



Nearby Nature

Discover • Learn • Grow



Nearby Nature's Alton Baker Park Guides Program

Thanks for your interest in Nearby Nature's volunteer guides program! 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.

ABOUT NEARBY NATURE

Nearby Nature believes every child should have a chance to connect with nature nearby – a place right near home that can be explored time and time again. Kids who play and learn outside are healthier and happier, both in mind and body. Think for a moment – where did YOU first connect with nature? A tree in your back yard? An empty lot down the street? Your grandma's garden? Probably it was somewhere nearby!

OUR SCHOOL NATURE WALKS PROGRAM

Through our school walks program, trained volunteers share nature in Alton Baker Park with 1,000-1,500 children every spring and fall. Thanks to this program, plus the many others we sponsor, local kids spend 31,000+ hours outside every year! We welcome and encourage the participation of all community members in our work and invite you to be part of this important program. Your options as a nature walks volunteer are described below.



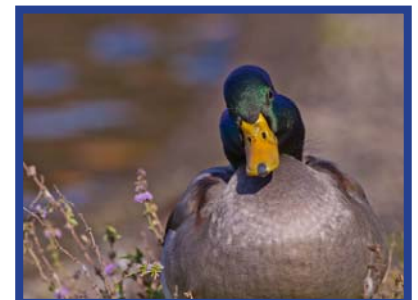
Morning Nature Walks Guide: Start your day off with a walk in the Heron Woods, a stroll along Beaver Way, or a visit to Willow Point! On **weekday mornings (9-11:45 am)** from mid-April through mid-June and late September through mid-November, volunteer guides lead small groups of six to nine K-5th graders on interactive nature adventures in Alton Baker Park. Topics covered range from aquatic wildlife and river ecology to gardening and sustainable living to Kalapuya life and lore. Guides use science, nature games, stories, and hands-on exploration to help kids discover, learn, and grow.



Critter Quest Pond Study Leader: On many weekday mornings, volunteers host pond study activities for larger groups (15-30 kids). Interested guides can help with pond study in addition to walks. Occasionally, volunteers who are not available to lead walks assist only with pond study.



Afternoon Adventures Leader: On some afternoons (12-2 pm), volunteers help with our extended Afternoon Adventures program. During this time, volunteers lead groups of 15-30 kids in pond study, nature art, or games. Occasionally, volunteers who are unable to lead morning walks help only with this part of our program.





Classroom Visits Assistant: Many schools scheduled for field trips also get a pre or post-walk classroom visit from Nearby Nature in the late fall, winter, or early spring. Nature guides are invited to help with these visits. A separate training is held for this program.

NATURE GUIDE TRAINING

Every April and September, Nearby Nature conducts field training sessions in Alton Baker Park for new nature guides. You don't have to be a seasoned 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 field sessions cover wildlife, plants, water ecology, conservation, games, stories, teaching techniques, and park safety. Printed materials are 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 **Guide Training Calendar for the current season** (nearbynature.org/volunteer/nature-guide-training-information) 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 are sometimes scheduled, 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 weekday walk or pond study session a week**, from 9-11:45 am. Guides are welcome to help with additional walks, afternoon activities, or school visits as well. If you do not have time to complete our whole training program or are unable to lead morning walks, you are invited to help with pond study, Afternoon Adventures, or other Nearby Nature programs. (See training schedule for details.)

COLLEGE CREDIT AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Students can 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 available for students as well as other community members. All internships remain open until filled. Contact Nearby Nature staff at 541-687-9699 or see nearbynature.org/volunteer/current-internships for intern job descriptions.

MEMBERSHIP, T-SHIRTS, AND MORE!

As a special thanks, we offer our volunteers a one year Friends Membership, a Nearby Nature T-shirt, our guide training manual, and coverage for a background check for a contribution of just \$45. (Note: Friends Membership usually costs \$25/individual/year, T-shirts cost \$12 for non-members, and binders plus the T-shirt and background check. If making such a contribution is a hardship, please let us know. Scholarships are available.

QUESTIONS?

Contact Nearby Nature staff at 541-687-9699 or info@nearbynature.org or see nearbynature.org.

OUR MISSION

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, maintains a Learnscape outdoor classroom, and serves as the City of Eugene's official host in Alton Baker Park.

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