



Docent Training Program

Beginning January 17, 2008

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
4801 La Crosse Ave.
Austin, TX 78739
512.232.0102

What is a docent?

Our docents are trained volunteers whose primary responsibility is to interpret the Wildflower Center for our visitors. They guide tours, give talks, serve in our Visitors' Gallery, and answer questions throughout our grounds and gardens. Docents are the ambassadors of the Wildflower Center mission.

What does docent training involve?

Docent training is a three-part learning program that combines eight weeks (48 hours) of classroom and field study with 26 hours of practical experience. Graduated docents will continue to increase their knowledge through Phase III - Enrichments, which continue as long as the docent remains active.

Part I: Classroom and Field Study-

Part I of the training program starts on Thursday, January 17, 2008. Classes will take place every Thursday from 9:00 am– 3:30 pm through Thursday, March 6, 2008.

Part II: Experiential Learning –

Part II of the training is the experiential learning component, which gives you the opportunity to apply your new skills in “real life” settings (Visitor’s Gallery, adult and family tours, special events – on and off site, etc.) and to work along side our experienced docents. The program allows you to “shadow” our current docents as they perform their duties and later to be “shadowed” by our current docents who will provide support to you. In the end, you’ll be well trained and ready to fly solo! The Volunteer Services Director will assist you in scheduling these sessions, which will require approx. 26 hours for completion. Phase II will take place in a flexible format during the week and/or on the weekend around your schedule. Part II of the training begins the week of Monday, March 17, 2008.

Phase III: Enrichment – Docent enrichments are scheduled throughout the year, usually once a month, to give volunteers an opportunity to learn more about the natural world around them. Enrichments are typically lectures, nature walks, and talks on specialized topics given by our staff and visiting guests. Docents are strongly encouraged to participate in a minimum of three enrichments per year.

Those who have completed Part I and Part II of training will be certified as docents during a graduation celebration held in late May 2008.

Who is a good candidate for docent training?

Anyone with an interest in the natural world and a desire to represent the Wildflower Center is encouraged to take docent training. In fact, we encourage you to invite like-minded friends to take docent training with you! It’s a lot of fun and a great way to spend time with people who enjoy being a part of the Wildflower Center’s programs. There is no expectation that you have

previous experience in natural science or education. All you need is a healthy curiosity and a willingness to learn.

What will I learn in docent training?

Core components of the classroom and field lectures include:

Mrs. Johnson's Legacy – The Center's history and mission,
Natural History of the Central Texas Hill Country,
Botany, Plant Taxonomy and Environmental Science,
Restoration Ecology and Plant Conservation,
Native Plant Horticulture, Landscaping, and Gardening.

Core components of the experiential component include:

Interpretive techniques for orienting visitors to the Center
Teaching and learning techniques for families
Resource skills for assisting visitors in the Gallery
Presentation skills for representing the Center



What is expected of docents following graduation?

Your continued involvement following training is vitally important to the Center's docent program. *To remain in good standing, graduates are required to volunteer three hours per month (or 9 hours every quarter) in a docent position* and attend three Docent Enrichments per year.* Docent Enrichments are programs designed by our education staff to give you an opportunity to further your study of the natural world.

* Docent positions include: working in the Visitor's Gallery, guiding tours for adults and families, assisting with educational programming, participating in special events and festivals, and representing the Center at external functions. Many of our docents volunteer in other departments at the Center in addition to their docent requirements.

What is the cost of training?

To cover the cost of speakers and materials, docent training is \$65. for members and \$100. for non-members. The non-member's fee includes a one-year individual membership to the Center.

What if I'm interested in the classes offered to docents but don't want to serve as a docent?

This program is designed solely for the purpose of preparing volunteers to represent the Center in a docent capacity. If you're not interested in volunteering as a docent or don't feel you can complete the entire training, please consider other educational opportunities offered by the Center. For a list of classes, seminars, and programs, please visit our website at www.wildflower.org or stop by and pick up one of our monthly calendars.

How do I sign up for docent training?

Please fill out the form on the facing page and mail it with your fee (\$65. for members/ \$100. for non-members). Deadline for applications is January 6, 2006. We suggest you cut this page off of the application and retain it for your records. We will contact you to confirm receipt of your application. Class size is limited and the spaces will be filled on a first come, first served basis. In the event the class is filled, we will contact you immediately to make arrangements to add you to next year's class. If you have questions about docent training, please contact Carrie McDonald, Volunteer Services Manager at 232-0102 ext. 102 or cmcdonald@wildflower.org.

Docent Application Form

Name _____
First Last Middle

Address _____
Street City/State Zip Code

Phone _(____)_____ (____)_____ Email _____
Home Work

Occupation _____

Are you a member of the Wildflower Center? ___ Yes ___ No

Are you a Wildflower Center Volunteer? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you speak a foreign language? ___ Yes ___ No (if yes, please list) _____

American Sign Language? ___ Yes ___ No

How did you hear about the docent training program? _____

What do you hope to gain from your experience as a Wildflower Center docent? _____

Which of the following components of docent training interest you most?
(*Select up to five favorites*)

- Native Plant Identification Native Plant Horticulture Plant Conservation Botany
 Children's Education Children's Tours Adult Tours Landscape Restoration
 Serving as a Docent in our Visitors' Gallery Mrs. Johnson's Legacy Speaker's Bureau
 Natural History of Central Texas Gardening Architecture of the Wildflower Center

Please share any additional information about yourself; your experiences, your employment and/or your interests that will help us get to know you better. If you need more space, feel free to attach additional pages.

Thank you for your interest in the Wildflower Center docent training program. *Please detach this page and send it with your docent training fee to:*

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
Attn: Stephen Brueggerhoff
4801 La Crosse Ave. ~ Austin, Texas 78739