



BOYCE THOMPSON
ARBORETUM

VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK

Welcome

Dear Volunteers,

Thank you for your interest, time, and service in support of Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA). As a volunteer here you are participating in a rich tradition--supporting the legacy of Colonel William Boyce Thompson, and conserving and protecting our living collections of plants from around the world--and the ecosystems in which they thrive.

Our mission is to instill in people an appreciation of desert plants and wildlife. We do that in many ways--through education, and research and conservation. Each volunteer is an important ambassador for BTA as we reach out to our community of visitors. We strive to provide an experience for our visitors that will help instill a love for plants, the natural world, and a sense of stewardship.

We often hear, "We couldn't do it without you," but in this case, it's true! Volunteers are our lifeblood, and each volunteer is essential to our work. Thank you!

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding.

I look forward to meeting you.



Lynne Nemeth
Executive Director



We Appreciate You

The time, talent, and dedication of our volunteers has made Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA) thrive for nearly 100 years. Volunteers have given countless service hours propelling BTA towards fulfilling its mission and ensuring its current success. We could not operate without you!

We recognize and appreciate the value that our volunteers bring to the Arboretum. BTA's staff is committed to making volunteering here enjoyable, productive, and rewarding. We take responsibility for our volunteers' experience and our goal is:

- To match your desired volunteer interest, skills and experience with Arboretum needs that provide you with a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment.
- To provide instruction by Arboretum staff, orienting you to its mission, history, team, operations and plant collection.
- To create a collegiate atmosphere amongst volunteers interested in plants, wildlife, the environment and the general outdoors in the free exchange of ideas.
- To establish a team environment that is physically safe and free from harassment.
- To equip you with appropriate volunteer apparel and identification.
- To conduct regularly scheduled training programs, giving you the latest on Arboretum operations.
- To recognize your volunteer contribution both in formal and informal ways.



Getting Started

This handbook has been designed for you. Our goal is to give you access to the essential information you need to know as a volunteer. It covers basic information about the Arboretum, our volunteer program, policies and procedures and safety procedures to optimize your volunteer experience.

All volunteers have their own Vicnet Profile through Volgistics. Volunteers can sign-up for shifts, check for updates, and more through their personal profile

The A.R.B.O.R.E.T.U.M and its staff are here to help you get started. At orientation, every volunteer will be placed in a specific department and have a designated staff member, also known as a staff supervisor, that they can report to on a regular basis. Below you will find a key summary to assist with preparation for your volunteer service on-site.



A Arrive on time. Ready to work with staff and other volunteers.

R Report any suspicious activity, threats, dangerous pets or visitors, etc, to your staff supervisor, the manager on duty, the volunteer coordinator, or the nearest staff member immediately. Volunteers should only remind guests of general Arboretum guidelines. BTA Staff will enforce the rules.

B Be Prepared. Come dressed appropriately for your task. Wear your volunteer t-shirt, name tag, and close-toed shoes.

O Offer Suggestions. We encourage you to bring your suggestions/feedback to the attention of the volunteer coordinator or a member of BTA management at any time.

R Record the hours you served on-site by checking in and checking out each time you volunteer.

E Engage with guests. Whether you are a docent, horticulture volunteer, maintenance volunteer, etc., help guests find their way or help answer their questions about the garden.

T Take care of yourself. Bring water, sunscreen, a hat, and snacks when volunteering on-site. And take breaks throughout your shift as needed.

U Use designated trails and pathways, stay alert and do not approach or feed any animals you encounter on-site.

M Meet new people. Get to know the people on your shift and take advantage of volunteer-only events to connect with our volunteer community.

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Volunteering at BTA

Our Volunteer Philosophy

BTA encourages the teamwork of employees and volunteers so that we can offer our members and visitors the best experience possible. Our volunteers share their passion, knowledge, time, and talents to advance the mission of BTA. We strive to create an atmosphere of engagement, camaraderie, diversity, community, respect, and fun for all volunteers by offering various opportunities. We are dedicated to ensuring that volunteers feel appreciated and recognized for their contributions.



Volunteer Rights

Volunteers are essential to the success of BTA. The volunteer rights outline our commitment to you as a volunteer.

- Receive equal opportunities regardless of race, sex, age, religious beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation, financial status, or disability, so long as reasonable accommodations can be made to enable you to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities.
- Receive training and supervision that will improve your understanding of the Arboretum and the job you are assigned.
- Be assigned meaningful projects essential to the Arboretum's growth and everyday operations.
- Have access to the tools and materials necessary to fulfill your duties.
- Be involved in evaluating the volunteer program.
- Be shown respect for your skills, dignity, and individuality.

Volunteer Responsibilities

The volunteer responsibilities parallel the volunteers' commitment to BTA.

- Perform volunteer duties as outlined in your position description to the best of your ability and in the best interest of the Arboretum.
- Follow Arboretum regulations and guidelines.
- Meet time commitments.
- Be an advocate for the Arboretum and its mission.
- Arrive on-time. Ready to work with the team.
- Give and receive honest and constructive feedback.

Volunteer Benefits

There are many reasons to volunteer and the rewards of volunteering are abundant: the sense of personal achievement, the satisfaction of helping an organization be successful, the chance to meet and interact with others who have similar interests, and the opportunity to help the garden meet its goals.

Our Benefits Include:

- Free admission to the garden on your volunteer day
- Monthly volunteer updates via email with information about BTA and special events/projects
- Volunteer-Only events and meetings
- 20% discount in the Gift Shop
- 30% discount during the Plant Sale (contingent on volunteering at that plant sale)
- Interdepartmental recognition
- Education throughout your service

We want our volunteers to feel appreciated and recognized for their contributions. For your time and dedication to our organization, you will receive pins for 5, 10, 15 and 20+ years served on-site, plus branded/noteworthy gifts for the following service hour milestones:

Hours	Gift
50	Lanyard
100	Hat
200	2 free registrations to any BTA event
300	Coffee Mug
400	Polo
500	Cooler Bag
750	Jacket
1000+	Backpack



