

19. How do volunteers help?

Aim

Parks Victoria is keen to involve the public in volunteer activities that help parks. This activity aims to familiarise students with the range of volunteer programs currently operating and asks them to suggest a program for their school.

Materials

- Resource sheet 18: Volunteers in conservation.
- A2 poster paper.
- Textas and other presentation material.

Activities

1. Read the resource sheet Volunteers in conservation and check Parks Victoria's website for details on volunteer groups and activities.

1a). Complete the sentence. A volunteer is someone who

1b). Write a summary of the range of activities that are undertaken by volunteers to assist parks and conservation. This could be done in a table similar to the one below.

1c) List the following:

- Benefits for the volunteer.
- Disincentives for the volunteer.
- Benefits for the organising group.
- Disincentives for the organising group.

1d) Refer to Parks Victoria's website and find the names of volunteer groups such as Friends of National Parks. Does the park closest to where you live have a Friends or other volunteer group? If so, what activities do they assist with in the park?

2. In groups of three or four, consider what your class could potentially do in a park near you. Prepare an outline of your suggested volunteer program in a format suitable to present to the park ranger, i.e. it provides a short, clear summary of the following:

- Type of activity proposed.
- Size of group.
- Age of the students.
- Proposed season or date of the activity.
- Length of time or times that the activity could be undertaken.
- Contact person at the school for this project.
- Materials or equipment that would be needed.
- Benefits of the project to the park and the volunteers.

The outline of the program should be no more than two or three pages long. It could include maps and photos if this is appropriate.

5. Working in the same group, design a large A2 poster advertising your proposed program and encouraging people to volunteer for the project. Discuss the relevant information to be included on your poster. Make sure your advertising is clear and eye-catching.

Extension

As a class, choose one of these projects to offer to conduct at a nearby park. Present the proposal to the ranger and discuss the project with him/her. Make any appropriate changes to the project in the light of these discussions with the ranger. Conduct the project and keep liaising with the ranger during the pre-, on-site, and post-project stages.

Examples of volunteer groups	Organising or responsible group	Types of activities/facilities undertaken	Types of people involved

19. Volunteers in parks

The community plays an important role in the protection and management of Victoria's parks. Community involvement is actively sought to conserve and manage our parks. It is hoped that through such programs people will develop an appreciation and understanding of the integrity and fragile nature of the environment.

A large number of voluntary groups are working with Parks Victoria and the

Department of Natural Resources and Environment on a range of management issues within parks. Activities involve planting and weeding, seed collection, data collection and research such as faunal and floral studies, and interpretation services.

Parks Victoria's website lists the many volunteers groups working with parks and details some of the activities the groups are involved in.

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Click on Volunteers in left hand side column.

