

Frequently asked Questions about Oglebay Good Zoo's Certified Master Naturalist Program

Who developed the program? The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

Where are classes offered? In various counties throughout the state. The Oglebay Zoo chapter covers Ohio, Brooke, Hancock and Marshall counties, but anyone from any county can participate, including students from Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Who teaches the classes? Oglebay Good Zoo staff, WV DNR biologists, Schrader Center staff, local experts, local college and university professors, fellow Master Naturalist students!

Who are typical students? Anyone 16 years of age, through senior citizens. College students, retired folks, college professors, backyard birders, elementary teachers, nature photographers, farmers, fisherman, **anyone who loves nature!** Students come from all walks of life, with many different backgrounds and ages. You will fit right in, and make new friends in the process!

When can I enter the program? You can jump in at any time; new students are starting at each weekend we offer.

What are some of the required classes? Mammals; Insects; Birds; Amphibians and Reptiles; Wildflowers; Trees and Shrubs; Aquatic Habitats; Creating Backyard Wildlife Habitats; Terrestrial Habitats; Nature Interpretation and Teaching; Names and Identification; Recording and Observing What You Learn. Each class is only 3 to 4 hours in length, for example the Bird class is 4 hours total to complete, taught in one afternoon.

What are some of the electives I can choose from? Alien Species; Pollinators; Screech Owls; Edible Plants; Medicinal Plants; WV Plants that Changed the World; Global Warming; Rearing and Tagging Monarch Butterflies; Nature Photography; Summer Night Skies Astronomy; Mushrooms; Ferns; WV Fish; Citizen Science Projects, Hellbender Research; Raptor Rehabilitation; Eastern Box Turtles, Deep Ecology; Field Identification of Birds; Nature Illustration and Journaling, and many more.

How many classes will I take to be certified? You must complete 48 hours of core classes and at least 16 hours of electives.

How often are classes offered? We offer classes throughout the spring, summer, fall and winter.

How long will it take to complete all the classes? One year if you don't miss a required core class and take about 3 or 4 electives.

What if I miss a class? You can make it up the next year; you have at least 3 years to complete the program. You can also take a missed class at another MN chapter across the state of WV.

How much does it cost? About \$6 per class hour; so a little less than \$400 to complete all the required classes. You can also take additional electives if you wish, which will vary from two to four hours per elective. You can repeat any class you paid for at the Good Zoo, free of charge, as long as there is space in the class.

What if I cannot afford the classes? Two scholarship slots are available in each class of 20 students, call for further details.

What about the volunteer requirements? You need to complete 30 hours of volunteer work before you can be certified, then 16 hours a year.

Can I work on my volunteer hours while still taking classes? Yes, many students do.

What counts as volunteer work? Creating habitat in your community, invasive plant removal in parks; presenting a school program; working on a project at the Good Zoo, nature center, or WV state park, rearing and tagging Monarch butterflies, photographing native bees, lady bugs, butterflies or lightning bugs; assisting DNR biologists with field research; teaching a Master Naturalist class or helping with Master Naturalist programs, monitoring bird feeders or bird nest boxes, and many other activities.

What does NOT count for volunteer work? Volunteer work you did before entering the program. Any activity not approved by the WV DNR. Habitat improvement in your own yard. (Habitat improvement elsewhere does count for hours).

How can I be sure my volunteer work will be eligible? Ask us BEFORE you volunteer! We may even have to ask the WV DNR if the activity you propose is eligible for volunteer hour credit.

What if I have more questions? Call Penny Miller at 304-243-4027 or Vickie Markey-Tekely at 304-243-4068

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