Volunteer Opportunities

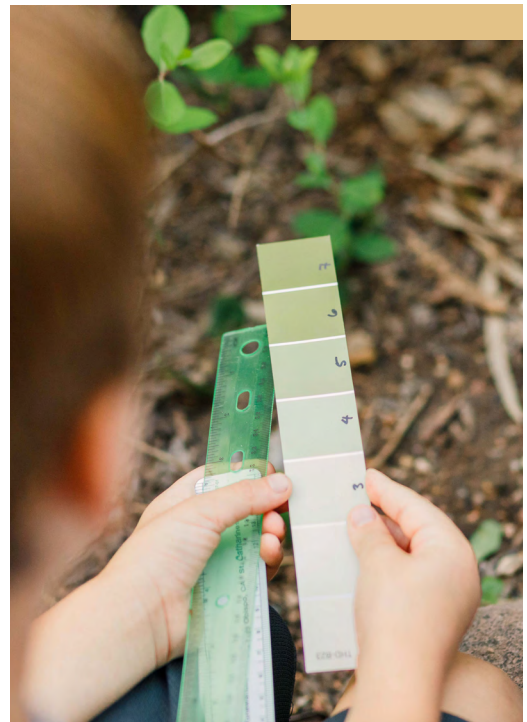
Volunteers are welcome to work as often as they wish. The minimum number of hours per volunteer shift is 3 hours, (4 Hours for Docents). All volunteers should come prepared with weather-appropriate clothing, closed-toed shoes, sunscreen, a hat, water, and snacks. Volunteer assignments include:

Docents

- Docents lead 60-minute public tours, cart tours, and private tours from October - May with our education department. When not leading tours, docents rove the Arboretum answering visitor questions, interacting with guests, helping visitors find specific gardens, and serving as an ambassador to the Arboretum. Additionally, docents can sign-up to staff the portable Discovery Station, a mobile cart that carries items found around the Arboretum
- Every docent will receive the necessary training prior to leading tour groups. Training takes place on Mondays weekly from October- January. Docents are encouraged to bring a unique perspective to their tours.
- Continuing education will be made available after completing the docent training and these courses are determined by the Education Coordinator and are subject to change.
- Docents work outside and the job may require frequent bending, stooping, sitting, and standing for long periods.

Field Trips

- Field trip volunteers provide an educational experience for school groups throughout the year with our education department.
- Every field trip volunteer will receive training on the curriculum designed by the Education Department prior to leading a school group on-site. Field trip volunteers work with other trained BTA volunteers to lead groups of various sizes. Chaperones provided by the school group may accompany you but only serve as an aide. They are not trained on the field trip curricula.
- School groups have the option to choose one of four field trips from our Arboretum Adventures Field Trip Program.
- Field trip volunteers work outside and the job may require frequent bending, stooping, and standing for long periods. Field trip volunteers are required to show proof of an active Arizona fingerprint clearance card prior to volunteering with youth.



Horticulture Aide

- Horticulture volunteers perform tasks like weeding, watering, mulching, pruning, and more with our horticulture department.
- Horticulture volunteers work exclusively on Monday or Wednesday in different areas around the garden.
- All skill levels are welcome and on-the-job training is part of the experience.
- Some tools will be provided, but it is required to bring your own work gloves. BTA will have extra gloves available if needed.
- Horticulture volunteers mainly work outside. Inside jobs may be available during the warmer months. The job may require frequent bending, stooping, kneeling, and standing for long periods.



Maintenance

- Maintenance volunteers work on various tasks around the garden including general maintenance and small construction projects with our facilities department.
- Experience with general maintenance, plumbing, painting, and mechanics is preferred.
- Maintenance volunteers will receive the necessary training for the job before starting a project. It is required to bring your own work gloves with you when volunteering. BTA will have extra gloves available if needed.
- Maintenance volunteers work outside and the job may require frequent bending, stooping, and standing for long periods.

Marketing

- Marketing volunteers update our media list, distribute press releases and media advisories, contact websites to update outdated Arboretum information, add BTA events to community calendars, manage the email database and take inventory of marketing collateral with our marketing department.
- Marketing volunteers work inside and sit for long periods.



Special Events

- The Arboretum hosts many events throughout the calendar year, as well as private events and gatherings. These opportunities are open to all volunteers and listed in Volgistics. Event volunteers work with various departments.
- Event volunteers are critical to the success of these events. They provide behind-the-scenes support, engage directly with attendees, and are ambassadors for the Arboretum.
- Event volunteers work outside and the job may require frequent bending, sitting, and standing for long periods.

Special Projects

- Special projects are open to all volunteers and are announced via email when opportunities arise. Special projects volunteers work with various departments.
- Special projects may require a specific skill set and/or prior knowledge of the project.
- Depending on the nature of the project, volunteer work may be done on-site or at an approved off-site location.

Visitor Center

- Visitor Center volunteers work with our visitor's service department and provide a welcoming presence, answer questions about the gardens and help guests find facilities like bathrooms and drinking fountains on the trail.
- Visitor Center volunteers are particularly important on days when visitor volume is high, especially on weekends.
- Visitor Center volunteers mainly work outside. Inside work may be available during high volume visitation and the warmer months. The job may require standing for long periods.

Specialized Volunteers

Master Gardeners

We welcome all Pinal County Master Gardeners to volunteer with us. Every Wednesday, Master Gardeners have the opportunity to work with a horticulturist on various projects including watering, weeding, propagation, and more. Hours served on BTA property count toward a Pinal County Master Gardener Certification and annual required volunteer hours. These hours must be logged through your personal profile set up by the Master Gardener program.

In addition, Master Gardeners must record their hours served with BTA while on-site. Master Gardeners are required to become regular volunteers with BTA to serve on-site.

Host Volunteers

BTA recruits host volunteers that live on-site in their RVs for a set period. The Volunteer Coordinator recruits, interviews, and on-boards new host volunteers from September-May for seasonal positions.

The volunteers recruited for this program serve as full-time volunteers and work with either our Visitor's Center department or Education department.

Host volunteers are contracted through BTA and are required to fulfill the commitment outlined in the host volunteer agreement.

Host volunteers are a part of our volunteer program but serve in a different capacity. Work schedules are determined by a department manager and the number of hours served each day may vary depending on the day of the week.



