

Junior Naturalist Program

GOAL: To offer students who are interested in the environment an opportunity to retain their relationship with Westwood Hills Nature Center and its' programs while gaining valuable experience assisting naturalists with various programs and/or projects.

QUALIFICATIONS: Jr. Naturalists must be responsible students who are entering 7th – 12th grade and have a genuine interest in Westwood Hills Nature Center and its' various programs. Self-motivation and ability to complete projects with minimal supervision is required.

DUTIES: There are six work assignments. Jr. Naturalists may choose to participate in one or more of the areas of interest:

-Animal Care and Projects – Jr. Naturalists assigned to Animal Care will be responsible for the following:

- The feeding of the animals housed at the nature center
- Ensuring the animal's cages are properly maintained and clean
- Other misc things associated with the animals or the building

In order to be assigned this duty, Jr. Naturalists must be available in the mornings.

-Program Aide- Jr. Naturalists assigned to Program Aide will be responsible for the following:

- Help set up supplies needed for activities, assist with clean-up at completion of project, assist children in understanding games, help with craft projects, and anything else the staff may need during camps.
- Help campers find their "lost" belongings and help remind them of items they will need to bring the following day.
- Assist with supervision of children at the interpretive center and on hikes to ensure their safety.
- Jr. Naturalists will be assigned to a Naturalist.

In order to be assigned this duty Jr. Naturalist must be available during the summer camps. Most weeks, Program Aide shifts are from 8:30am-12:00 and 11:45 am to 3 pm (Please note: Some camps go longer and/or have different hours)

-Trail Phenology – Jr. Naturalist assigned to Trail Phenology will be responsible for the following:

- Assisting in the identification* of Birds and other animals at Westwood
 - Walking the trails at Westwood with other volunteers and picking up garbage if needed
 - Writing down what you see at the end of your hike
- *If you don't know your birds or local animals, you will be with other people that will know or know how to figure it out. If you have an interest in Bird Identification or learning more about wildlife, then Trail Phenology would benefit you!

In order to be assigned this duty, Jr. Naturalists must be available during Tuesday and/or Thursday Mornings

-Bird Feeding and Projects – Jr. Naturalist assigned to Bird Feeding would be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining the various bird feeders and humming bird feeders at Westwood
- Taking care of Cecropia Moths housed at Westwood for a portion of the summer
- Monitoring the Rain Bars that help prevent trail erosion
- Filling up Bird Baths if necessary

In order to be assigned this duty, Jr. Naturalist should be available Monday, Wednesday and/or Friday Mornings.

-Water Quality Testing

- Canoe on Westwood Lake and take water tests with a staff member
- Use a secchi disk to test for water clarity
- Perform tests on the water you collect that will be used in research

In order to be assigned this duty, Jr. Naturalists should have an open schedule because Water Quality Testing gets done at different time based on staff availability.

-Insect Catching and Pinning – Jr. Naturalists assigned to Insect Catching and Pinning would be responsible for the following:

- Going on different trails and catching bugs with Nets
- Helping staff identify insects and spiders
- Willing to pin dead insects to be used for insect displays

In order to be assigned this duty, Jr. Naturalists should be free during the week and be comfortable handling dead or alive insects. If you would like to do this but only want to catch and identify insects, feel free to indicate your interest on the application.

If you are only free for some of the times listed above, but not every time or every week, you are still encouraged to apply. The staff doesn't guarantee that you will be able to participate in all the project areas above.

Each volunteer will be responsible for recording their hours

*Every summer there is an activity fee of \$10.00 to cover the costs associated with the program *

If you volunteer for 10 hours during the summer, you will be invited to a City Council Meeting to be honored by the St. Louis Park City Council. There will also be a reception event afterwards that the Jr. Naturalist Coordinator and another staff member will organize. Also for the volunteers that contribute 10 hours, they will receive a letter of recommendation from the Director of Parks and Recreation and a Thank you letter from the Mayor.

Throughout the year, Volunteers will have opportunity to attend social event aimed at creating a volunteer community at Westwood. In the past, there have been Movie and Game Nights, Canoeing days, and Kickball Games.

JUNIOR NATURALIST
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Please Print Clearly

Name _____ School _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____ Date of Birth _____

Home Phone Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Volunteers Cell Phone (if applicable) _____

Volunteers Email Address (if applicable) _____

-Parent/ Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone (if applicable) _____

Parent/ Guardian Email Address (if applicable) _____

Have you attended any programs or field trips at Westwood? (Y/N) _____

If yes, what programs or themes do you remember?

Have you volunteered at Westwood before? (Y/N) _____

If yes, what did you do?

List any work experience below (begin with the most recent):

List any volunteer experience below (begin with the most recent):

Extra Curricular Activities (ie. Athletics, Clubs, School Groups, Religious Groups, etc...):

Shortly, please explain why you would like to become a Jr. Naturalist?

My volunteering interests are: (check one or more)

Animal Care and Projects Trail Phenology
 Bird Feeding and Projects Program Aide
 Insect Catching and Pinning Water Quality Testing

If you have another project area you would like to see at Westwood, please explain what it would be and why you would like to see it take place?

(It isn't guaranteed the project will occur, but the nature center will try to accommodate it)

The information provided on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant Signature

Date

PERMISSION AND WAIVER:

I hereby agree to allow myself or my child to participate in the above named Parks and Recreation Department activity. In consideration of accepting this registration, I hereby, for myself and my heirs, waive any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the City of St Louis Park and its representatives, for any and all injuries from whatever cause suffered by the above participant(s) in the indicated activity. I understand that the information that I have provided may be distributed to individuals involved with each recreation program. The Parks and Recreation Department often take pictures, slides, and videotape of participants enjoying their activities. These are used for program promotion, brochures, scrapbooks, and staff training. I grant permission to use the name, pictures, and quotes of me or my child (ren) for the above purposes.

Parent's / Guardian's Signature

Date

Day phone - for emergency use

RETURN TO:

**WESTWOOD HILLS NATURE CENTER
8300 W. FRANKLIN AVE
ST. LOUIS PARK, MN 55426**