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## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the mission of the Wenatchee Naturalist program?** The mission of the Wenatchee Naturalist Program is to cultivate awareness, understanding, and stewardship of the Wenatchee River region by developing an active corps of well-informed community volunteers.

**Who can become a Wenatchee Naturalist?** The course is designed for 25 curious adults who enjoy learning about the natural world, but have limited formal science training. Participants take the class to expand their knowledge about the Wenatchee River watershed's plants, animals, habitats, landforms and key conservation issues. They are required to volunteer in some capacity after completing the course. There should be a desire to become engaged in the local community, volunteering for local conservation organizations.

**How often will the class meet?** The class will meet for 12 consecutive Wednesday evenings, Feb. 1 – Apr. 18, 2012, 6:00-8:30 p.m. All day Saturday field-trips will be on Feb. 4, Mar. 24, and Apr. 7, 2012.

**How do I sign up to become a Wenatchee Naturalist?** Download and print the registration form at <http://www.barnbeachreserve.org> and mail it to the Wenatchee River Institute at Barn Beach Reserve, 347 Division Street, Leavenworth WA 98826. The \$300 course fee is due on or before Jan. 29, 2012, by check or through PayPal on the website.

**What does it cost to be a Wenatchee Naturalist?** This is a self-supporting program with tuition of \$300. For field trips, participants will be asked to carpool and share mileage expenses with the volunteer driver.

**What type of learning materials will be given to the class members?** The tuition will include an extensive resource notebook, field journal, and DVD copy of all presentations. Each week, you will be given handouts and reference materials to add to a resource binder. At the end of the course, you'll receive a DVD copy of all presentations. You will be given a field journal to use during the class. You will have access to borrow hand lenses and selected

field guidebooks during the course. You will use study skin specimens and dissecting microscopes during sessions held in the Biology Department at Wenatchee Valley College.

**What is the transportation for field trips and what do I need to bring?** We will announce destinations and coordinate logistics for each Saturday all-day field trip at the prior Wednesday class. We will meet in Wenatchee to carpool. Class members will be expected to share mileage costs with the volunteer class-member drivers. Plan to depart at 8 a.m. and return by 5 p.m.. Class members will provide their own sack lunches, beverages, and clothing for all types of weather.

**What are the types of volunteer service each person will be asked to do as the 20-hours of give back?** Following the completion of the training course, Wenatchee Naturalists will be expected to complete 20 hours of volunteer service per year to be considered active. Each person can choose the type of service that best fits their interests, abilities, and time constraints. During the course, students will be introduced to regional conservation organizations that welcome volunteers. There are four basic areas of service:

- **Stewardship Projects**— Natural resource management activities, such as invasive species removal or restoration projects, as a volunteer for a local conservation non-profit or agency.
- **Education/Interpretive Projects**—Volunteer teachers for local outdoor or museum education projects for school children, preparing educational materials, or leading hikes.
- **Citizen Science Projects**— Volunteers gathering data and returning it via the internet to support research projects. Options include national or locally run projects which will all be introduced during the course.
- **Program Support**— Working as a volunteer for Barn Beach Reserve programming, under staff direction.

**How much time is involved during the 12-week course and after course completion?** In addition to the 2-1/2 hour class each week, students will be asked to spend at least 30+ minutes at a self-selected field site doing field journaling and data gathering. An array of optional reading and reference materials will be provided weekly. Upon course completion, students will independently plan and complete the 20+ hours of give-back volunteering.

**What if I miss a class session?** You'll receive all materials and presentations in the class as a DVD at the end of the 12-week session.

**I'm a teacher and want to sign up for either clock-hours or for course credit. How does this work?** Sign up with the Wenatchee School District for free clock-hours <http://register.wsd.wednet.edu/Course.aspx?id=1605>. Register for course credit with the Heritage Institute <http://www.hol.edu/about.cfm>. Students enrolled for course credit will have required homework and a project, to be arranged with the instructor.

**What are more specific example of volunteer projects that Wenatchee Naturalists may be doing, upon completion of the class?**

- Teach an outdoor education station at annual science field experience events for Barn Beach Reserve, Wenatchee School District, or other schools.
- Volunteer for Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT) to do trail building, weed control, or restoration projects in the Wenatchee Foothills or Entiat River properties.
- Volunteer to help with Leavenworth Bird Fest in May or Salmon Festival in September.
- Become a field volunteer for the UW Seeds of Success or Rare Care programs.
- Become a contributing citizen scientist for local projects like IRIS Witnessing Change, Audubon Christmas Bird Count, or a CDLT or Upper Basin Birders ebird route.
- Become a contributing citizen scientist for a national project administered by Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Peregrine Fund, or the National Phrenology Network.
- Volunteer with the Wenatchee Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society to put up posters for Celebrating Wildflowers Week in May.

**How will participants keep track and report their volunteer hours?** An easy-to-use self-reporting format will be fully explained as part of the class. With the *give back 20 hours* expectation, each class member will determine a volunteer plan that best fits their interests and skills. In December 2012, our class will gather for a social and share volunteer experiences with the group.

**How is the Wenatchee Naturalist course similar to Master Naturalist programs offered in other states?** The Wenatchee Naturalist program is modeled after on-going programs in over 42 other states. Course designer, Susan Ballinger, is a member of the national professional organization, *Alliance of Natural Resource Outreach and Service Programs*. The Alliance's mission is to promote awareness and citizen stewardship of natural resources through science-based education and service programs. Member programs have a natural resource focus, are community-based, offer a minimum of 20 hours of service-oriented education and training, and include a field component in the training. The Wenatchee Naturalist program is most similar to programs offered in Montana and Minnesota.

**If you have additional questions, please contact the course instructor, Susan Ballinger ([skylinebal@gmail.com](mailto:skylinebal@gmail.com); 509.669.7820)**