

Heard Institute Courses

Volunteer Orientation – Conducted in the garden and museum proper, focusing on native plants, indoor exhibits, Heard history, volunteer opportunities, expectations, and benefits. This is a 3 hour session. Bring bottled water, Wear long pants & closed toe shoes. Bug spray is recommended. You must have all your paperwork (this includes a background check) completed and turned in before attending orientation. This orientation is mandatory for all volunteers. A Volunteer Handbook will be provided for this course.

Forestry Trail Guide – Conducted on the Hoot Owl Trail, focusing on woodland plants and animals. This course will also cover the presentation and handling of animals. This course is mandatory for all trail guides, workshop facilitators and contract teachers. *This is a 5 hour course.* Bring a lunch and bottled water, Wear long pants & closed toe shoes. Bug spray is recommended. Trail Guide Manual will be provided for this course. Additional requirements are two observations of an animal presentation given by a staff member and two observations of a guided trail given by staff and a final observation of you by a staff member as you give a guided trail and an animal presentation.

Prairie Trail Guide – Conducted on the Sycamore Trail and the Red Tail Trail, focusing on grasses and birds. This course is mandatory for trail guide certification, plant and bird biology lab facilitators and contract teachers. *This is a 5 hour course.* Bring a lunch and bottled water, Wear long pants & closed toe shoes. Bug spray is recommended. Additional requirements are two observations of a guided trail given by a staff member and a final observation of you by a staff member as you give a guided trail.

Wetlands Trail Guide – Conducted on the Wood Duck Trail focusing on aquatic plants and animals including pond life. This course is mandatory for trail guide certification, aquatic lab facilitators and contract teachers. *This is a 5 hour course.* Bring a lunch and bottled water, Wear long pants & closed toe shoes. Bug spray is recommended. Additional requirements are two observations of a guided trail given by a staff member and a final observation of you by a staff member as you give a guided trail.

Project WILD Workshop- Project WILD is a Kindergarten through 12th grade environmental and conservation education program emphasizing awareness, appreciation and understanding of wildlife and natural resources. It is interdisciplinary and supplementary and can be used to teach basic skills in science, social studies, language arts, math, art, music and physical education. Human population growth is increasing exponentially. As our planet grows more crowded every day, natural and wild places are rapidly diminishing . . . and so is wildlife. Project WILD explores how people can understand wildlife and habitat and make decisions that use natural resources wisely.

Project WILD Aquatic Workshop - The Project WILD Aquatic K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide emphasizes aquatic wildlife and aquatic ecosystems. The guide is full of 48 activities that emphasize hands-on, inquiry-based, and cooperative learning strategies with demonstrated classroom effectiveness. It is organized in topic units and is based on the Project WILD conceptual framework. Because these activities are designed for integration into existing courses of study, instructors may use one or many Project WILD Aquatic activities or the entire set of activities may serve quite effectively as the basis for a course of study.

Each Project WILD Aquatic activity contains all the information needed to conduct that activity including objectives, method, background information, a list of materials needed, procedures, evaluation suggestions, recommended grade levels, subject areas, duration, group size, setting, and key terms. A glossary is provided, as well as a cross-referenced by topics and skills.

To become a Heard Certified Trail Guide you must complete orientation and all three courses. All observations are required as well as attendance at both Project Wild Workshops.

Additional Heard Institute Courses:

Night Hike Guide – This training will focus on the adaptations of nocturnal animals, night sounds, night hike activities and the specific nocturnal animals that we have on the Heard Sanctuary. We will also cover safety for night hikes. This is a 3 hour course

Museum Exhibit Docent - This course will give in-depth training on the exhibits inside the museum. You will learn to assist guests in using the living lab. This includes proper handling of the equipment and the natural science specimens. Basic knowledge of all exhibits and rules for exhibit safety will be essential for interaction with guests. A handbook will be provided for this training.

Snake Exhibit Docent – This course will cover the snakes we have in our exhibit, how to answer questions from the public, and snake biology basics. This is a 3 hour course.

Dinosaurs Alive! Trail Guide - This course will cover the dinosaurs that we have in our 2007-2008 Dinosaurs Alive Exhibit. The pertinent biological information for each dinosaur will be presented. Training will include how to give a guided dinosaur trail, how to handle school groups and how we schedule school groups.

Garden Guides - Two 3 hour sessions:

Course will provide a brief overview of the history of botanical gardens and their importance in American culture. A history of the native plant movement will be explored leading to the design and instillation of the Heard Native Plant Garden. You will learn to identify garden species learn their origin and uses. Principles and best practices of native plant cultivation will also be covered along with plant and animal associations.