What is a Docent?

A docent at Bouverie Preserve is someone with an abiding love of nature and a desire to share that love, appreciation and enthusiasm with children aged 8–10.

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in.” — Rachel Carson

As a docent at Bouverie Preserve, you have the rare opportunity to be that person and possibly change a child’s life.

Docents commit to consistent involvement with 3rd and 4th graders for two consecutive spring (March–May) and fall (October–November) hiking seasons, participating in the classroom and on the trail. Scheduling is flexible.

Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit environmental conservation and education organization. It was founded in 1962 to safeguard Bolinas Lagoon from irresponsible development, leading the way for the protection of Tomales Bay. In 1978 David Bouverie donated to ACR a major portion of his Glen Ellen ranch for education and preservation, forming the Bouverie Preserve.

Today, ACR acts as guardian of a system of nature preserves spanning 26 properties in Marin, Sonoma and Lake counties. These 5,000 acres of tidal flats, marshlands, coastal prairie, oak woodlands and redwood groves provide significant habitat to wildlife and have been placed in our care by generous donors to steward and protect in perpetuity.

“At the Bouverie Preserve, we are counting on children and grown-ups gaining a bit of love, knowledge and respect for nature, to preserve our fast-disappearing heritage.”

David Pleydell Bouverie

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Become a Docent at Bouverie Preserve
An Inspiring Living Laboratory in the Valley of the Moon
Audubon Canyon Ranch
conervation in action
Average 1.5 credits per day during training
New!
Earn 4 UC Davis credits!
Training begins in September!
Bouverie Preserve School Program
Bolstering science and natural history education in Sonoma and Napa county schools

A Wildlife Sanctuary
The Bouverie Preserve is 535 acres of undisturbed wildlands in Sonoma County hosting a rich diversity of native plants and animals—over 130 species of birds, 500 species of flowering plants, bobcat, grey fox, coyote and mountain lion.

An Outdoor Classroom
ACR’s School Program gives students an education-based nature experience guided by trained docents who facilitate inquiry and investigation. Docents lead small groups (no more than six students) through a variety of habitats where their learners explore animal tracks and signs, aquatic ecology, plant and animal adaptations, food webs, watersheds, water cycles, and other relationships in nature. Docents capitalize on teachable moments and model curiosity.

Since the beginning of our classroom program more than 40 years ago, ACR has provided this free program to more than 250,000 Bay Area children.

An Inspiring Living Laboratory
Our seasonal Guided Nature Walks & Twilight Hikes, led by docents, provide opportunities for the general public of all ages and abilities to enjoy Bouverie Preserve and gain a deeper understanding of local natural history.

Join Us!
Sign up at egret.org/volunteer_educate

Docent Benefits

Docents receive in-depth natural history training in Northern California’s diverse and beautiful ecosystems as well as training in the dynamics of working with children in these natural settings. ACR partners with UC Extension’s California Naturalist program.

- Be the embodiment of ACR’s mission—Conservation in Action—by imparting to a younger generation a deeper understanding of the cycles of life and ways in which we connect to the land.
- Develop a bond with your classmates and the ACR community.
- Gain exclusive access to ACR preserves throughout Sonoma and Marin counties.
- Become a certified California Naturalist and eligible to receive four UC Davis Extension undergraduate academic credits.
- Enjoy ongoing opportunities for advanced coursework, lectures and field training.
- Receive a 20% discount at our nature bookstore.

Become a Docent

Complete these steps to become a docent at Bouverie Preserve:

Submit the application, available online at egret.org/volunteer_educate.

Reserve your spot at a Bouverie Preserve docent orientation. Orientations begin at 10:30 a.m. with a brief overview of the program. Seasoned Bouverie Preserve docents lead an hour-long, small-group hike and are available to answer questions. Orientations will be held on select Wednesdays and Saturdays in 2019:
- March 27
- April 13
- April 17
- May 4
- May 15
- June 12
- June 22

Attend all sessions of the 17-week training, Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m., beginning September 4, 2019 through January 2020 (holiday exceptions). Trainees also observe experienced docents on the trails and in the classroom.

There is a materials fee (scholarships are available), and a no-cost background check is required to ensure the safety of children in our care.