



Tennessee Naturalist Program

Suggested Volunteer Opportunities

Suggested Volunteer Opportunities for Tennessee Naturalist Program Volunteers

The Tennessee Naturalist Volunteer is a very unique volunteer. After completing the requirements of becoming a TNP Volunteer these individuals have an understanding of the natural history of Tennessee that few others possess. Their expertise should be used to educate the public on the biodiversity and conservation needs of Tennessee. Having received both the biological information and the interpretation skills needed to share this information, TNP volunteers are ready to lead guided hikes or answer questions that park or natural area visitors may have. They are also uniquely qualified to participate in citizen science projects such as biodiversity inventories. TNP volunteers will also be prepared to carry out conservation projects such as exotic plant removal or trail construction. The volunteers of the Tennessee Naturalist Program can be an invaluable asset to the conservation of Tennessee and should be used as such.

Below are examples of nature organizations across Tennessee and the descriptions of their volunteer programs. There will no doubt be unique opportunities available to Tennessee Naturalist Volunteers.

Bays Mountain Park

Volunteers play a vital role to the daily operations of Bays Mountain Park and Planetarium. The volunteer opportunities at Bays Mountain Park offer individuals a variety of ways to become involved in the community. Bays Mountain Park Association (BMPA) volunteers are trained by the Park's staff and aid in every aspect of the Park's operation. Some of Bays Mountain Park's largest public programs could not be offered without the assistance of volunteers.

Listed below are the different areas where volunteers can get involved. If you are interested in volunteering or would just like to know more, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator's office at (423)229-9449.

Farmstead - Greet visitors to this museum about the history of families who lived on Bays Mountain and what life was like for them. The Farmstead Museum features exhibits of farming equipment once used on Bays Mountain and helps visitors understand the history of Bays Mountain. Present short interpretive programs using tools and implements in the museum.

Naturalist - Volunteers take small groups of students on nature hikes and teach grade-level curricula. Hikes last 50 minutes with stops along the way to watch animals. This is our most-demanding volunteer position and requires a one-year commitment.

Herpetarium - Help monitor public access to our snake, frog, turtle and other related displays at this building. Provide information and answer questions for visitors.

Astronomy - Astronomy enthusiasts can provide help by joining the Bays Mountain Astronomy Club. The club provides volunteers to assist with special events and astronomical programs for the public at the park observatory and around the community.

Watershed Room - Meet the public, answer questions about the fresh-water pool and fresh-water aquariums, and explain the other live and freeze-dried specimens in the room. Feed the fish and clean the outside of aquaria.

Chattanooga Arboretum and Nature Center

Volunteers come from different backgrounds, with each contributing a unique perspective to the center. Volunteers are greatly appreciated in all fields, however, positions are limited in some departments. The Chattanooga Arboretum & Nature Center strives to accommodate academic community service needs, as well as personal preferences or physical limitations. Volunteer positions include visitor center receptionist, grounds and gardens and maintenance. To learn more visit: <http://www.chattanooganaturecenter.org/www/docs/117/volunteer>

The Discovery Center at Murfree Spring

Murfreesboro (615) 890-2300

The Discovery Center serves over 120,000 children and families annually who come to experience the fun, hands-on environment. The docent volunteer works with the education staff to provide hands-on programs for school children.

Elmwood Cemetery / Carlisle S. Page Arboretum

Founded in 1852, Elmwood Cemetery is the oldest active cemetery in Memphis featuring some of the city's biggest and oldest trees. Beneath our ancient elms, oaks, and magnolias lie our most honored and revered, famous and infamous. Volunteer opportunities include: youth group tour guide, adult and public tours, lunch & lecture volunteer, Costume Twilight Tour volunteer, and Arbor Day 5K volunteer. Tennessee Naturalist Program volunteers should specifically request opportunities relating to nature and trees.

<http://www.elmwoodcemetery.org/>

824 S. Dudley Street, Memphis, TN 38104 901-774-3212

Contact: Cookie Swain cookie@elmwoodcemetery.org

Great Outdoors University

Great Outdoors University (GOU) is a conservation education and outdoor experience program of Tennessee Wildlife Federation whose mission is to connect kids to the great outdoors in meaningful, lasting, life-changing ways. GOU works with organizations which serve low-income children, youth and families providing Saturday field trips and overnight outings to forests, rivers, farms and off the-beaten-path places within an hour's drive of the city. If you love the outdoors and working with kids, GOU is the perfect program. GOU volunteers have the opportunity to assist in leading trail courses and activities such as hiking, fishing, camping skills, nature walks, bird and waterfowl watching, gardening, forestry skills, nature observation skills, and others. Additional duties include preparing lunch, mentoring youth, and helping set up and clean-up. GOU also encourages experienced and talented naturalists who work well with children to apply for a Field Trip Leader position.

