



KANSAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM

Introduction

A. What is a Master Naturalist?

Participants who successfully complete program requirements of the Kansas Master Naturalist (KMN) Program are Master Naturalists.

Kansas Master Naturalists are volunteers with the commitment and desire to complete training, volunteer their time and expertise, and engage in continuing education. Master Naturalists may have many roles, including collector of scientific data, interpreter, teacher, advocate, and steward.

The use of the term “master” in this program name follows a tradition established by other Extension programs. It is not intended to indicate that participants have the same degree of expertise as professional environmental educators and scientists whose titles may include the term “naturalist.” Master Naturalists are committed to learning about the natural world and sharing their knowledge and skills with others. As a Kansas Master Naturalist you will have opportunities to:

- Enhance your love of nature through hands-on training and community-based service;
- Practice life-long learning and sharing with new people with similar interests;
- Give something back to nature and your local community;
- Learn more about local, regional, and state natural resources and conservation;
- Learn from and work side-by-side with experts.

There are many wonderful organizations in Kansas who are doing good work to protect the environment, and they need your help! By participating in the Kansas Master Naturalist Program you can be confident that you will have the skills to give back to your community in the way that best fits you, including volunteering your time and expertise to these organizations.

B. Training and Volunteer Requirements

To become a Certified Master Naturalist you must complete at least **40 hours of classroom and field training** and provide a minimum of **30 hours of volunteer service**.

C. Levels of Kansas Master Naturalist Participation

- **Master Naturalist Trainee**—a program participant from the time he or she is accepted into the program through completion of classroom training.
- **Master Naturalist Intern**—a program participant from the time he or she graduates with a minimum of 40 hours of Master Naturalist training through the completion of 30 hours of volunteer service. This internship is normally completed within 12 months of the end of classroom training. However, interns may take 2 years to complete their internship upon agreement of the local Master Naturalist Advisory Committee.
- **Master Naturalist Graduate**—a Master Naturalist Intern who completes the 40 hours of Master Naturalist training but does not complete the volunteer service requirement for certification.
- **Certified (Active) Master Naturalist**—a Master Naturalist Intern who has completed his or her initial 30-hour volunteer service requirement, or a returning Master Naturalist. To maintain Certified Kansas Master Naturalist status requires a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of continuing education annually and is valid for 1 year. Active Master Naturalists are encouraged to pair with Master Naturalist Trainees and Interns to help guide them through a successful volunteer experience.

D. Organizations in Kansas that Qualify for Master Naturalist Volunteer Credits:

You may legitimately volunteer as a Kansas Master Naturalist at nature and wildlife sites, museums, zoos, and research sites. You may also give talks or lead hikes for 4-H and scouting groups and school groups.

A list of possible sites where you may volunteer as a KMN is listed at the end of this chapter. If you're not sure a volunteer opportunity qualifies for KMN credit, call Alisa Kozlowski.

E. Reporting your hours:

Your volunteer and continuing education hours will be recorded and maintained by the KEEP office. We turn them in annually to Chuck Otte, K-State Research and Extension, Ag & Natural Resources agent (Geary County). Contact KEEP via email, telephone, or mail and let us know:

- the date (month/day/year) of activity
- duration of activity
- where the activity took place
- what you did for the group – project description

You are required to volunteer 30 hours to become a KMN and then 30 hours each year after to maintain your certification. If you do not report your hours, you may lose your KMN designation.

Master Naturalist report summaries for the previous year (your name, number of hours of volunteer service provided, and hours of continuing education attended for the year) must be reported by the end of January each year. This information is needed to re-certify you as a Master Naturalist for the coming year.

Continuing education – you are required to complete at least 10 hours of continuing education each year. Konza Prairie Biological Station will offer this continuing education throughout the year (Saturday morning walks with Earl qualify) and during docent training.

Report all of your KMN volunteer hours to:

Ashley Thackrah
Konza Environmental Education Program
116 Ackert Hall
Division of Biology; KSU
Manhattan, KS 66506
(785) 587-0381
keeped@ksu.edu

