirements: Educational, Service, and Youth Earnings. There are many resources available to help you complete these requirements, including the GCY website, and your Trip Coordinator. We recommend starting this process early!

- **Educational Component**

How do you prepare to embark on an adventure like this? The educational component for this program is a series of weekly emails before the expedition begins. Articles, poems, short videos, and other resources will help you delve into the wonder, history, and environment of the Verde River. You will receive these emails from your Trip Coordinators starting a few months before the expedition. Prepare to reply and respond thoughtfully to all of these prompts. If anything peaks your interest, don't be afraid to dig deeper!

- **Service Component**

Engaging with your home communities prepares you to be an active member of the GCY river community. Each participant is expected to complete **2 hours of service per day on expedition**. You can count any service you have done since the beginning of the school year.

- **Youth Earnings Component**

Have you ever noticed that when you work for something, it means more to you? You are expected to raise or earn a portion of the trip price. There are no parameters on how much you need to earn – we ask that you raise a meaningful amount for yourself. Be as creative as you like: save money from your job, do chores for family and friends, or sell art you make, old sports equipment, or video games you no longer use, etc.

- **Pre-Trip Requirement Documentation**

We also ask that you document the completion of these Pre-Trip Requirements. When you complete your online application and are officially registered for the expedition, you will receive a welcome email containing a link to the Pre-Trip Requirement Forms. It is a good idea to look at the questions on these forms *before* you begin working on your Pre-Trip Requirements.

Travel Planning

If traveling from outside of Flagstaff, you are responsible for your own travel to and from Grand Canyon Youth. For information about support GCY can offer and other considerations, visit <https://gcyouth.org/expeditions/individual-expeditions/#packing>. Please call the GCY office if you have any questions and before booking any flights or travel arrangements!

Packing for Your GCY Expedition

Verde Valley Explorer

How to Pack

Bring one bag for this expedition. At the river, you will take your lunch, sunscreen, water bottles, and any needed medications and pack them into a small “dry bag” that is provided. Your backpack with extra dry clothes for after the trip will stay in your vehicle while you are out paddling for the day.



Left: Your lunch and small personal items will be packed into a small dry bag, then rolled and buckled to ensure contents stay dry while on the river.

Right: A sturdy school backpack works perfectly to bring your personal items in. So does an extra shopping bag

**Bags are not to scale*

GCY Will Provide...

A Personal Flotation Device (PFD), small dry bag, kayaks, paddles, snacks, extra fresh water, and extra rain gear and jackets for participants to borrow if they get cold or wet. There are outhouse-style bathrooms along the way.

Borrowing from GCY

Please check with GCY before purchasing any items: we have many items available to borrow at our warehouse, including river shoes and rain gear. We know that kids grow quickly and purchasing outdoor gear can be a burden. Work with your Trip Coordinator to request items, or stop by GCY to try things on.

Do Not Bring

If you do not see an item on the Equipment List, it is because **we have intentionally left it off**. Avoid bringing heavy clothing, towels, jeans, nice shoes, or leather boots. GCY expeditions are intentionally technology free, so please do not bring any electronics (cell phones, gaming devices, etc.). Anything you bring may get lost or ruined! Also leave behind all money, wallets, and other valuables. GCY will provide lunch and plenty of snacks, so **leave all food and drinks** at home as well.

Medications

Please bring TWO SETS of any prescription medications (inhalers, Epi-pens, daily medications, etc.). One set will stay with you and the other will go with your Trip Coordinator as backup. **Youth must be able to manage and administer their own medications**, unless otherwise agreed or documented in medication communication plan with collaborating organizations. GCY staff does not administer medication except in the event of specified emergencies, or where a participant requests reasonable assistance in self-administration of medications.