Volunteer Commitments

We require all volunteers to do the following as part of their commitment to BTA:

- Attend initial Volunteer Orientation.
- Pay for an initial background check and an AZ fingerprint clearance card (if applicable).
- Check your email and VicNet mail regularly. This is the primary communication channel we use to communicate with volunteers.
- Honor the time commitment for your chosen volunteer assignment.
- Sign-up for volunteer shifts at least 2 days in advance using your VicNet profile.
- Check-in and check-out for each volunteer shift.
- Perform volunteer service according to training from BTA staff or designated trainers.
- Communicate accurate information to guests or redirect them to the appropriate source of information.
- Wear a volunteer shirt and/or name tag at all times when serving on BTA property and representing BTA off-site, unless otherwise specified by supervisor or inappropriate for duty (e.g. formal event or weather conditions, etc.).
- Update contact information via your online volunteer profile VicNet to keep all personnel files up to date.
- Follow the rules of BTA as outlined in BTA's Code of Ethics and our General Arboretum Guidelines.

Age Restrictions

Volunteers in our volunteer program must be at least 11 years of age or older.

Volunteers ages 11-13 must be directly monitored and accompanied by a parent, guardian, or chaperone at all times while on BTA property. Volunteers ages 14-17 must be supervised by a parent, guardian, or chaperone at all times while on BTA property.

The parent, guardian, or chaperone of a minor must also complete a volunteer application, attend the volunteer orientation, be screened through a background check, and attend any required training relevant to the volunteer assignment. Minors may be restricted from performing certain volunteer services depending on the nature of the project. Minors will not be screened through a background check until they are 18 years of age and can volunteer as an adult.



Dress Code

What we wear says a lot about us. As representatives of BTA, our apparel can contribute to others' impressions of our organization. It is important to present a professional image when volunteering with us.

Upon completion of the volunteer orientation, all volunteers will be provided with a:

- Volunteer name tag
- Volunteer t-shirt

Please make sure to:

- Wear clothes that are neat, clean, and appropriate for your assignment.
- Wear your volunteer t-shirt.
- Avoid wearing clothing with political messages, sports teams or logos other than the BTA logo.
- Wear closed-toed shoes for all volunteer assignments.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings that may present a safety concern or distraction and/or cover any tattoos that are not family-friendly.
- Always wear your volunteer name tag. It identifies you as a BTA volunteer and gets you a discount in the gift shop.

Volunteers should not wear:

- Camouflage clothing
- Cut-off or torn jeans/pants
- Sandals, Chacos, Birkenstocks, or any shoes that could be hazardous
- Jewelry that may be a distraction or safety concern
- Sports bras, muscle tank tops, camisoles, spandex or oversized/excessively loose fitting t-shirts
- Shorts that are mid-thigh (i.e. short shorts)

This list is non-exclusive and BTA reserves the right to change the dress code.



Please see the Volunteer Coordinator with any dress code questions. Dress code violations may result in the volunteer being asked to leave. Repeat dress code violations may result in the ending of the volunteer agreement.

Exceptions: Volunteers working during special programs/events may be allowed alterations in the dress code policy with the approval of the staff member in charge of the program/event. Docents are required to wear their docent vest and khaki pants. A volunteer t-shirt is preferred.

NOTE: Volunteer apparel with the BTA logo must be purchased from the gift shop or provided directly by the Volunteer Coordinator. Use of the BTA logo for personal apparel is not permitted (e.g. purchasing a t-shirt/polo and screen printing or embroidering the BTA logo to create custom volunteer apparel).

Volunteer Resources



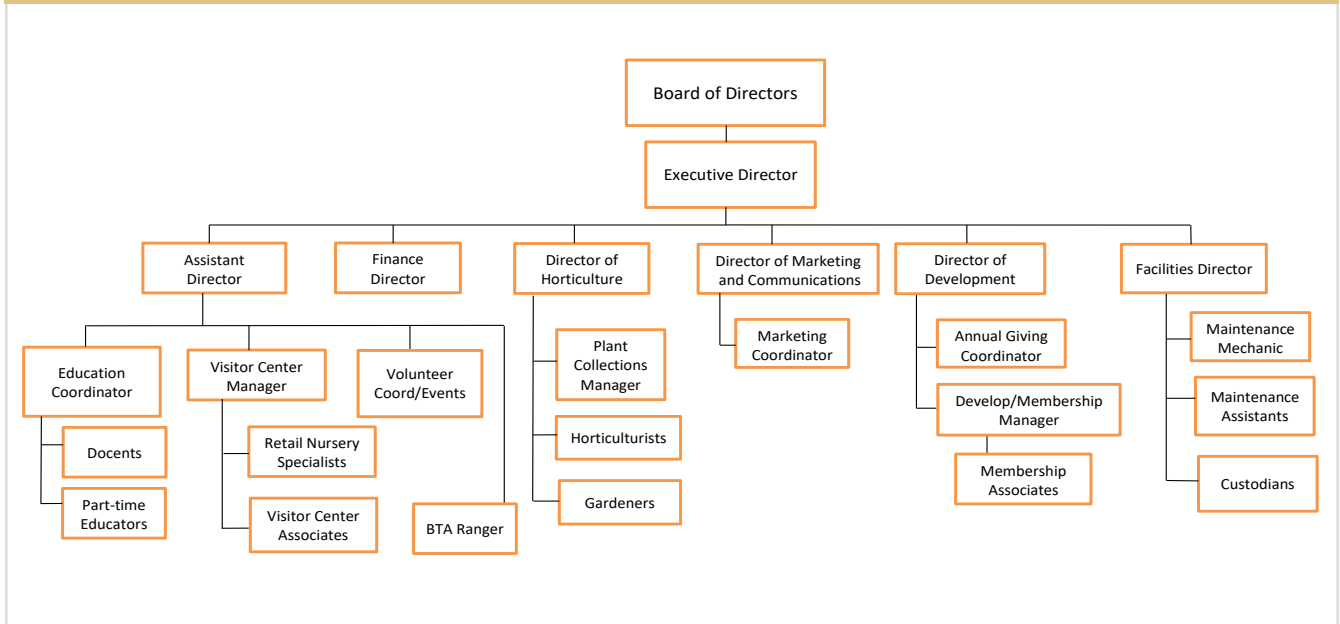
Volunteer and Event Coordinator

Emily Smolenski

Email: emily.smolenski@btarboretum.org

Phone: 520-689-4721 (call or text)

Organizational Chart



Manager on Duty (MOD)

If you are unsure how to handle a situation and your staff supervisor is not present, please contact the Manager on Duty. Volunteers are not required or expected to alleviate issues. Our staff has been trained to address difficult situations and respond appropriately. If you need assistance, please find your staff supervisor or the closest staff member with a radio.

