

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, Marshall and other nearby counties.

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, anyone who loves nature! Students come from all walks of life, with many different backgrounds and ages. Residents of West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Ohio are welcome to join!

When can I enter the program? You can start 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, Names and Identification, Recording and Observing What You Learn

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

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 will offer at least 4 different weekends, plus some added days or weekends of elective classes.

How long will it take to complete all the classes? One year of 4 weekends, longer if you miss a weekend or some of the classes.

What if I miss a weekend? You can make it up the next year; you have at least 2 years to complete the program.

How much does it cost? About \$79.50, so \$318 total over the course of one year taking the 4 required weekends. You can also take additional, individual electives if you wish, for a per-class fee, which will vary by length and type of 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? Hiking trail maintenance, invasive plant removal in parks; presenting programs in schools, the zoos, nature center, nursing homes or parks; assisting biologists with field research; teaching a Master Naturalist class or helping with Master Naturalist programs, and many other activities.

What does NOT count for volunteer work? Any activity you do that is NOT in the state of West Virginia. Volunteer work you did before entering the program. Any activity not approved by the WV DNR.

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 hours credit.

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