



SHARE
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NATURE...
*Become a
First Guide
teen volunteer!*



2025

First Guides



Who are First Guides?

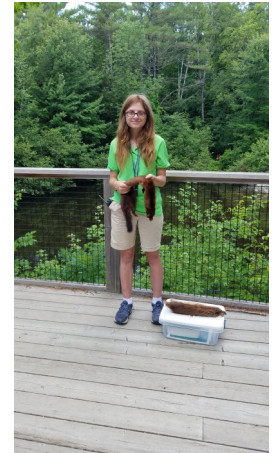
First Guides is a volunteer program at Squam Lakes Natural Science Center specifically designed for teens. First Guides have the opportunity to interact with visitors on the Gephart Exhibit trail, at special programs, and participate in community action projects. The First Guides program gives teens a chance to volunteer alongside wild animals from our collection and, at 16 years old, may opt to be trained to handle some animals in their second year of the program.

First Guides are between 14 and 17 years old by July 1. Candidates submit a completed First Guides

application form by May 18, 2025, and attend training in June. First Guides arrange their transportation to and from the Science Center.

What will First Guides do?

The primary function of a First Guide is to be an educational presence on the Gephart Exhibit Trail. First Guides complete a training course to learn various skills, and



practice those skills with adult volunteer mentors. First Guides are invited to return annually. Volunteer opportunities include greeting visitors on the trail, presenting biofacts, speaking about various animals, participating in a Community Action Program, and more.

What is the time commitment?

During the first year, First Guides donate 32 hours by November 1, including 20 hours of formal classes.

Additional training is ongoing and scheduled at will. Returning First Guides donate 12 hours annually after their first year to remain active in the program.

What topics are included in formal training?

Formal training sessions are with adult docent trainees and include Practice on the Trail, Resources at Your Fingertips, Animal Care Introduction and Tour, Interpretation, and much more.

Who are First Guide Mentors

First Guide Mentors are adult volunteer docents trained to assist First Guides on the exhibit trail. Mentors often have a live animal with them as they greet visitors. First Guides joining them demonstrate



related biofacts and engage in discussion with visitors.

What are the benefits?

Volunteering has many rewards. First Guides develop new skills, serve as role models, and share their knowledge of the natural world with visitors. In addition, service in the First Guides volunteer program can enhance college applications and job resumes. After completing their first year, First Guides will receive a certificate.



Course times and fee

The 2025 course sessions are

June 19 from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., June 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., June 24 from 3:00. to 7:00 p.m., June 26 from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., and June 28 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The cost of the First Guides program is \$50, a one-time fee that includes formal classroom training by Science Center staff, a collared shirt, and supplies. Contact the

Volunteer Manager for information about scholarships. Volunteers are required to attend a Volunteer Orientation before volunteering. In 2025, the orientation is scheduled for June 14 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

How To Apply

To apply to the First Guides program, request an application from your school, contact Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, or visit the Volunteer page on the Science Center website <https://www.nhnature.org/who/volunteer.php> to complete a basic Volunteer Application. Send the completed application to the Volunteer Manager at the address below by **May 23, 2025.**



Squam Lakes Natural Science Center
PO Box 173, Holderness, NH 03245

Carol Raymond, Volunteer Manager
Phone: 603-968-7194 extension 122
E-mail: carol.raymond@nhnature.org

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