BTA delegates one person to serve as the Manager on Duty. The responsibilities of that person are as follows:

- The Manager on Duty shall be on-site and available by radio from open (6 am or 8 am) until the last visitor leaves at closing.
- The Manager on Duty shall have a utility cart or other means of transportation easily accessible to them.
- The Manager on Duty shall be available to alleviate issues during high volume visitation. This includes but is not limited to answering phones, responding to visitor questions/concerns, and other various tasks as needed. Staff should call the Manager on Duty for assistance or direction when their direct supervisor is unavailable.
- The Manager on Duty shall provide leadership for staff, volunteers, and visitors during any incident or emergency. They make the final decision on how to proceed and will initiate evacuation procedures when necessary.

BTA Ranger

Our ranger is on-site to serve staff, volunteers, members, and visitors. The ranger drives a golf cart around the Arboretum and assists people as needed. The ranger golf cart carries a first aid kit and water in case of emergencies.



Volunteer Policies and Procedures



OPEN DOOR POLICY

BTA believes in an open-door communication policy. You are encouraged to bring your volunteer policy or procedure related issues or concerns to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of BTA management at any time.

CODE OF ETHICS

BTA will conduct business honestly and ethically. We strive to improve the quality of our services, products, and operations and will maintain a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound business judgment. Our managers, employees, and volunteers are expected to adhere to high standards of business and personal integrity as a representation of our business practices, at all times consistent with their duty of loyalty to BTA.

We expect that managers, employees, and volunteers will not knowingly misrepresent BTA and will not speak on behalf of BTA unless specifically authorized. The confidentiality of trade secrets, proprietary information, and similar confidential commercially sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.) about BTA or operations, or that of our customers or partners, is to be treated with discretion and only disseminated on a need-to-know basis.

Alcohol & Drugs

When on duty and/or wearing a BTA volunteer name tag and/or shirt, volunteers must not drink alcohol, use illegal drugs or be under the influence of either substance. If an accident occurs while volunteering and the volunteer are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Volunteer Insurance Policy is nullified.

Smoking

Smoking is strictly prohibited at the arboretum except in personal vehicles.

BTA Property

BTA property, merchandise, or supplies may not be borrowed for personal use with the exception of library books with the approval of BTA's Staff

Selling

Selling of goods of any kind is not permitted on site, unless during a scheduled event as a contracted vendor.

Gifts

Volunteers may not accept gifts, favors, loans, or other dispensations or things of value that are given to them in connection with their duties at BTA. Any tips received should be turned into the gift shop as a donation for the Arboretum.

Pets

Leashed and well-behaved pets are welcome to accompany volunteers when deemed appropriate by your staff supervisor. Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet and under the physical control of the owner. Pet owners are responsible for cleanup.

Wildlife

Do not pick flowers, fruits, or plant parts from any plant. Do not remove anything from the Arboretum grounds including plants, leaves, flowers, fruits, sticks, rocks, feathers, or wildlife. Do not damage or harm any plant or animal or encourage others to do so.

Media and Reporters

If any media personnel, not accompanied by BTA staff, approach a volunteer, the volunteer should immediately refer them to the Visitor's Center or contact a staff person who will refer them to the Marketing Department.

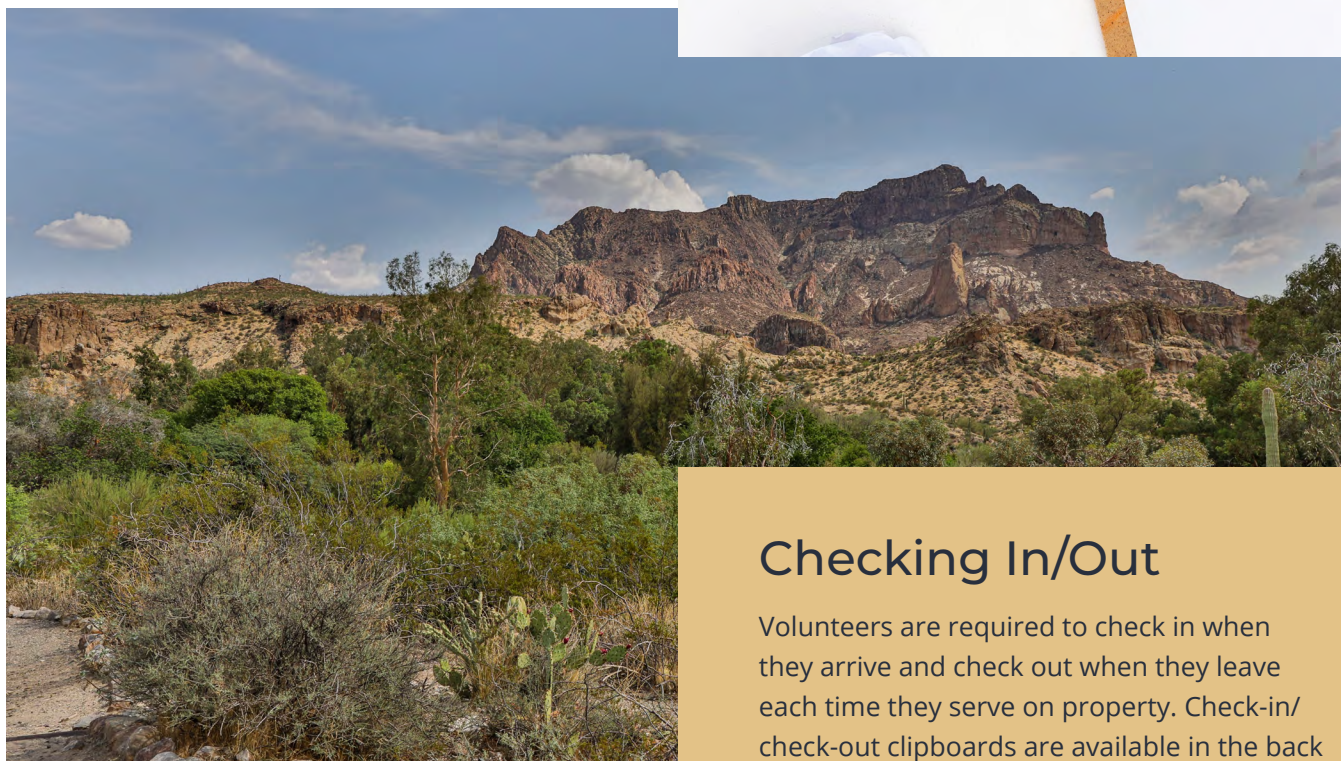
Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Recording Hours

All volunteers are required to record the total number of hours served per day, each month. This includes hours for orientation, training, direct service done on-site and direct service done at home or other off-site locations.