<http://www.tnwf.org/great-outdoors-university>

Sonya Wood Mahler
GOU Manager Nashville
(615) 353-1133
swoodmahler@tnwf.org

Kate Friedman
GOU Memphis Program Coordinator
(901) 826-4615
kfriedman@tnwf.org

Hands-on Science Center

Tullahoma, TN (931) 455-8387

One of the most vital aspects of the Hands-on Science Center is their volunteers. Over the years, many have discovered that volunteering at the Hands-On Science Center is fun, exciting and educational. Volunteers get to run educational science programs and demonstrations for local children, plan build and maintain exciting new exhibits and presentations, but most importantly, they get to walk away with a sense of pride and joy that only comes from donating their time to a worthwhile cause.

The Hands-On Science Center is dedicated to encouraging enthusiasm and interest in science and mathematics in local children and they're always looking for volunteers who share that idea.

Go to <http://hosc.org/support-us/volunteer/> for more information.

<http://www.discoverycenteronline.org/volunteer.html#VolunterApplication>

Ijam's Nature Center

Volunteer Field Guides lead school field trips through the gardens and trails and enable us to maintain the 1:10 teacher/pupil ratio that helps make our programs so popular with schools.

Volunteer Day Counselors to help with Nature Day Camp in the summer are also needed.

Grounds volunteers work year round to maintain our beautiful perennial gardens and nature trails.

If you would like more information about our volunteer opportunities, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Sarah Brobst at (865) 577-4717 ex 124 or you may email her at sbrobst@ijams.org.

The Knoxville Zoo

<http://knoxville-zoo.org/about-the-zoo/volunteer.html>.

The mission of the Knoxville Zoo Volunteer Program is to enhance the guests' experience through education about animals and conservation, by serving as ambassadors of the zoo. Further, the volunteers support and assist zoo staff with care and welfare of animals, outreach, education, special events, research and daily operations.

Memphis Botanic Garden

The Garden has many special events throughout the year and volunteers are needed to assist with preparation for these events, staffing each event and for serving on various committees involved in planning these events. Persons interested in volunteering at the Memphis Botanic Garden, please contact:

Page McCoy, Volunteer Coordinator, at 901-636-4105 or at <mailto:pagemccoy@memphistn.gov?subject=Volunteer%20Information>

Nashville Metro Park Nature Centers

The following are volunteer opportunities with Nashville's natural area parks

- Monthly trail building workdays and boardwalk construction
- Exotic pest plant removal
- Native planting
- Park research
- Land acquisition
- Roadside litter pick up
- Environmental education
- Fund raising
- Special events

For more information contact:

Friends of Beaman Park at <http://www.nashville.gov/parks/nature/bpnc/volunteer.asp>

or

Shelby Bottoms Nature Center at

<http://www.nashville.gov/parks/docs/nature/shelby/SBNCVolApp.pdf>.

To learn more about all of Metro Nashville's Nature Centers visit:

<http://www.nashville.gov/parks/nature/>.

The Nashville Zoo

Volunteers are integral components of the Nashville Zoo. They are dedicated individuals providing much of the manpower needed for daily operations, programs, special projects and events. Click on the links below to find out more about the many volunteer opportunities at Nashville Zoo. To learn more visit: <http://www.nashvillezoo.org/volunteer>

The Nature Conservancy Tennessee Chapter Duck River Project

The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Since 1999, The Nature Conservancy's Duck River office has been based in Columbia, Tennessee, working with local communities, businesses, and government agencies on long-term protection of the river's water quality and ecological integrity.

Department: Duck River Project

Type of Volunteer Work: River Bank Stabilization

Contact Leslie Colley (Duck River Program Manager) at lcolley@TNC.ORG

Owl's Hill Nature Sanctuary

545 Beech Creek Road South, Brentwood, TN 37027

(615) 370-4672 www.owlshill.org

Owl's Hill has a very small paid staff, but they are fortunate to have a strong, active volunteer staff. Most volunteers serve as Trail Guides for school and scout programs, but many also assist with gardening, woodwork, nestbox trail monitoring, weekend programs and many other activities. Currently, most of our volunteer opportunities are for weekdays only. If you are only available on weekends, but have a special skill - art, woodworking, writing, etc. - that you are willing to use for Owl's Hill, please contact us.