F. Sites where you may volunteer:

- Sternberg Museum of Natural History – Hays
- Fick Fossil & History Museum – Oakley
- Cheyenne County Historical Museum – St. Francis
- Smoky Hill Bison Ranch – Assaria
- Milford Nature Center and Fish Hatchery – Junction City
- Rock Springs 4-H Center
- Insect Zoo – Kansas State University – Manhattan
- Konza Prairie Biological Station – Manhattan
- Sunset Zoo – Manhattan
- Lakewood Discovery Center – Salina
- Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure – Salina
- Kanas Landscape Arboretum – Wakefield
- Kansas History Center Nature Trail – Topeka
- Topeka Zoological Park – Topeka
- W. Clement Stone Nature Center – Topeka
- Kaw Valley Heritage Alliance – Lawrence
- Prairie Park Nature Center – Lawrence
- University of Kansas Natural History Museum – Lawrence
- Prairie Oak Nature Center – Leawood
- Operation WildLife – Linwood
- Ernie Miller Nature Center – Olathe
- Deanna Rose Children Farmstead – Overland park
- Overland Park Arboretum – Overland Park
- John Barkley Visitor Center – Shawnee
- Wonderscope Children’s Museum – Shawnee
- Kansas Heritage Center – Dodge City
- Wright Park Zoo – Dodge City
- Lee Richardson Zoo – Garden City
- Brit Spaugh Zoo – Great Bend
- Kansas Wetlands Education Center – Great Bend
- Kansas Meteorite Museum and Nature Center – Haviland
- Pratt Education Center and Aquarium – Pratt
- Quivira National Wildlife Refuge – Stafford
- Chaplin Nature Center – Arkansas City
- Eagle Valley Raptor Center – Cheney
- Tanganyika Wildlife Park – Goddard
- Dyck Arboretum of the Plains – Hesston
- Dillon Nature Center – Hutchinson
- Hutchinson Zoo – Hutchinson
- Kanas Cosmosphere and Space Center – Hutchinson
- Kansas Underground Salt Museum – Hutchinson
- Maxwell Refuge Tour Center – McPherson
- Kauffman Museum – Newton
- Botanica, The Wichita Gardens – Wichita
- Exploration Place – Wichita
- Great Plains Nature Center – Wichita
- Kansas Wildlife Exhibit – Wichita
- Lake Afton Public Observatory – Wichita
- Museum of World Treasures – Wichita
- Sedgwick County Zoo – Wichita
- The Water Center – Wichita
- Wolf Creek Environmental Education Area – Burlington
- David Traylor Zoo – Emporia
- Schmidt Museum of Natural History – Emporia
- Wildwood Outdoor Education Center – LaCygne
- Cedar Cove Feline Conservatory – Louisburg
- Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve – Strong City
- Safari Zoological Park - Caney
- Southeast Kansas Nature Center - Galena
- Southeast Kansas Education Service Center – Greenbush
- Ralph Mitchell Zoo – Independence
- Pittsburg State University Nature Reach – Pittsburg
- Other sites/organizations: 4-H clubs, scouting groups, university groups, local or federal fish and wildlife groups, native plant societies.



Kansas Master Naturalist Training

A. Classroom training

The Kansas Master Naturalist Program provides a broad-based, scientifically curriculum covering a wide variety of topics. Training consists of a minimum of 40 hours of classroom and field instruction based on the Kansas Master Naturalist curriculum. The curriculum being developed will include the following subject matter areas:

Chapters

Interpretation	Herpetology (Reptiles & Amphibians)
General Ecology	Entomology (Insects)
Weather & Climate	Mammalogy (Mammals)
Geology & Soils	Ornithology (Birds)
Botany (Plants)	Ichthyology (Fish)

B. What to expect from training

The Kansas Master Naturalist curriculum strives to provide an engaging, skill-building guide to prepare you for a lifetime of learning about the natural world and to help facilitate your efforts in volunteer restoration activities and educational outreach. This program employs a mix of lectures, interactive activities, and field experiences to instill an appreciation of the intricacy of nature. It is also designed to support the enthusiasm and build the confidence of Master Naturalists to share their knowledge and skills. The training promotes experiential learning and critical and creative thinking. Diversity and adaptability are hallmarks of the program.

The Kansas Master Naturalist curriculum is not designed to answer all of your questions. It is designed to provide an entrance into topics that will motivate you to seek more information. And there is no shortage of excellent resources available to those interested in learning about the natural world. Indeed, entire books have been written on each of the topics covered in this curriculum. Master Naturalists are encouraged to delve into the many resources available to learn more about any topics of special interest to them.

Attendance

Master Naturalist Trainees are expected to attend all training sessions. In the event a training session must be missed; it is the responsibility of the trainee to make arrangements for making up the missed session. If you are not able to attend a session please let us know as soon as possible.

Jill Haukos (785) 587-0381 office
(806) 786-7899 cell
konzaed@ksu.edu

Ashley Thackrah (785) 587-0381 office
keeped@ksu.edu



Kansas Master Naturalist Program Policies

A. Use of the Master Naturalist Title

The title “Master Naturalist” is to be used only and exclusively in the Master Naturalist Program in which the trained and certified Master Naturalists conduct educational programming or provide natural resource assistance with local partners. Master Naturalists are expected to identify themselves as such only when conducting unpaid service in the program. The title is valid only when the volunteer is participating in the Master Naturalist program. When an individual ceases to actively participate, his or her designation as a Master Naturalist becomes void, and he or she becomes a Master Naturalist Alumnus.

Certification as a Master Naturalist is restrictive in that it is valid only when the individual is participating in a Master Naturalist endorsed project or activity for the coming year. Those not continuing in the program will not be re-certified and should be aware that if they represent themselves as Master Naturalists, they are violating their original commitment.

B. Recognition and Awards

Unsatisfactory completion of the Master Naturalist training, a Master Naturalist Intern certificate is awarded to the participant. After completion of the 30-hour internship, the Master Naturalist Intern becomes a certified Master Naturalist and is awarded a Master Naturalist certificate. Certificates may be presented at an annual graduation or volunteer recognition ceremony. In succeeding years, Master Naturalists who remain active by keeping their continuing education and volunteer service requirements current may be awarded a “Years of Service” certificate.

C. Conflicts of Interest

A Master Naturalist should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Master Naturalist at a place of business unless that business is sponsoring a Master Naturalist activity. It is improper to imply endorsement of any product, service, or place of business. Master Naturalists must not use their title in any form of commercial advertisement. The Kansas Master Naturalist Program is a volunteer program established to provide service and unbiased information.

When Master Naturalists make public presentations on natural resource subjects, it is permissible for them to accept unsolicited gifts or be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred in conducting the class. It is inappropriate to seek pay for personal gain for speaking engagements conducted as a Master Naturalist. Speaker’s fees or honoraria are permissible when they are relegated to the furtherance of the Master Naturalist mission.