BTA uses the Volgistics Software to protect your private information and provide you with an online volunteer profile.

[Login to your VicNet profile](#)



Checking In/Out

Volunteers are required to check in when they arrive and check out when they leave each time they serve on property. Check-in/check-out clipboards are available in the back of the gift shop and the Smith building. Please include your full name, date, the time you arrived, and the time you left.

Leave of Absence

Volunteers must notify their staff supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator if they are unable to volunteer for an extended period (e.g. seasonal resident, surgical procedure, etc.).

Grievances

When a volunteer has a problem or complaint that cannot be resolved by themselves or their staff supervisor, the Volunteer Coordinator will intervene to mediate the issue.

Resignation

If a volunteer no longer wants to volunteer at BTA, a notice of resignation will be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator two weeks before the effective date.

The volunteer's name tag must be returned to the Volunteer Coordinator on their last scheduled shift or seven (7) days after a notice of resignation is submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator. The name tag can be delivered in person or through the mail (postage not provided by BTA).

Grounds for Dismissal

- Treating guests, other volunteers, or staff without respect or in an abusive manner.
- Continuing to give misinformation or performing tasks incorrectly after remediation.
- Continuing to violate volunteer requirements and policies after remediation.
- Participating in illegal activities on BTA property.
- Violation of any state or federal law.
- Not following the rules of BTA as outlined in BTA's Code of Ethics and/or Volunteer Policies.
- Participating in any behavior that negatively affects the safety of BTA's plant collection, staff, guests, volunteers, wildlife, or natural environment.

This list is non-exclusive and BTA reserves the right to terminate a volunteer at any time.

Volunteer Safety Procedures

Infections Diseases

Volunteers work closely with our staff and other volunteers. If you are scheduled to volunteer and are feeling ill, it is important to take care of yourself and stay home. To prevent the spread of infectious diseases, we ask all volunteers to notify the Volunteer Coordinator immediately if they are feeling unwell or suspect they have recently been exposed. Information relayed by the volunteer to the Volunteer Coordinator is confidential.

If you are ill, please visit your primary care physician and follow their directions and recommendations. Please return to your volunteer duties when it is safe to do so and inform the volunteer coordinator of your expected return.

Highlighted infectious diseases in Arizona include:

- COVID-19
- Hepatitis
- Influenza
- Measles

The Volunteer Coordinator will continue to evaluate new and existing infectious diseases as they may effect our operations. Updates on mitigation strategies from BTA to keep you safe will be communicated promptly and available on your Volgistics volunteer profile in VicNet.

Animals and Insects

BTA is home to many creatures. Some are entirely harmless, but others are not. It is important to be aware of your surroundings while volunteering and to let staff remove/monitor dangerous, venomous, or poisonous animals/insects that may pose a threat to you, staff, or our visitors. It is our job to keep you safe while working on-site.

When on-site, use your best judgment and please remember these tips:

- Unless otherwise permitted, please stay on the trails.
- Travel with a friend or staff member and stay alert.
- Do not feed, pet, or approach native animals. If you encounter an animal that makes you feel uneasy, please find the nearest staff member and inform them of the location and provide a brief description of the animal.



BTA is also pet-friendly and many visitors enjoy bringing their dogs (and cats!) to the Arboretum. Any dog/pet posing a threat or that has already harmed visitors, volunteers, staff, other dogs/pets, or living plant collections will be asked to leave immediately by a BTA staff member. Never break up altercations between animals; domestic or otherwise.

If you encounter a pet that is posing a threat or has already harmed another pet/human, immediately call the Manager on Duty or find the nearest staff member with radio. BTA staff will enforce the rules and respond appropriately to the situation.

First Aid, AED & Injuries

First Aid

First aid stations are located in the Visitor Center gift shop and in the Smith building (only for staff/volunteer use). Each station is marked with a red first aid sign. Volunteers should only provide basic first aid supplies to visitors such as tweezers and band-aids. BTA staff will address severe injuries and/or will provide aspirin/Benadryl if needed. All staff is First Aid/AED/CPR certified and are willing and able to assist if there is an emergency. Please follow the directions of the staff and/or your supervisor if there is an emergency.

The first aid kits located inside buildings contain:

1 Ace Bandage	Hydrogen Peroxide	Triangular Bandages
1 Adhesive Gauze	Sterile Gauze Pad	1 Conforming Bandage
Wound Wipes	Aspirin	Rubber Gloves
Assorted Gauze	Tweezers	Eyewash
1 Box Assorted Band-aids	Scissors	Instant Ice
Antiseptic Solution or Ointment	Burn Ointment	Benadryl

BTA will provide all docents with a portable first aid kit to carry during their shift.

The first aid kits for docents contain:

Rubber Gloves	Assorted Band-aids	Sterile Gauze Pads
Wound Wipes	Scissors	Aspirin
Tweezers	Instant Ice	Benadryl

First aid kits are stocked regularly and will be checked by the BTA Safety Committee. If supplies are low, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator.



Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

BTA has two (2) AEDs on-site. One is located in the entryway of the Visitor Center bathroom and the other is located outside the bathrooms at the Smith building.



Injuries

Volunteers should report all injuries to their supervisor or staff immediately, regardless of how minor the injury may be. Staff will assess the injury and provide the volunteer with basic first aid supplies or call 911. Any life-threatening injuries or conditions should be dealt with by calling 911.

Heat Safety Policy

Heat illness and heat-related death can happen at surprising temperatures, in unsuspecting conditions, and even to those in the best physical condition. It is vital for the safety of BTA staff, volunteers, and visitors to abide by the following procedures to ensure safety. Below, please find our heat risk response and additional precautions.

