



Volunteer opportunity

Position Title:

Native Plant Center seed scout

Department/ Program/Team:

Parks and Nature/Conservation Program/Science

Purpose:

Native Plant Center seed scouts support Metro's conservation of uncommon, threatened and endangered native herbaceous species by monitoring and tracking phenology and documenting population location. Seed scouts visit various Metro properties each year to locate, identify and document these populations. This work supports Metro's commitment to enhance and increase biodiversity of regionally significant habitats.

Benefits:

Seed scouts visit Metro properties not open to the general public. They have the opportunity to observe unique habitats with some plants endemic to the Northern Willamette Valley, and learn about the ecosystems these species rely on to flourish. Scouts also become skilled at identifying species of interest in five phenological stages: vegetative, bud, flower seed unripe and seed ripe. Additionally, there will be an opportunity for some volunteers, based on experience and availability, to participate in the collection of voucher specimens for the Portland State University herbarium and seed for banking at the Rae Selling Berry Seed Bank at the university.

Essential position responsibilities:

- Attend two mandatory trainings held on March 16th and June 1st
- Possess a strong interest in self-directed learning to prepare for site visits
- Become proficient at field identification of approximately thirty (30), of our program's most common herbaceous perennials throughout their phenological stages from vegetative through seed ripe.
- Availability and commitment to conduct site visits on two-week intervals, March through September (site dependent), to monitor phenological stages, collect and document all observations as presented in training, determine seed collection dates and collect seeds
- Enter field data into electronic format and send to NPC staff within one week of site visit
- Arrange travel to Metro field sites on one's own or by facilitating carpool options with team members and/or Native Plant Center staff
- Maintain and document volunteer hours using Volgistics
- Maintain regular communication with the Native Plant Center coordinator and team members to schedule and confirm collection dates and field kit needs

- Maintain good working relationships with Metro staff, volunteers and property neighbors
- Additional tasks to support seed scouting include: data entry and photographing phenological stages of select species

Preferred qualifications, skills and abilities:

- Intermediate knowledge of PNW native herbaceous plant species and experience using a dichotomous key
- Ability to navigate, using a handheld Garmin GPS unit
- Methodical, organized and able to follow strict data and seed collection methods and protocol
- Remain undeterred by weather, including hot, sunny days; rough terrain, including rocky or steep slopes and mucky edges of riparian strips or wetlands; and occasional bee and poison oak hazards
- Ability to take on a leadership role in the program as needed

Background Check:

This position is a Tier 2 volunteer opportunity. Applicants will complete a standard background check through OpenOnline.

Time commitment:

Seed scouts volunteer approximately 12-16 hours per month, beginning in late March through September. This includes two, four-hour site visits, two hours of travel time, 1 hour of data entry, and 1 to 4 hours of self-directed preparation for site visits, depending on experience.

Receives guidance from and/or reports to:

Marsha Holt-Kingsley
Natural Resource Associate Scientist, Botanist
marsha.holt-kingsley@oregonmetro.gov

Jennifer Wilson
Native Plant Center assistant
jennifer.wilson@oregonmetro.gov

Adrienne Basey
Science assistant
adrienne.basey@oregonmetro.gov