



Nearby Nature's Spring 2012 Alton Baker Park Nature Guides Program

Thanks for your interest in Nearby Nature's volunteer guide program in Alton Baker Park. If you love being outdoors, enjoy working with kids, and want to make a difference in your community, then this opportunity is perfect for you.

WHAT IS NEARBY NATURE?

Nearby Nature is a non-profit environmental education group dedicated to fostering appreciation of nature nearby and providing tools for ecological living. Our staff and volunteers lead nature walks, host school programs, teach daycamps, and organize environmental restoration projects in local natural areas. Nearby Nature also teaches classes for the Network Charter School and serves as the City of Eugene's official caretaker in Alton Baker Park. We welcome and encourage the participation of all community members in our programs. For more information, see our web page at www.nearbynature.org.

THE ALTON BAKER PARK SCHOOL WALKS PROGRAM

Every fall and spring, Nearby Nature hosts nature walk field trips in Alton Baker Park for local K-5th grade school children. Trained volunteer guides lead these walks. As many as 3,000 children participate in our walks each year. Your options as a volunteer with this program are described below.

- **Morning Nature Walks Guide:** Start your day off with a walk in the Heron Woods, a stroll along Beaver Way, or a visit to Willow Point! **On weekday mornings (9-11:45 am) from late April through mid-June**, volunteer Nearby Nature guides lead small groups of six to nine K-5th graders on interactive nature walks in Alton Baker Park. Walk topics range from aquatic wildlife to river ecology to resource conservation to Kalapuya life and lore. Guides use stories, nature games, and hands-on exploration to help kids observe, discover, grow, and learn. Most of this flyer is about this program.



- **Critter Quest Pond Study Leader:** On many weekday mornings, specially trained volunteers staff our pond study station and work with larger groups of 15-30 children. Interested guides may help with this program and the nature walks program simultaneously if they complete the special Pond Study Leader Training (see training schedule). Occasionally, volunteers who are not available to lead morning walks participate only in this part of our program.
- **Afternoon Discovery Adventure Leader:** On some weekday afternoons (noon-2 pm), specially trained guides assist staff with groups that stay for our extended program of Afternoon Adventures. These guides lead groups of 15-30 kids in pond study, creative writing and art projects, and nature games. Interested guides may help with this program and the nature walks program simultaneously. Guides interested in pond study should complete our Pond Study Leader Training (see schedule). Occasionally, volunteers who are not able to lead morning walks participate only in this program.
- **Classroom Visits Assistant:** Most classes scheduled for spring field trips will also get a pre-walk classroom visit from Nearby Nature in January, February, or March. Nature guides are invited to help with these school visits. A separate training is held for this program. Contact our staff for more information if you are interested.



NEW VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

If you would like to learn more about being a volunteer nature guide, afternoon activity leader, or school programs assistant, please join us on **Tuesday, March 13, from 6:30-8 pm** for a **new volunteer orientation** at the Eugene Public Library (Tykeson Room). At this gathering we will introduce you to our many volunteer opportunities, have a slide show highlighting volunteers in action, and provide you with information on how to get involved in our programs. Let us know if you are interested in joining us at this meeting (or if you are interested in volunteering but cannot make this meeting). Nearby Nature staff can be reached by phone at **541-687-9699** or email at **info@nearbynature.org**.

NATURE GUIDE TRAINING

In April, Nearby Nature will conduct **field training sessions** in Alton Baker Park for people who want to become nature guides. You don't have to be a trained naturalist or teacher to lead walks. We'll provide you with all the knowledge and teaching tools you'll need to be a great guide.

What will guide training cover? Our educational and entertaining trainings will cover wildlife, plants, water ecology, conservation, games, stories, teaching techniques, safety, and Kalapuya life and lore. Printed materials will be provided for each training session. Before leading your first "real" walk, you will also "shadow" an experienced guide as he or she leads one of the season's first nature walks.



Please see the **Spring 2012 Guide Training Calendar** for training dates and times. Note that training sessions take place both on weekday mornings and on weekends or weekday evenings to allow for scheduling flexibility. Please contact our program staff to sign up for trainings. Make-up trainings may be scheduled if needed, so let us know in advance if you have a scheduling conflict.

TIME COMMITMENT

Once you have successfully completed guide training, we ask that you lead at least **one walk a week**, on a weekday morning, from 9-11:45 am. Guides are welcome to help with additional walks, afternoon activities, or school visits as well. If you are unable to lead morning walks, or do not have time to complete our whole training program, you are invited to help with afternoon programs or school visits. Volunteers specifically interested in pond study are also needed to staff our Pond Study Station. See the training dates for details.

COLLEGE CREDIT AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Students are encouraged to arrange for course credit for this program with professors, through the UO Career Center, the UO Service Learning Program, the LCC Cooperative Education Program, or other appropriate departments at area colleges. Volunteer internships are also available for students as well as other community members. All internships will remain open until filled. Contact Nearby Nature staff at 541-687-9699 or see www.nearbynature.org for intern job descriptions.



MEMBERSHIP, T-SHIRTS, AND MORE!

As a special thanks, we are offering our new volunteers a one year membership, a Nearby Nature T-shirt, and our guide training manual for a contribution of just \$30. This contribution will also cover your required background check. (Note: Membership usually costs \$30/individual/year and T-shirts \$12 for non-members.) Alternatively, new volunteers can make a \$15 contribution to our programs to help cover the cost of a guide training manual, T-shirt, and background check. If making such a contribution is a hardship, please let us know. Scholarships are available.