HEAT RISK RESPONSE				
Risk Level	Conditions	Staff/ Volunteer Response	Visitor Notification	Additional Precautions
Moderate	Heat Index or temperatures over 100 degrees	Take frequent breaks if working outside	Visitors should be advised of heat risk. Visitor's Center staff must ensure all visitors have water available	Those who don't typically work outside should take extreme caution when outside ie. event staff and volunteers
High	Excessive heat warning, Extreme Caution on the Heat Index or temperatures over 105 degrees	Take frequent breaks if working outside	Visitors should be advised of heat risk. Visitor's Center staff must ensure all visitors have water available	All outside work should have shade coverage or be done during early morning times Those who don't typically work outside should take extreme caution when outside ie. event staff and volunteers
Severe	Heat Index is in the Danger Zone or temperatures above 110 degrees	Outside work should only take place when temperatures or heat index are below 110	Visitors should be advised of heat risk. Visitor's Center staff must ensure all visitors have water available	All outside work should have shade coverage or be done during early morning times Event cancellation or modification should be considered
Extreme	Heat index or temperature is at or above 115 degrees or in Extreme Danger Zone	Outside work should only take place when temperatures or heat index are below 110	Closure or modification of Arboretum Hours should be considered by the Executive Director	All outside work should have shade coverage or be done during early morning times Event cancellation or modification should be considered

Additional Precautions

High Trail will be closed June-August

This closure is to limit visitor access to a strenuous trail with minimal shade. This closure also eliminates the need for staff or emergency personnel to endanger themselves to assist a distressed visitor. On June 1, the BTA ranger will place the closure signs on the trail and check them weekly for damage.

Anyone exhibiting signs or symptoms of heat illnesses should cease work immediately and notify their staff supervisor. The notified staff person should immediately enact the heat illness procedure, on page 22.

All staff and volunteers working outside should take steps to protect themselves from the elements. Long-sleeve shirts and wide-brim hats are highly recommended when working outside or anytime sun exposure is possible. It is recommended to apply sunscreen to any exposed skin repeatedly throughout the day.

Ample hydration is required at all times but is critical during warmer months.



Heat-Related Illness

When temperatures are on the rise, watch for the following symptoms:

Thirst

By the time your body tells you that you are thirsty, you are already mildly dehydrated.

Heat Cramps

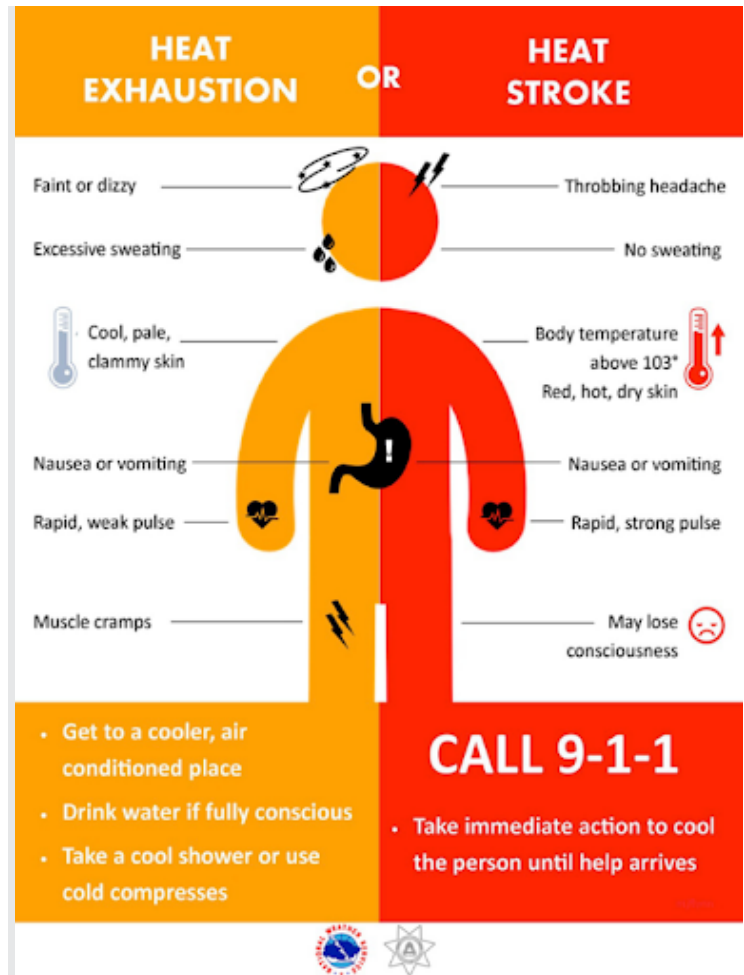
Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. They usually involve the abdominal muscles or the legs. The loss of water and salt from heavy sweating causes heat cramps.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is less dangerous than heat stroke. It typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Fluid loss causes blood flow to decrease in the vital organs, resulting in a form of shock. As a result, the body is not cooled properly. Signals include cool, moist, pale, flushed, or red skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.

Heat Stroke

Also known as sunstroke, heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Signals include hot, red and dry skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, strong pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high—sometimes as high as 105 °F.



Preventing Heat-Related Illness

Anyone can be susceptible to heat-related illness. Those at greatest risk are infants and young children, adults over 65, people who are homeless, people who are overweight, people who overexert during work or exercise, and people who are physically ill or on certain medications, or suffer from depression, insomnia, or poor circulation. Heat-related illness may be serious or even deadly if unattended.

Staying healthy during the summer is easier if you take the time to protect yourself by making sure you are drinking enough water and limiting your exposure to the heat. Follow these simple rules:

- **Drink water.** Even people that stay mostly indoors all day should drink at least 2 liters of water per day. People that spend time outdoors should drink 1 to 2 liters per hour that they are outdoors. People that do strenuous activities outdoors should be very careful, being that your body can lose up to 4 liters of water per hour during strenuous activity. You should carry water with you and drink it even if you do not feel thirsty. Be heat safe and avoid alcohol, which dehydrates the body. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- **Take regular breaks** when engaged in physical activity on warm days. Take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you, or someone else, are showing symptoms of a heat-related illness, stop the activity and find a cool place. Remember, have fun, but stay cool.
- **Dress for the heat.** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or to use an umbrella. Always apply sunscreen to exposed skin.
- **Eat small meals and eat more often.** Avoid foods that are high in protein which increases metabolic heat.
- **Monitor Those at High Risk.** Check on other volunteers for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Emergency Procedures

Emergencies

- In every emergency, the first person to discover the situation or receive a report from a visitor is known as the “Initial Observer”. The Initial Observer plays an important role in the emergency response process: they are responsible for relaying the information and notifying others. If you are the Initial Observer, please make sure you stay on-site if told to do so by your supervisor/Manager on Duty. You may need to assist with providing details about the incident.
- Upon responding to the report of an incident, the Manager on Duty should state their name on the radio. This ensures that all staff and volunteers are aware of who the Manager on Duty is for the day. The Manager on Duty role can change during an emergency. Any change made needs to be announced on the radio immediately.
- Emergencies, disasters, and accidents can occur in any setting and at any time. Always act to protect the safety of yourself and those around you. If you are ever unsure how to respond, defer to the Manager on Duty or find the nearest staff member with a radio.
- For the safety of all volunteers, please communicate any suspicious activity/ threats/etc. to your supervisor or the volunteer coordinator immediately. Staff will assess the situation and take action if needed.
- During incidents that are not a threat to all on-site (medical emergency, animal bite, etc.), volunteers who are not the first on the scene (initial observer) should not respond to the incident.
- During incidents that pose an imminent threat to all on-site (active shooter, building/ forest fire, etc.), volunteers should act to protect their safety and then follow instructions from the Manager on Duty or staff supervisor. Personal safety is paramount.

