

List of Possible Volunteer Opportunities

Visitor Services Activities Include:

- **Visitor Information** volunteers work the front desks at either North Tract (NT) or the NWVC to ensure that visitors feel welcome and have a quality experience. They greet visitors, orient them to the Refuge, inform them of recreational and educational activities available, answer questions, encourage appropriate behavior, respond to emergency situations and thank visitors for coming. Four hours of on-the-job training with staff or veteran volunteers is required at both tracts (total of 8 hours) before signing up for your own shift at either or both centers. This is by far the best way to learn more about the refuge and what it has to offer, to meet staff and volunteers who can further guide you towards a more personalized volunteer experience.
- **Interpretation/Naturalist** volunteers develop and lead wildlife education programs for all ages of the public such as nature walks (bird, trail hikes, wild flowers, etc.) interpretive talks and demonstrations. Participatory, hands-on programs focusing on the Refuge's habitats, wildlife and mission are preferred. Volunteer should have knowledge of natural history from education and/or experience. Some formal and on-the-job training is required.
- **Tram Interpreter** volunteers lead tram tours around Lake Redington on South Tract. Volunteers interpret the National Wildlife Refuge System, refuge management, wildlife research, and wildlife they encounter along the way. The tram operates mid-March through mid-November. Interpreters should enjoy talking to groups of people and sharing their knowledge about the natural environment. During summer months, volunteers must commit to at least four tram tours per month. Some training and self study required.
- **Community Outreach** volunteers promote the Refuge during a community sponsored event. The volunteer will staff an information table to acquaint event attendees with the Refuge and the activities available. Dependability & ability to independently handle assignments required. On-the-job training required.
- **Trail Monitor** volunteers assist visitors using trails and public use areas, answer questions about habitats and wildlife or refer to appropriate sources, check the trails and grounds for needed repair, report problems and emergencies. CPR/First Aid training is highly recommended. Ability to walk comfortably for 2 miles and remain outdoors for at least 2 hours in a variety of weather conditions is required. North Tract has over 20 miles of trails and roads for hiking and biking. There are 5 miles of foot trails on ST to monitor as well. Training is required for both tracts.
- **Tram Driver** volunteers operate the electric tram through the Patuxent Research Refuge, South Tract. The tram operates mid-March through mid-November. A Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with passenger endorsement is required, as well as additional training on the unique 40 passenger electric tram. Ability to operate a vehicle safely, skill in dealing with the public and several hours of supervised on-the-job training is required.
- **Environmental Education** volunteers provide assistance to classes, teachers, and youth group leaders in the use of the visitor centers and other refuge facilities as well as on offsite locations such as area schools. At the NWVC the volunteer will provide assistance in training educators in the use of the Center, meeting and greeting youth groups, assisting educators in outdoor environmental education activities, and assisting in planning and providing additional programs for educators and students. At the North Tract the volunteer will provide assistance with children's education programs in schools. Experience in environmental

education and with children is a plus, but opportunities for learning new activities and concepts are available. Several hours of training are required.

Maintenance Activities Include:

- **Landscaping/Gardening** volunteers help maintain the landscaped areas of the Refuge. Possible activities include mowing grass, trimming edges along walkways, weeding, watering, pruning, mulching, maintaining bird feeders, and cleaning interpretive panels near landscaped areas. Knowledge of gardening is preferred and on-the-job training available.
- **Outdoor Maintenance** volunteers maintain trails; build and install gates; mount, install, and maintain signs; assist with removing fallen trees; stain and paint various recreational facilities. Experience with general maintenance, hand and power tools and carpentry is helpful. On-the-job training provided.
- **Facilities Maintenance** volunteers help staff with maintenance issues in the many buildings on the refuge. Exhibit maintenance at the National Wildlife Visitor Center is a common need and requires basic engineering and electrical skills. Basic handyman skills from carpentry to plumbing required for most maintenance activities.

Administrative Type Activities Include:

- **Book Store** volunteers assist the Friends of Patuxent in the Book Store. Functions include: greeting and assisting customers; stocking shelves; taking inventory; pricing merchandise; operating the cash register; and maintaining displays and the Book Store appearance. Ability to deal with people, dependability, and an interest in providing education through books and other materials required. Regular attendance at scheduled shift is critical.
- **Computer Operator** volunteers assist with database development, input, and maintenance, as well as word processing and web page maintenance, and IT staff assistance. Knowledge of computers and a variety of software is required. Experience with Microsoft Word, Microsoft Access, Power Point and web page development is helpful.
- **Office/Clerical** volunteers assist staff in managing the operations of the Visitor Center. Possible activities include scheduling other volunteers, answering phones, responding to public inquiries, assisting with photocopying, and preparing mailings. Word processing experience is helpful and the ability to work within a busy, multi-discipline environment is desired; particularly needed on weekdays.
- **Writing** volunteers write articles for the Volunteer/Friends monthly newsletter and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service publications, and press releases for events and/or announcements. Work may be done at home.
- **Volunteer Management** volunteers assist in recruiting, orienting, training, scheduling, mentoring, and recognizing volunteers. One must be people-oriented and interested in volunteerism.

Biological Type Activities Include:

- **Hunter Harvest Data Collector** volunteers assist the North Tract Hunting Control Station Managers and Refuge staff during the 5 month hunting program for waterfowl, small game, and deer. Activities include collecting data on harvested species such as age, sex, weight, etc. Ability to keep accurate records, lifting, and contact with dead animals is required. September - January only.

- **Invasive Species Control** volunteers patrol assigned portions of the Refuge frequently throughout the growing season for members of the plant community classified as “non-native invasives,” document and map locations of established weeds, and where possible arrest plant development by removing weeds via hand removal and cutting throughout the growing season.
- **Songbird Nest-box Monitor** volunteers enhance the population of cavity nesting songbirds on the Refuge by monitoring several assigned boxes once a week from April through August and record data such as bird activity, nest construction, number of eggs laid, number of eggs hatched and number of nestlings.
- **Wildlife Survey** volunteers help with seasonal monitoring for songbird nest boxes as well as anuran, woodcock, and whippoorwill surveys. These opportunities are limited, based on present biological data needs and those needs can change from year to year. On the job or formal training is provided.