



NMWC Ambassador Animal & Education Volunteer Description

PURPOSE: Ambassador Animal & Education Volunteers help care for NMWC's Animal Ambassadors and educate the public about local wildlife and conservation.

CLASSIFICATION: Volunteer; this position is limited by all NMWC policies and local, state, and federal laws, rules and regulations.

REPORTS TO: Education Manager, Education Assistant, Education Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator

LEVEL OF PHYSICALITY: Moderate - High

WORK HOURS: One 3.5-hour shift per week minimum. Flexible schedule.

*NMWC prides itself on the level of time and energy staff put into training volunteers and providing an enriching volunteer experience. As such, volunteers must complete **60 hours of volunteer service within the first 5 months** of their position and must commit to **at least one year** of service. Volunteers that do not commit to these time requirements will be dismissed.*

POSITION SUMMARY

Volunteers help to care for the over 35 Ambassador Animals that live at NMWC while educating the public about wildlife and conservation. Through animal husbandry, training, and education programming, volunteers will connect with the animals at NMWC. Volunteers help with the Education Department at different levels:

- *Level 1:* Basic animal husbandry (enclosure cleaning, dish washing, mat cleaning) and communicating basic animal facts to interested visitors.
- *Level 2:* Advanced animal husbandry (diet preparation, enclosure cleaning with animals present) and presenting basic life history facts about animals to visitors.
- *Level 3:* Supervised animal handling (reptiles and raptors), learning training techniques, and learning how to present to the public about wildlife conservation.
- *Level 4:* Unsupervised animal handling (reptiles and raptors), reinforcing already trained behaviors, and presenting to visitors about wildlife conservation and local wildlife.
- *Level 5:* Raptor/reptile handling at formal education programs and implementing education program curriculum.

Volunteers can choose to stop at any level along this path and are encouraged to communicate their goals throughout the program. Staff will encourage volunteers to continue developing skills and knowledge and will provide the resources and training to do so. Volunteers are not guaranteed to progress along the levels at any set rate and are not guaranteed to move up a level if all skills from the previous level are not mastered.

REWARDS & BENEFITS:

Volunteers benefit from this position by

- Helping promote curriculum-based science learning in the community
- Building lasting relationships with Ambassador Animals
- Interacting with the public
- Being part of a team
- Helping promote wildlife conservation through our mission
- Helping protect wildlife through education
- Inspiring future generations to become compassionate about wildlife



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CORE DUTIES

- Clean animal enclosures using rakes, buckets, brushes and garden hoses.
- Clean water dishes, food dishes, and the kitchen using soap, bleach, and mops.
- Scrub mats for the ambassador animals with dish soap and hoses.
- Handle and prepare various types of dietary items for the carnivorous ambassador animals, including dead mice, rats, day-old-chicks, quail, elk meat, ground meat, etc.
- Observe Ambassador Animals' behaviors and activities and notify staff of any unusual observations.
- Interact with and provide educational information to onsite visitors.
- Higher-level volunteers:
 - Utilize choice-based, operant conditioning training methods to work with Ambassador Animals.
 - Present curriculum during education programs onsite and offsite.
- Participate in educational training to present programming, as well as independently learn NMWC information about each animal using the volunteer handbook.

QUALIFICATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers in this position must:

- Have a passion for NMWC's mission and for educating the public about wildlife conservation.
- Understand that all animals at NMWC are wild animals and are to be respected as such.
- Accept training and instruction from staff regarding animal behavior and handling, and abide by the guidelines provided by staff.
- Respect the staff's decisions regarding medical protocols and euthanasia of animals.
- Be comfortable in front of the public and talking to visitors.
- Be willing to come in contact with dirt, animal feces, blood, raw meat, and other materials that may cause filth.
- Enjoy learning new information about wildlife and take responsibility to continue learning.
- Present only NMWC-approved language and facts.
- Use appropriate radio etiquette and follow radio protocol.
- Understand when to call a staff member to assist in a difficult or intense situation.
- Provide outstanding customer service and provide a friendly, optimistic, professional face.
- Work and communicate well with other team members in all situations.
- Understand and implement NMWC's policies.
- Report for shifts on time and stay for the duration of the shift - or notify staff of any deviations from shift expectations in a timely manner.
- Be able to multitask and work well alone or with others in a team environment
- Complete tasks safely and efficiently per the direction of the supervisor.
- Take both written and verbal direction; follow detailed protocols and instructions.
- Be able to use hands frequently, lift heavy objects, and bend over frequently.
- Sign up for volunteer shifts and track hours through Volgistics.



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- Complete tasks both inside and outside for long periods of time in all weather.
- Be responsible for their own health in inclement weather. Be up-to-date with tetanus vaccine and provide documentation.
- Follow up-to-date COVID protocols implemented by NMWC and the state.
- Have an email address and check email regularly for communication from NMWC.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by a volunteer to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. A large percentage of duties are performed outdoors in various weather conditions, ranging from rain, wind, snow, cool to cold weather, and extreme heat. It is possible the volunteer will be exposed to dust and harsh chemicals that if not handled properly may present a health hazard. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate. While performing the duties of this job, the volunteer is regularly required to stand; walk; use hands; reach with hands and arms; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; talk; and hear. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and ability to adjust focus. Specific auditory acuity to identify animal noises indicating distress, aggression, pain and other conditions and behaviors; to hear warning signals from safety and security alarms and/or warning signals; to detect sounds associated with malfunctions in mechanical equipment and systems. Must possess sufficient manual dexterity, strength and ability to rotate wrists, elbows and shoulders to operate manual cranks, and pulleys and to use manual and power tools commonly used in routine maintenance. The incumbent must occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds. The work environment may be exposed to inclement weather; pollen, mold, dust, dirt and other airborne contaminants; and temperature variations. Must be able to tolerate exposure to animal dander, animal wastes, and other zoonotic contaminants. Must be able to work in close proximity to native wildlife species. Must be able to wear all required protective clothing and equipment.

❖ **Note: Volunteers in this classification may be required to have COVID vaccination and tetanus vaccination.**

DISCLAIMER: This position description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by a volunteer within this role. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities and qualifications required of a volunteer in this position.

EEO STATEMENT: All qualified applicants will receive consideration for volunteer placement without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, or any other characteristic protected by law. All NMWC volunteers are subject to volunteer eligibility and background security checks.