Pink Palace Museums (Including Lichterman Nature Center)

Volunteer positions include:

Exhibit Docents & Wildlife Interpreters - Interact with the general public and school groups as you explain exhibits and work at an activities table. Assist in outdoors programs sharing information about various habitats at Lichterman Nature Center.

Guest Service Representatives - Serve the public by staffing the Information Desk in the Pink Palace Museum lobby or at Lichterman Nature Center. Greet and assist guests and school groups.

IMAX Theater Hosts or Planetarium Assistants - Help IMAX® or Planetarium staff guide and seat guests and maintain the theater and lobby area.

Gardening Volunteers - "Green Thumbs" needed for the greenhouse and demonstration beds at Lichterman Nature Center and the vintage garden at Magevney House.

Program Assistants - Assist Education Department staff with hands-on programs and events for children and families.

Special Event Volunteers - Assist at opening parties, exhibit galas, and special programs. Help in various booths at the annual Pink Palace Crafts Fair, Lichterman Nature Center Plant Sale or Earth Fest.

Please call (901) 320-6438 or email diane.mckinna@memphistn.gov for further information.

Tennessee Aquarium

<http://www.tnagua.org/GetInvolved/VolunteerOpportunities.aspx>

The Tennessee Aquarium is a private, non-profit organization and volunteers are vital to their success. Aquarium Volunteers educate aquarium guests, care for its plants and animals, assist in its offices and even volunteer behind the acrylic walls as divers.

Volunteer Positions suitable for Tennessee Naturalists include:

- Docents
- Horticulture Volunteer
- Volunteer Diver

Tennessee State Parks

Tennessee State Parks offers volunteer opportunities in the following areas:

- Friends of State Parks Groups
- Living History Interpretation
- Campground Host
- Trail Work
- Litter Cleanup
- General Maintenance
- Office/Visitor Center Host
- Mapping/GIS
- Interpretive Programming
- Gardening
- Special Events
- Research – Historical or Scholarly
- ATBI (All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory) – Natural Resource Inventory

Contact Information:

Volunteer Coordinator
Tennessee State Parks
L&C Tower, 7th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243
Phone 1-888-867-2757

<http://www.tn.gov/environment/parks/volunteer.shtml>

Tennessee Trails Association

P.O. Box 41446, Nashville, TN 37204-1446

Volunteer Service – Trailwork

There are Tennessee Trail Chapters all across Tennessee. Look for a local chapter at:

<http://www.tennesseetrails.org>

Tennessee Wildlife Educators and Rehabilitators

There are Wildlife Rehabilitators across the state who need volunteers to help care for injured wildlife. To learn more visit Tennessee Wildlife Educators and Rehabilitators Association at: <http://twera.org/>

Tennessee Watershed Associations

There are watershed associations across Tennessee that depend upon volunteers for stream monitoring, restoration projects, cleanups and watershed education. To learn more about the watershed associations throughout Tennessee visit the MTSU Center for Environmental Education's Waterworks site at:

<http://www.mtsu.edu/waterworks/groups.shtml>

Walden's Puddle Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center

Walden's Puddle provides care and treatment to sick, injured and orphaned native Tennessee wildlife. They are the only professionally-staffed wildlife rehabilitation and education facility in Middle Tennessee. They do not charge for services and receive no federal or state funding at this time.

Need: Walden's Puddle is growing, with over 2,300 animals admitted and cared for last year. Volunteers provide many necessary services including assistance with animal care and administration. Some volunteers assist in the diet preparation and feeding of animals. This may include activities such as weighing a baby animal, feeding a specific amount of food to the animal and of course cleaning up what comes out the other end!

Application Requirements: Online <http://www.waldenspuddle.org/volunteer.html>

Wolf River Conservancy

There are many opportunities for individuals and groups to help the Wolf River Conservancy in Memphis, TN. We often need assistance with the following activities:

- Special Events (please see our Wolf River Ambassadors program)
- Land Stewardship (exotic plant removal, trash pick-up, habitat restoration)
- Office (marketing, bulk mailings)
- Canoeing (experienced river guides & paddlers only)
- Hiking (various locations along the Wolf River)
- Education (assistance with programs & field trips)

Please fill out the Volunteer Inquiry form below and we will be in touch!

The Wolf River Conservancy offers a limited number of unpaid internship positions throughout the year.

901-452-6500 www.wolfriver.org