Weather

While it is our policy to remain open during most periods of inclement weather and maintain normal business hours whenever possible, our volunteers reserve the right to cancel their scheduled shift if they have concerns about road conditions, do not feel comfortable working outdoors, etc. If we are experiencing extreme weather conditions and our staff cannot be outdoors to perform their work duties, volunteers will be notified by the volunteer coordinator in advance, if possible. Please communicate any changes in your volunteer schedule due to weather to the volunteer coordinator as soon as possible.

Closures

At times, emergencies (such as severe weather, fires, power failures, etc.) can disrupt our day-to-day operations. BTA reserves the right to close to the public, its employees, and/or volunteers. Volunteers scheduled to work will be notified by the Volunteer Coordinator in advance, if possible. No volunteer should come on-site if they feel unsafe in any way. If an emergency occurs during your volunteer shift, please follow the directions of the staff and/or supervisors.

Radios

If your volunteer position requires a radio, radio training will be provided to you. If you need help, please ask your staff supervisor or the volunteer coordinator. We are happy to assist and provide training on how to use the radios.

Radio Use in Emergency Situations

If a volunteer is the first person to discover an emergency/situation or receive a report from a visitor, you are known as the "Initial Observer". The Initial Observer is responsible for relaying the information and notifying others. Please use your best judgment to assess the situation and then call on the radio for the Manager on Duty, stating your location and a summary of the situation if it is safe to do so. Upon the announcement of any incident on the radio, all routine radio traffic must cease to keep the radio free for emergency coordination. Only relevant radio transmission should be aired. **Please keep all transmissions brief and to the point.** Once the Manager on Duty has arrived, the volunteer should wait for further instructions. Please do not leave the area unless specifically asked to do so by the Manager on Duty.

After an incident in which normal business can resume, an announcement from the Manager on Duty will be made to all staff and volunteers carrying a radio. This announcement will be broadcasted two consecutive times and again 5 minutes later to ensure all are aware.

NOTE: If you do not have a radio and are the first person to discover an emergency/situation or receive a report from a visitor, please find the nearest staff member with a radio. They will call the Manager on Duty. Please follow the directions of the staff and/or supervisors for any situation/emergency on-site.



Personal Safety

It is our goal to provide and maintain safe working conditions, to follow safe operating procedures, and comply with all safety laws and ordinances. Volunteers should be alert to any unsafe conditions and report any problems immediately to their staff supervisor. Prevention of accidents and unsafe conditions is the key, and ordinary common sense is the best approach. The principles of workplace safety are similar to those people should follow at home, on the road, or wherever they are. Here are some general guidelines volunteers should follow that can help ensure a safer workplace:

- Watch out for and report conditions that may cause accidents.
- Learn how to operate equipment properly with training from your designated supervisor.
- Develop safe personal habits that will prevent injury.
- Practice common sense and show consideration for others to avoid injury.
- Know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher, fire exit, and first-aid kit.

Safe Volunteer Environment

BTA Volunteers are provided a safe and secure work environment through the Safe Volunteer Environment Policy. This policy includes the following types of actions, behaviors, and/or circumstances:

- Firearms are prohibited on BTA property.
- Threatening, intimidating, coercive, abusive, harassing, or violent verbal, written, or physical behavior toward others will not be tolerated.
- Intentionally destroying BTA property or the property of others is prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of the Volunteer agreement.

BTA requires all volunteers to report threats of violence, intimidating encounters, harassment, or the possession of firearms in accordance with this policy to their staff supervisor or the volunteer coordinator. No adverse action will be taken against anyone who, in good faith, makes such a report.

Volunteers should leave the area immediately if the situation is life-threatening. After finding a safe location, volunteers should call 911 and, when able, notify their supervisor or the executive director. If the situation is not life-threatening, employees and volunteers should notify their staff supervisor and provide all the necessary information so that the incident can be investigated.



Volunteer Health and Security

- Protect your valuables. Do not leave them in your car or unattended.
- For volunteers' health and safety, please remember to wear a hat, and sunscreen, drink plenty of water, and balance electrolytes. Water and snacks are always available from the volunteer coordinator, but volunteers are also encouraged to supply their own.
- All volunteers must leave buildings when staff members leave in the evenings unless they are helping with a legitimate, sanctioned event (excluding host volunteers). Volunteers should never be on-site without supervision of a staff member.

Insurance Coverage

BTA purchases special risk Insurance for volunteers while they are serving on the property.

If a volunteer is injured in the course of their service at BTA, it is important that they advise their staff supervisor, or any staff person, and get medical care if needed. An incident report must be completed by the volunteer with a manager on duty in coordination with the volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are required to submit an emergency contact as part of their personnel file to the volunteer coordinator in case an emergency should arise.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can my family/friends volunteer with me?

Yes. Please inform the volunteer coordinator prior to the scheduled shift. The volunteer department will inform your staff supervisor of the expected number of guests. Family/friends that provide direct service with you while on-site must be at least 11 years of age and sign our one-day volunteer liability waiver.

What if I have to cancel and who do I contact?

If you are unable to volunteer and need to cancel, we understand. Please call, text, or email the volunteer coordinator ASAP to inform them of your absence. You do not have to provide any personal details of why you need to cancel.

What is “direct service” performed on-site, off-site, and at home?

- Direct service on-site is the job you do for the day even if it is outside your normal working duties as assigned by your staff supervisor. The time you spend working for one of our departments counts toward your service hours.
- Direct service off-site will be determined by your staff supervisor and/or could be a special project that is deemed appropriate to work at a pre-approved off-site location.
- Direct service at home may consist of learning or reading field trip curriculum, research for your position, etc. Service at home will be determined on a case-by-case basis by your staff supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

I am a docent or host volunteer, what does “rove” mean?

