



# Volunteer opportunity

**Position Title:**

Native Plant Center Seed Scout

**Department/ Program/Team:**

Parks and Nature/Conservation/Science

**Purpose:**

Native Plant Center (NPC) 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 may be opportunities for volunteers 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.

**Essential position responsibilities:**

- Attend two mandatory trainings held on March 14<sup>th</sup> and June 6<sup>th</sup>, 9am-1pm
- Availability and commitment to conduct site visits on two-week intervals, March through July, to monitor phenological stages, collect and document all observations as presented in training, determine seed collection dates and collect seeds, with an option to participate through September
- 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 priority herbaceous perennials throughout their phenological stages from vegetative through seed ripe.
- Enter field data into electronic format within one week of site visit
- Arrange travel to Metro field sites independently or by facilitating carpool options with team members and/or Native Plant Center staff
- Document your volunteer hours using Volgistics, our online volunteer database
- Maintain regular communication with the Native Plant Center staff 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: photographing phenological stages of select species

**Required qualifications, skills:**

- Intermediate knowledge of PNW native herbaceous plant species and some experience using a dichotomous key
- Ability to navigate, using a handheld Garmin GPS unit
- 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

**Preferred skills:**

- Methodical, organized and able to follow strict data and seed collection methods and protocol
- Ability to take on a leadership role in the program as needed

**Time commitment:**

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

**Background Check:**

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

**Receives guidance from and/or reports to:**

Marsha Holt-Kingsley, Natural Resource Associate Scientist; Botanist  
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