Packing List

Arrive Wearing

- River shoes:** 1 pair of sport sandals with a thick sole and heel strap, such as Tevas, Chacos, or Keens.
- Quick-dry shorts:** Bring 1 pair. They should be made of nylon or fast-drying material (not cotton!). Athletic shorts, swim trunks, or leggings.
- Bathing suit top** (if needed): No tying swimsuits, dark-colored sports bras recommended.
- Sun shirt: 1** long-sleeved, lightweight, cotton shirts are ideal for sun protection. Think button-up dress shirts. Wearing shirts is required.
- Sun hat:** With a large brim and chin-strap. Wearing a hat is required.
- Sunglasses**
- Retention device:** Strap for your sunglasses or eyeglasses so you don't lose them, like Chums or Croakies.

Keep with you during the day (Pack into dry bag)

- Water bottles:** 2 Nalgene-type screw top plastic bottles. You need at least 2 liters. Camelbacks or other hydration packs are okay as long as you also bring a spare water bottle.
- Carabiners:** 2 metal clips that let you attach your backpack and water bottle to boats. Find them at outdoor shops. They should be at least 3 inches long, and do not need to be climbing grade or locking.
- Rain gear:** 1 rain jacket (no ponchos) & 1 pair of rain pants.
- Lightweight fleece jacket:** Bring 1
- Waterproof disposable cameras:** (optional) Bringing large or expensive cameras is not recommended.
- Eyeglasses:** If needed. If you wear contact lenses, bring back-up glasses, just in case.
- Sunscreen:** At least a 3 oz. bottle.
- Personal Toiletries:** chapstick, travel size lotion, period care products (tampons with cardboard applicators or O.B. tampons are recommended)
- Personal medications:** Bring 2 sets!

For the drive home (Pack in backpack or shopping bag)

- Small towel:** Bring 1 to dry off with after the expedition.
- Extra, dry set of clothes:**
- T-Shirt**
- Shorts or Pants**
- Underwear**
- Socks**
- Dry Shoes:** these can be tennis shoes, flip flops, etc.
- Trash Bag:** Bring 1 to store all of your wet, dirty clothes in on the ride back

2021 COVID-19 Prepared Packing List

In addition to following the COVID-19 Health Agreement before your expedition, please come prepared to help mitigate the potential for transmission while on expedition. This includes updating changes to information with GCY, bringing the following items along with you, and being ready to be an active participant in the collective health of your expedition!

2021 Travel Requirement Update

If you provided a name and contact information for someone who will remain within five driving hours of Flagstaff, AZ, for the duration of the expedition inline with our [2021 Travel Requirements](#), please confirm with GCY that this person is still available. If you need to change/update this contact, please call the office (928.773.7921) or email expeditions@gcyouth.org.

How to Pack

Please keep your COVID-19 preparedness supplies in your **day-pack**. Follow [CDC recommendations](#) for clean and dirty face covering storage, and washing cloth/reusable masks throughout your expedition.

GCY Will Provide...

Additional COVID-19 mitigation supplies, including sanitization materials for the duration of your expedition. Please reach out to us with any questions regarding on-expedition mitigation efforts at expeditions@gcyouth.org, or visit our [FAQs on our website](#).

- Negative COVID-19 test or completed vaccination card** (For Multi-Day Expeditions Only)
 - Please email your records to expeditions@gcyouth.org before arriving for your expedition. Bring a copy as back-up.
- Well-Fitting Masks:** cloth and/or disposable that fit your face well. Please follow [CDC guidelines](#) regarding fit and [other recommendations](#).
 - For shorter expeditions (1-4 day), please bring enough masks to have a clean option each day.
 - For longer expeditions (5+days), time will be available to wash cloth/reusable masks. We recommend bringing enough masks to have a clean option each day for the first half of your trip.

Expedition Length	Masks
1 Day	2
2-4 Days	4
5+ Days	6



- Ziplock bags:** bring 2. Keep your clean masks in one. Use the other to store dirty/wet masks before proper disposal or washing.
- Biodegradable/Castile soap (travel size)** (For Multi-Day Expeditions Only): for washing cloth masks.