When not leading tours, docents “rove” (or walk) around the Arboretum answering visitor questions, interacting with guests, helping visitors find specific gardens, and serving as an ambassador to the Arboretum. You will need to grab the essentials before heading out such as your docent vest, a radio, first aid kit, water, sunscreen, and snacks.

Is mileage tax deductible?

Please consult with a tax advisor. Upon request, we can provide a report of your hours served on-site with the specific dates.

What counts toward service hours?

Initial orientation, direct service done on-site, direct service done at home or other off-site locations, and volunteer training and meetings.

How many hours do I have to serve?

The minimum number of hours volunteers are required to serve is 3 hours per shift. You are welcome to stay longer than your shift if desired.

What is a Discovery Station?

Our Discovery Station is a mobile cart that carries various items found around the Arboretum. Volunteers participating in our docent program have the opportunity to set up and staff the discovery station and interact with guests for a set period. Docents will receive information/fact sheets about each item on the cart so that they can answer questions from guests.

What if I am sick?

If you are sick or feel under the weather, please stay home. Call, text, or email the Volunteer Coordinator to inform them of your absence. If you test positive for COVID-19, please follow the CDC guidelines on when to quarantine and when to isolate. Please do not return to your volunteer duties until you have a negative test.

Will I interact with visitors?

Yes. Almost all volunteers encounter visitors along the trail or at the Visitor Center. Visitors may be interested in the work our volunteers do on-site and/or may have general questions for you. Often, you may need to point them in the right direction or answer a simple question. If you do not have the answer to their question(s), connect them with a staff member.

What if I want/need to resign?

If a volunteer wishes to no longer volunteer, a notice of resignation should be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator via email or letter at least two weeks before the effective date. The volunteer's name tag must be returned to the Volunteer Coordinator on their last scheduled shift or seven (7) days after a notice of resignation is submitted to the volunteer coordinator. The name tag can be delivered in person or through the mail (postage not provided by BTA).

We love feedback. You are encouraged to bring your suggestions to the attention of the volunteer coordinator or a member of BTA management at any time. Didn't see your question answered above? Email volunteer@btarboretum.org

What assignment do I choose when logging my hours online?

When logging your hours online or checking in/out for the day, choose an assignment that accurately reflects the job you performed for that day or the department. For example, volunteers working in the garden should post their assignment as Horticulture Aide, master gardeners should post their service as Master Gardener, host volunteers should post their hours as Host Volunteer - Education or Host Volunteer - Visitor's Center, etc

Why do I track my hours?

Logging your hours is important because our department managers use volunteer hour data for grant proposals, evaluate volunteer trends, and report the number of hours used for conducting their programs. Volunteer hours are also an in-kind donation with a monetary value for BTA. By logging your hours, we can track volunteer activity throughout each season and it maintains your volunteer status as active.

About Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Our Mission

The mission of BTA is to inspire appreciation and stewardship of desert plants, wildlife, and ecosystems through education, research, and conservation.

Our Values

Beauty. We are an Oasis of Inspiration

Stewardship. Every Living Thing Matters

Learning. Learning is Lifelong

Community. All Are Welcome Here

Strategic Goals

- Clearly define and develop education programs to serve youth and inspire life-long learning.
- Create a master site plan for the ongoing upkeep, maintenance, and enhancements of the Arboretum.
- Develop a business model and plan for financial sustainability through both earned and contributed revenue.
- Implement appropriate research and conservation programs that demonstrate stewardship practices and take advantage of the Arboretum's unique assets.
- Promote the unique benefits of the Arboretum through enhanced marketing, branding, audience development, and community partnerships.
- Build internal capacity through the professional development of staff and volunteers.





Our History

The Arboretum was founded on April 1, 1924, incorporated as Arizona's first non-profit research institution on October 5, 1927, and officially dedicated and opened to the public on April 6, 1929. To view the complete history of BTA, [visit our website](#).

Our Garden

Acres: 372

Trails: 4.7 miles

Gardens: Plant collections from around the world. Countries and regions represented: United States, Mexico, Australia, Madagascar, India, China, Japan, Israel, South America, the Middle East, Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Arabian Peninsula.

Plants: 20,000+ arid-land plants; 4,025 taxa (species, etc.) - approx. 30% are species of conservation concern

BTA Fun Facts:

- Arizona's oldest and largest botanical garden.
- Home to "Mr. Big", a long-leaf eucalyptus tree, and an Arizona Champion Tree.
- Nationally accredited plant collections: Desert Legumes, Southwest Oaks, and Eucalyptus.
- On the National Register of Historic Places; historic buildings on site.
- An Audubon "Important Bird Area" with 275 species sighted.



Governance

BTA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and we are governed by a [Board of Directors](#). They act as directors of policy within the organization, provide support and direction for future growth, and are ambassadors of our mission, vision, and goals in the community.

Memberships

A membership is not required to volunteer with us. Oftentimes, visitors have questions about the benefits and levels of our membership program. We welcome anyone interested in joining. To make our memberships accessible to everyone, we offer many types of memberships.

[Learn More Here](#)

Resources

Visitor Guidelines

- Stay on designated trails at all times.
- Leashed and well-behaved pets are welcome. Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet and under the physical control of the owner. Pet owners are responsible for cleanup.
- All fires including charcoal, wood, and LPG propane are prohibited. Smoking is strictly prohibited at BTA except in the main parking lot in front of the Visitor Center.
- Children must be closely supervised by an adult at all times.
- Do not pick flowers, fruits, or plant parts from any plant.
- Do not remove anything from the Arboretum grounds including plants, leaves, fruits, sticks, flowers, rocks, feathers, or wildlife.
- Do not damage or harm any plant or animal.

Helpful Links

[Arboretum Hours](#)

[Admission Prices](#)

[Arboretum Map](#)

Connect With Us

Our Website: <https://btarboretum.org/>

Our Phone Number: (520) 689-2723

General Email: info@btarboretum.org

The BTA Blog: <https://btarboretum.org/blog/>

Socials:

 [Facebook: @BoyceThompsonArboretum](#)

 [Instagram: @btarboretum](#)

 [Linkedin: @btarboreum](#)

 [Twitter: @BoyceThompson](#)



Thank you!