

2024-25 Naturalist Training Schedule and Requirements Overview

Newport Bay Conservancy's Naturalist Training course has been offered annually since 1990 with the goal of providing volunteers interested in leading programs the knowledge they need to be able to do so successfully. The course features classes and field trips on a range of topics led by experts in their field as well as program-specific trainings to prepare volunteers to share their newfound knowledge with students and the public. Our Naturalists go on to guide public kayak and walking tours in the Bay, educate students from elementary school through college, lead restoration projects, and share our story with the broader community of our watershed.

DATES: This year's course runs from August 29, 2024 through June 2025.

PREREQUISITE: For those not yet volunteers with us, the prerequisite for this course is Volunteer Orientation. You may choose to attend the full orientation on Saturday, August 24th from 8:30am-3:30pm, or to attend a one-hour meeting in late Aug/early Sept and complete the orientation in the Spring.

COST: The course costs \$35 and includes a manual of reference materials. Refunds are not available after the second week of classes. If you decide to drop the course after the second week, your registration fees will be applied towards next year's training. NBC is pleased to offer four scholarships to people from diverse groups in support of their participation in the 2024-2025 Naturalist Training. Interested in applying for a scholarship? Ask for our scholarship application.

TESTING: Short weekly quizzes are administered throughout the fall session to help you assess your understanding of key topics. At the end of the fall session, each trainee will present a program idea. The spring session will include collaboration with other trainees to run a new program.

TRAINING COMPONENTS: Training consists of 2 components: Knowledge Acquisition and Skills-Building & Practice. The Knowledge Acquisition Component takes place primarily in the fall, while the Skills Building & Practice Component spans from fall through spring.

1. Knowledge Acquisition Component

From August 29th through December 7th, 2024, class meets on Thursday evenings and Saturdays. Thursday evening lectures will be from 6-8pm, presented via Zoom with closed captioning. Saturday class times and locations vary. All Saturday classes will be presented in-person only, a mix of indoors and outdoors.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance and participation in the activities is vital to ensure that you have the breadth and depth of knowledge necessary for our naturalists. Therefore, if you miss any Thursday meetings, you will be expected to watch the recording of the session. If you miss any Saturday meetings it is important that you speak with the program administrator as soon as possible to discuss how to make up missed material to complete your training. In cases where a participant encounters significant emergencies/challenges that prevent them attending more than 3 Saturday meetings, we may ask them to complete the training the following year.

2. Skills-Building & Practice Component

Trainees are expected to attend at least two 4-part trainings (8 meetings total), including shadowing selected programs which can begin as early as fall, with trainings and followup meetings in spring. Trainees also work collaboratively in groups to develop and run a new program.

Fall 2024 Naturalist Training Schedule

Knowledge-Acquisition Component

Day	Date	Time	Location	Topic	Speaker(s) & Affiliation
Thu	8/29/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Intro/Welcome to Naturalist Training	Hilary Cunningham Julie Ferguson
Thu	9/5/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Estuary Ecology & Endangered Species	Dick Zembal, NBC & OCWD
Sat	9/7/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Muth Library	Geology of the Bay	Phil Hughes, NBC & SAC
Thu	9/12/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Climate Change: Science, Impacts & Solutions	Shahir Masri, UCI
Sat	9/14/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Irvine Ranch Water District (details to come)	Watershed & Water Quality Lecture & Activity	IRWD Staff
Thu	9/19/24	5:30-7:00pm	Zoom	Coastal Cleanup Day logistics Post-Colonial History of the Bay	Cassandra Radcliff, author of Saving Upper Newport Bay
Sat	9/21/24	8:30am-12:00pm	To Be Assigned	Coastal Cleanup Day at the Bay	
Thu	9/26/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Plants Lecture	Ron Vanderhoff, CA NPS
Sat	9/28/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Big Canyon (details to come)	Plants Walk	NBC Naturalists
Thu	10/3/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Insects & Spiders Lecture	Peter Bryant, NBC & UCI
Sat	10/5/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Muth Library	Insects & Spiders Microscope Lab	Peter Bryant, NBC & UCI
Thu	10/10/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Mid-point Check-in	Hilary Cunningham
Sat	10/12/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Muth Library	Mammals Lecture	Don Millar, OC Trackers
Thu	10/17/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Reptiles & Amphibians Lecture	Barry Nerhus, ICRE
Sat	10/19/24	9:00am-12:00pm	BBSC	Restoration Lecture & Activity	Matt Yurko, Project Grow
Thu	10/24/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Birds Lecture	Bettina Eastman, NBC & Sea&Sage Audubon
Sat	10/26/24	TBA, early start	TBA	Birds Walk	Bettina Eastman, NBC & Sea&Sage Audubon
Thu	10/31/24	HALLOWEEN	NO CLASS		
Sat	11/2/24	8:45am-1:00pm	BBSC	Marine Life Inventory	CDFW Staff
Thu	11/7/24	6:00-8:00pm	Muth Theater & Zoom	NBC Annual Meeting	NBC Board of Directors
Sat	11/9/24	9:00am-5:00pm	BBSC	First Peoples Discussion & Activity	Lazaro Arvizu
Thu	11/14/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Fishes & Tides Lecture	Dennis Kelly, OCC
Sat	11/16/24	12:00-4:00pm	BBSC	Marine Biology Lecture & Field Trip	TBA
Thu	11/21/24	6:00-8:00pm	Muth Library in-person ONLY	Diversity & Environmental Justice	NBC Board & Staff
Sat	11/23/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Muth Library	Know Your Audience Workshop	Emma Arago, OCP
Thu-Sat	11/28-30/24	THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS		
Thu	12/5/24	6:00-8:00pm	Zoom	Student Proposal Presentations	Naturalist Trainees
Sat	12/7/24	9:00am-12:00pm	Muth Library	Putting What You Learned Into Practice	Hilary Cunningham Mariah Sabo
Sat	12/14/24	1:00pm-3:00pm	Muth	Holiday Party & Winning Proposals Announcement	

