

TYLER ARBORETUM NATURAL AREAS TEAM (NAT) VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF SERVICE: Provide assistance in managing Tyler Arboretum's natural areas primarily outside the deer fence. The main goal is to remove and to control invasive plant species (invasives) in these areas in order to help our native plant species (natives) to flourish. This is important because invasives often adversely affect the native ecosystem by outcompeting natives, thus reducing ecosystem diversity and impacting food sources for resident wildlife. Additional tasks such as native plant maintenance, water bar maintenance, clearing debris from drain pipes, and keeping culverts open and running may be performed.

We will work to accomplish this goal through three main methods:

- **Learning to identify native and invasive species** – We want to know which is which and to remove the invasive plants only
- **Working off-trail in problem areas** – Be prepared to walk off-trail (not far and will be in a group) including wearing clothing and footwear appropriate to working safely in off-trail areas.
- **Safely using effective tools** – we use our hands and hand tools (such as clippers, pruners, and shovels) to remove invasives, so come prepared to work!

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS:

1. Available to volunteer one-half day per month, typically the third Saturday morning (8:45am to 12:30pm) of the month, March through to November. Additional workdays may be scheduled throughout the year, weather permitting. Scheduled workdays and times will be communicated monthly via e-mail.
2. Good health with physical dexterity, ability to bend and kneel, and tolerance for working outdoors during the growing season, but seldom on inclement weather days. Physical aspects of the work can sometimes be demanding or laborious, such as pulling, carrying and digging.
3. Willingness to work as part of a team and to accomplish assignments.
4. Helpful: an interest in and appreciation of local ecology and an understanding of conservation concepts. Willingness to learn by doing.

TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS: Invasive plant removal, native plant and trail maintenance, cutting vines and digging with a shovel or weed wrench.

EXPECTATIONS

1. Sign-up for work days using Sign-Up Genius and report for work as scheduled. Notify the communications coordinator in advance if you are unable to keep your commitment, and delete your sign-up.
2. Dress for the weather outdoors, in comfortable, serviceable, and presentable clothing including Tyler volunteer t-shirts and vests. Bring a hat, gloves, sunglasses, and sunscreen; wear sturdy closed toe shoes.
3. Abide by safety protocols as presented in safety training
4. Treat all tools with care and use all tools safely. Return all tools and Arboretum property to the proper location, clean and ready for reuse.
5. Become familiar with reading materials provided by the leader or communication coordinator.
6. Follow instructions from your leader. Ask what you need to know to complete your assignments. Communicate openly with your leader to build productive working relationships. Be sure to mention physical limitations and safety concerns.
7. Plan to take a break with fellow workers to share common interests to build a working team.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

1. Required annually: Volunteer Safety Training covering tool usage, appropriate work clothing, personal protective equipment, vehicle requirements and safety. Volunteers will sign and date their attendance at each training session (minimally annually). NAT volunteers do not use power tools.

2. In order to be aware of safety measures and the work conditions that may be encountered as you perform various tasks, volunteers are to be familiar with the details under 'Safety While Volunteering' section of the Volunteer Handbook.
3. Volunteers learn through hands-on experience. The leader (or designee) will provide natural areas training and will orient volunteers to the projects. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in informal learning opportunities during work outings. For those interested in additional experiences, occasional field trips or collecting expeditions may be available.
4. The leader may ask experienced Natural Area Team members if they wish to serve as co-leaders on specific workdays.

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