



Stockton, Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge Partner to Offer Volunteer Master Naturalist Program

40-Hour Certificate Program Trains Nature Enthusiasts to Become
Volunteer Stewards for the Environment April 9-May 14

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**Contact: Susan Allen
Office of News & Media Relations
Galloway Township, NJ 08205
Susan.Allen@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4790**

Galloway Township, NJ- Nature enthusiasts will have the opportunity to become volunteer master naturalists by enrolling in a 40-hour certificate program offered by The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey and Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.

The Volunteer Master Naturalist (VMN) program offers both classroom and field-based learning covering a broad range of natural resource and wildlife topics delivered by experts in environmental education. The program is open to staff of environmental organizations, teachers, retirees and adults interested in the environment. Participants can expect to expand their knowledge of local biodiversity and learn ways to live sustainably. After the training, master naturalists are tasked with giving back through volunteerism.

"It's a great way for people to get up to speed on the natural history of this area and will lead to opportunities to volunteer to teach others," said Don Freiday, visitor services manager at Forsythe.

The program runs from **April 9 through May 14, 2014**. The classroom training takes place on Wednesday evenings, 6-9 p.m., at the Forsythe Headquarters building. Saturday field trips are 9-3 p.m. and include a kayaking trip at Sedge Island (located off of Island Beach State Park) and an 8-mile driving tour of Wildlife Drive and exploring the foot trails at Forsythe. Field trips require participants to drive or carpool to destinations.

Scholarships are available. To apply, visit www.stockton.edu/cs, click on course offerings and then select certificate programs. To receive the VMN certificate, scholarship recipients must also complete, during the subsequent 12 months, 40 hours of service at Forsythe and complete an additional eight hours of advanced environmental training. The 40-hour service and eight-hour advanced training component must be completed each year to maintain one's Volunteer Master Naturalist status.

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Instructors include Dr. Patrick Hossay, associate professor of Sustainability at Stockton College, Terry O'Leary, education coordinator at the Forest Resource Education Center, Don Freiday, visitor services manager at Forsythe, Dr. James Merritt, program director at the Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center, Michael Stanton, an alumnus of the Stockton-Forsythe VMN program, and others.

For more information, contact Stockton College Continuing Studies at NJVMN@stockton.edu or call 609-652-4227.

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