Muth = Peter & Mary Muth Interpretive Center
BBSC = Back Bay Science Center

Spring 2025 Naturalist Training Schedule & Requirements

Skills-Building & Practice Component

1. **Program Trainings:** Each trainee must **complete at least two (2)** of the following training options. For each option, trainees will need to attend a program or related training, shadow a scheduled program between October and March, attend a discussion/debrief meeting in late March or early April, and co-lead a scheduled program between April and May. Trainees must complete all 4 components in a series to receive credit. Set meeting dates below are *tentative* and will be confirmed by November.

	Attend/Train	Shadow	Discussion/Debrief	Lead/Co-Lead
OPTION 1: Friends Tours	<u>Attend the Tour</u> Sat, 12/14/24, 9-11am OR Sat, 1/11/25, 9-11am	Sat, 1/11/25, 9-11am OR Sat, 2/8/25, 9-11am	Sat, 2/15/25, 9-10am	Sat, 3/8/25, 9-11am
OPTION 2: K-5 Programs	<u>Attend Program Training</u> Sat, 1/18/25, 9am-12pm	Any scheduled Tues, Oct-Mar	Sat, 3/22/25, 9-11am	Any scheduled Tues, Apr-May
OPTION 3: Walking Tours	<u>Attend Any Walking Tour</u> Sept-Mar (not restricted to UNB)	<u>Any UNB Walking Tour</u> Sept-Mar (run by NBC or OCP)		Any UNB Tour, Apr-May
OPTION 4: Outrigger Tours	<u>Attend Steer Training</u> Oct, TBD, 9am-12pm OR Feb, TBD, 9am-12pm	Any scheduled weekday, Oct-Mar	Sat, 4/5/25, 9-11am	Any scheduled weekday, Apr-May
OPTION 5: Kayak Tours	<u>Attend Safety Training</u> Sun, 5/4/25, 9am-12pm	Any Sat, Oct-Mar		Any Sat, Apr-May
OPTION 6: Restoration	<u>Attend three 3-hour restoration sessions at UNB</u> Scheduled depending on availability (run by NBC, OCP, or Project Grow)		Schedule individually with Education Manager	

2. **Program Design & Implementation:** Each trainee will propose a spring program idea at the end of the fall session. Top programs will be selected and trainees will work in groups to produce these programs in the spring. This will include:

- Five meetings with staff (Education Manager and/or Education Specialist)
 - Meeting 1, Thu, 1/9/25 (1hr): review proposal & receive guidance on next steps
 - Meeting 2, Thu, 3/13/25 (30min): progress check-in
 - Meeting 3, Thu, 5/8/25 (30min): confirm last remaining action items
 - Meeting 4 (30min): final check-in scheduled 1 week before your program date
 - Meeting 5 (30min): debrief scheduled within 1 week after your program date
- Group members will work together to...
 - Determine ideal audience and how to recruit participants/attendees
 - Clarify and develop the curriculum & talking points
 - Obtain and/or create materials for any activities
 - Schedule a date for the program
 - Create flyers and advertising to potential participants/attendees
 - Train other volunteers on curriculum/activities if necessary

NOTE: If these requirements would pose personal or logistical challenges, alternative options can be discussed with the program administrator, such as additional volunteer shifts, committee involvement, or other projects.