

JOB DESCRIPTION



TITLE: Discovery Center Volunteer Docent
SUPERVISOR: Albany Pine Bush Preserve Education Program Assistant
LOCATION: Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, Albany, New York
PREPARER: Blake Etchison

Located in the heart of New York's Capital Region, The Albany Pine Bush Preserve currently consists of 3,200 acres. The Preserve serves to protect a globally rare inland pine barrens ecosystem, a diversity of species including the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly and other rare species and natural communities. The Preserve provides an invaluable open space, recreational and educational resource for Capital District residents, businesses, and visitors. Opened in June of 2007, the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center sponsored by TrustCo is a central location within the Preserve for people of all ages to come and learn about the ecology, natural and cultural history of the Pine Bush. Interactive exhibits, a theatre, classrooms, and a recreated pine barrens landscape and outdoor exhibits all help to tell the story of the Pine Bush. Educational programs for school groups and the general public both inside the Discovery Center and along the trails will be a vital part of what the Discovery Center offers.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

Discovery Center Volunteer Docents perform several important roles. Docents are friendly greeters that welcome visitors to the Discovery Center, they are informal educators assisting visitors by answering visitor questions and providing visitor orientation, and they are formal educators leading small group presentations associated with specific Discovery Center exhibits. Docents must possess an interest in the Albany Pine Bush, in education and an enthusiastic and friendly outlook. Docents have the opportunity to use live animals, in our collection, in their presentations (formal and informal). If a docent elects to pursue this opportunity, they must receive training from staff. Experience as an educator or with public speaking is helpful but not required. ***Training for Discovery Center Docents will be provided.*** The Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission Education Program Assistant supervises and trains the Discovery Center Volunteer Docents.

Duties:

1. Greet visitors to the Discovery Center.
2. Circulate through the Discovery Center exhibit area and Discovery Center grounds.
3. Provide visitor orientation and answer visitor questions.
4. Monitor exhibits for maintenance needs and report any repair needs to Discovery Center staff. Help keep exhibits neat and organized.
5. Lead small group presentations associated with specific exhibits.
6. Optional: Conduct live animal presentations.
7. Continually enhance your knowledge of the Pine Bush through the use of field guides, internet resources and other Pine Bush reference materials.
8. Help with set-up and clean-up of classrooms.
9. Assist Pine Bush staff as needed.

Requirements:

1. Successfully complete Discovery Center Volunteer Docent training program.
2. Optional: Successfully complete the Animal Handling Training.
3. Minimum commitment of 1 hour per week for at least one year.
4. Excellent interpersonal skills and a positive, enthusiastic attitude.
5. Reliable, punctual and a professional work conduct.
6. Ability to effectively communicate with people of all ages in an interpretive capacity.
7. Experience in working as an educator, or with public speaking helpful but not required.
8. Background or interest in the natural sciences and the willingness to expand your knowledge of the Pine Bush.
9. Ability to work independently.
10. Reliable transportation needed.
11. First aid training recommended.

For more information or to sign up for an interview please contact:

Blake Etchison
Education Program Assistant
Albany Pine Bush Preserve
195 New Karner Road
Albany, NY 12205
(518) 456-0655 ext.1222
betchison@albanypinebush.org
www.albanypinebush.org

Prior to training, all prospective volunteers will be interviewed by the Education Program Assistant. Please note that a background check will be done on all Volunteer Educators and Docents.