What is Squam Lakes Natural Science Center?

Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, founded in 1966, is a non-profit organization located in rural Holderness, New Hampshire on 200 acres adjacent to beautiful Squam Lake. Our mission is to advance the understanding of ecology by exploring New Hampshire's natural world. The Science Center's main attraction is a live animal exhibit trail featuring native wildlife in natural enclosures. At each animal enclosure there are related interactive exhibits that teach about the natural world. Featured attractions also include beautiful Kirkwood Gardens and nature cruises aboard pontoon boats on Squam Lake.

Share your love of Nature!

Is Training Provided?

All new volunteers attend an orientation session with the Volunteer Manager. Volunteers must receive training for all services. Several assignments require completion of a formal training program provided onsite.

What is the Commitment?

The amount of time you spend volunteering at the Science Center is up to you. Some volunteer services, such as our Docent Program, do have an annual time requirement, but most volunteer services do not.

What are the benefits of volunteering?

The greatest rewards of volunteering are unseen, but here are other benefits we hope volunteers enjoy:

- The volunteer newsletter and other publications
- Use of the Unsworth Library
- Volunteer potlucks and education talks
- Discounts in our gift shop
- $15 membership discount
- Free trail admission when you volunteer

How are volunteer efforts recognized?

Volunteers hear many thank yous from staff and visitors! Volunteers are recognized in *Symbiosis*, the volunteer newsletter; annually at our Volunteer Recognition Dinner; and on our Volunteer Appreciation Display, Volunteers Complete the Picture, located in the Webster Building Lobby.

For more information, visit us at nhnature.org or scan the QR Code.

Squam Lakes Natural Science Center
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60 YEARS

NATURAL SCIENCE CENTER
SQUAM LAKES

Volunteer!

Share Your Enthusiasm

NEARER TO NATURE

nhnature.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Animal Care (18+)

Animal Care volunteer responsibilities include feeding and cleaning enclosures of turtles, snakes, mealworms, and cockroaches; preparing diets for program mammals; and assisting with other daily chores. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, capable of working independently, and able to care for animals in a thoughtful and professional manner. Volunteers accepted for this service will complete training with Animal Care staff.

Counselors-in-Training (14+)

These volunteers assist educators with Guided Discoveries programs. They must possess maturity, patience, and skill when assisting youth. Counselors-in-Training volunteers must be at least 14 years of age and will assist young children during their summer camp time. Volunteers attend a formal training session and commit to an additional 12 hours between the end of June and mid-August.

Docent (18+)

A welcoming and informative presence for Science Center visitors, docents are trained to interpret New Hampshire's natural world using educational props and live animals. They can also assist Naturalists with classes, lead tours, and host Discovery Tables at community events throughout the year. A formal training program is held yearly to train new docents. Training time, the first year is a 40-hour commitment, followed by 16 hours annually.

Exhibit Trail and Groundskeeping (14+)

Volunteers enjoy being outdoors assisting the Facilities staff by sweeping trail boardwalks, washing exhibit windows (ground-level only), monitoring the perimeter fence for damages, and other maintenance tasks. Fourteen-year-olds though fifteen-year-olds must be accompanied by a chaperone.

First Guides (14+)

First Guides are teen volunteers between the ages of 14 and 17 who are trained to to be an educational presence on the exhibit trail. First Guides may not handle live animals, but may be with docents who are demonstrating a live animal to visitors. At age 16, First Guides may team up and demonstrate artifacts at exhibit sites. A commitment of 32 hours, including classroom training, is required in the first year and 12 hours annually afterward.

Greeters (14+)

Volunteer greeters provide a welcoming presence for visitors and school groups. During fall and spring, volunteers greet arriving school groups and orient them to the Science Center. During the busy summer months, greeters staff an information station at the Trailhead Gallery.

Invasive Species Removal (14+)

Once volunteers are trained, they self-schedule time to remove Oriental Bittersweet and other invasive plants from the campus between May and October. Tools are provided. This is a great opportunity for groups of volunteers interested in a single project or for individuals looking for an on-going opportunity with scheduling flexibility.

Kirkwood Gardeners (14+)

Garden volunteers create and maintain beautiful Kirkwood Gardens (located along Route 3). Novice gardeners are welcome and will work alongside experienced gardeners and staff. Assignments include gardening, planning, and turning compost, and moving garden supplies. Sessions are every Thursday morning 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., May through October. Volunteers are also welcome without committing to a schedule.

Lake Education Assistants (18+)

Volunteers are trained to assist students during weekdays aboard pontoon boats with lake monitoring activities. Sessions are scheduled weekdays most often in May & June.

Wood Lot Crew (18+)

Wood Lot Crew volunteers meet as they are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays between the spring and fall. They transform raw timber into cord wood and stack pallets. Pallet repair and special carpentry opportunities are also available.