

JOB TITLE: NATURALIST GUIDE VOLUNTEER (18 YEARS OR OLDER)

DESCRIPTION OF WORK:

Seeking enthusiastic volunteers who have an interest in nature and a desire to share their interest with school groups (grades K through 6th) at the Ottawa County Parks Nature Education Center (NEC) located at Hemlock Crossing County Park.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS:

The NEC's year-round school programs provide unique outdoor learning experiences for children. They are designed to meet the Michigan Department of Education's Grade Level Content Expectations for the Inquiry Process. These seasonal programs are designed to complement, enhance, and expand upon the concepts that the students are learning in their classrooms. Volunteer Naturalist Guides will use a variety of techniques as they lead groups (15 or fewer students per group) and will encourage students to ask questions, make observations, and construct reasonable explanations based on observations. Our goal is to provide a positive and direct outdoor experience so that students can develop their knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the natural world. Training will be provided.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Facilitate a variety of interpretive school programs and activities for children in K-6th grades.
2. Be available to teach on Tuesdays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. during peak program periods (especially April through early June and September through October).
3. Understand that there will be few or no hours during slow periods of the year.
4. Participate in seasonal volunteer trainings
5. Prepare content and materials for scheduled programs. The programs at the NEC are not scripted. Volunteers must be able to adapt to each group/grade level and be spontaneous along the trails.
6. Must attend volunteer trainings

SKILLS/EXPERIENCE NEEDED:

1. Ability to relate to children of all ages
2. Be comfortable with nature including insects, reptiles, amphibians, etc.
3. Experience working with children and others in an outdoor setting is desirable
4. Familiarity with the flora, fauna and ecology of West Michigan preferred.
5. Excellent verbal communication skills required.
6. Be in good physical shape to interact with children including crouching, bending, sitting on the ground, and walking at least a mile on varied terrain,

TIME COMMITMENT: 2+ years