



Graduate Naturalist Program

Program Overview

Wolf Ridge offers work experience combined with regular evaluation and graduate level coursework in collaboration with Antioch University New England - designed to help you grow as an experiential educator and naturalist. Wolf Ridge alumni continue to teach and lead the field of environmental education all over the world in formal classrooms, at state and national parks, in nature centers, zoos, museums, organic farms, and as artists and adventurers. Since 1974, the program has served almost 1000 graduate students and interns with diverse backgrounds who come to this learning community to sharpen their skills in environmental education and sustainability.

This is a 10-month program from late August to Mid June that culminates in a graduate-level Certificate in Environmental Education and Sustainability, with 12 transferable graduate credits. The total cost for the program is \$250 per credit and includes a private room in our sustainable staff housing and meals in our dining hall. Work-study opportunities are available to offset the out of pocket price.

Graduate naturalists teach an average of 6 classes a week, attend graduate seminars, live and learn in our sustainable staff housing, and explore our 2,000 acre campus while learning how to be better educators, live in community, and co-teach with the natural world.

Teach at Wolf Ridge

You will teach from a diverse array of content and participate in training for key competencies. You will work daily with participants of all ages, social backgrounds, physical and mental abilities, and personal interests. You will learn how to foster nature connection through hands-on experiential learning and engage in potentially controversial issues such as hunting, development, and climate change.

An average week consists of six half-day classes from Monday through Friday, plus an average of one weekend a month. The classes cover topics in cultural history, natural history, and adventure education. Your students from visiting schools will typically range from fourth grade to 12th grade. This is a residential (total immersion) learning program designed so that you will learn from practice - teaching, exploring, and living in community.

Earn Graduate Credits

The graduate-level Certificate of Environmental Education and Sustainability, managed by both Wolf Ridge and Antioch University New England, serves as the core of our program. At the end of your time at Wolf Ridge, you'll leave with 12 graduate credits that can be applied toward a Master's program at Antioch University New England or any other program in the nation. The graduate courses include:

- ESC 5501 Natural History of the Northwoods
- ESE 5470 EE Methods
- ES 6960 Environmental Education and Sustainability Internship
- ESE 5020 Foundations of EE

Everything you do here is connected to a credit. Whether you're teaching, attending a seminar, or walking through the woods looking at plants, you're receiving credit. Seminars and course work may include bird banding, plant identification hikes, discussing equitable learning environments, tapping maple trees, practicing place-based education, lynx tracking in the

national forest, and exploring local food systems. You will explore both theory and practice combining a rich understanding of the psychological needs of students and theoretical aspects of pedagogy with real-life experience. The entire program is interdisciplinary and will put you in direct contact with professionals in education, wildlife management, storytelling, business administration, organic farming, live animal care, and more.

Live in Community

Our community consists of 11 professional naturalists with an average of nearly 20 years' experience, 5 graduates remaining for a second year learning how to run the business of Wolf Ridge and acting as mentors for incoming graduates, and 16 new graduate naturalists (like yourself) with experiences from all over the map.

Housing is provided in the Lakeview Staff House. The house was designed to Living Building Challenge standards - a building certification program, advocacy tool and philosophy that defines the most advanced measure of sustainability in the built environment possible today. Features include a solar photovoltaic array for electricity, solar hot water heater, automatic light sensors, and locally sourced materials. The building was also designed to facilitate community building and create spaces for intentional interactions.

Housing amenities:

- Private room with a twin bed, desk, and dresser with hanging storage.
- Large shared kitchen with 3 stoves and a commercial fridge.
- Multiple common areas with a pellet stove and projector for movie nights.
- Full laundry facility in the building.
- Large basement with extra furniture and ample storage space.
- A back deck with an amazing view of Lake Superior!

Meals are provided in our dining hall when schools are on campus, and food staples are supplied for the house for community meals on weekends. In the fall this includes fresh veggies from our organic farm, and in the spring we start to grow microgreens as we wait for the snow to melt. Compost from the house and from prep in the dining hall is sent down to the farm to complete the cycle.

Other Details

The program runs from late August 2023 to early June 2024. Your total out-of-pocket cost for the graduate naturalist tuition is \$3,000. Naturalists receive a private dormitory room, meals when schools are in residence, all necessary materials for teaching and learning, and scholarships from Wolf Ridge and Antioch University New England. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis February-April for the fall cohort.

For more information visit: wolf-ridge.org/programs/educators/naturalist/
To apply fill out an application here: <https://wolfridge.campbrainstaff.com/>
Contact Shelby Roback shelby.roback@wolf-ridge.org for more information or any questions you might have. We look forward to meeting you!