

# Bellevue Botanical Garden Volunteer Guide

This document provides information specific to volunteering at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. Volunteers are also required to read the City of Bellevue Parks & Community Services Volunteer Handbook.



BELLEVUE BOTANICAL  
GARDEN



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable modification requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-6826 (voice) or email [BBGVolunteer@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:BBGVolunteer@bellevuewa.gov). For complaints regarding modifications, contact the City of Bellevue ADA, Title VI, and Equal Opportunity Officer at [ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov).

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# BBG Mission and Partners

Bellevue Botanical Garden (BBG) is a 53-acre urban refuge comprised of 12 thematic gardens, woodlands, and natural wetlands. The Garden is part of the City of Bellevue Parks system. The mission of the Bellevue Botanical Garden is to display the best plants and gardening practices for healthy, beautiful Northwest gardens. Visitors are encouraged to participate in Garden volunteerism, events and programs that are engaging, educational and inspiring.

The City of Bellevue partners with local nonprofit organizations to maintain the gardens, provide programming, and secure additional funding for development. This collaborative approach maximizes the value of community resources, leveraged with the City's investment in maintenance and operations. Agreements between the City and Partners define roles and responsibilities and are critical to BBG's existence as an accessible and sustainable public garden for all.

## Garden Partners

- Bellevue Botanical Garden Society (BBGS)—Primary Partner  
(<https://bellevuebotanical.org/bellevue-botanical-garden-society/>)  
Educational Programs, Community Events including Garden d'Lights and Arts in the Garden, Garden Development, Docent Program, Trillium Store, Membership, and Communications
- Bellevue Utilities—City of Bellevue  
(<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/utilities>)  
Waterwise Garden
- East Lake Washington District of Garden Clubs (ELWD)  
(<https://elwd.org/>)  
General Garden Support and Advocacy
- Eastside Fuchsia Society (EFS)  
([http://www.nwfuchsiasociety.com/gardens/eastside/eastside\\_fuchsia\\_garden.htm](http://www.nwfuchsiasociety.com/gardens/eastside/eastside_fuchsia_garden.htm))  
Fuchsia Garden

- Hardy Fern Foundation (HFF)  
(<https://hardyferns.org/>)  
Rhododendron Glen (Location of the Fern Collection)
- Master Gardener Foundation of King County (MGFKC)  
(<https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/>)  
Ask a Master Gardener Plant Clinics, Entrance Planters, and  
'Habitats at Home' exhibit in Courtyard Raised Bed
- Northwest Perennial Alliance (NPA)  
(<https://www.northwestperennialalliance.org/>)  
Perennial Border
- NW Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society (NWNARGS)  
(<https://www.nargsnw.org/>)  
Rock Garden
- Puget Sound Dahlia Association (PSDA)  
(<https://www.pugetsounddahlias.com/>)  
Dahlia Display
- Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS)  
(<https://www.wnps.org/central-puget-sound>)  
Native Discovery Garden



# Garden Hours, Etiquette, and Guidelines

The Bellevue Botanical Garden is free and open to the public 7 days a week, dawn to dusk. The Trillium Store gift shop and Copper Kettle coffee bar hours change seasonally and can be found at [BellevueBotanical.org](https://BellevueBotanical.org), along with a calendar of classes, lectures, and events.

We ask visitors to observe these guidelines to help protect and maintain the Garden:

- Only service animals are allowed in the Garden. Dogs and other pets are not permitted. \*
- Leave all flowers, plants, fruits, seeds, and leaves for everyone to enjoy.
- Stay on paths and lawns. Do not walk in plant beds or climb on rocks.
- Recreational bicycles, scooters, rollerblades, and skateboards are not allowed in the Garden. A bicycle rack is available at the Garden entrance. \*
- Do not disturb plant labels. If you are curious about a plant, you can find plant information in our plant collection database on our website, [BellevueBotanical.org](https://BellevueBotanical.org). There are also QR codes throughout the Garden that link to the database.
- To ensure the safety of visitors, please remember that drones are not allowed in the Bellevue Botanical Garden or any City of Bellevue Park without a City permit.
- Families and children are encouraged to enjoy and explore the Garden. Please supervise children at all times. \*

\*Nearby Wilburton Hill Park is available with space for pets, sporting activities, and a children's playground.

If you feel comfortable, please feel free to politely educate visitors about these rules and remind them they are visiting a living museum. Always be kind and courteous when interacting with visitors. It may be their first time visiting the Garden. If a visitor is confrontational, ask a staff member for help.

# BBG Volunteerism and Opportunities

Community involvement at various levels is a core element of the Garden's operations and essential to the Garden's continuing development and maintenance. Every effort is made to provide meaningful and productive volunteer opportunities and to encourage volunteer participation at the Garden.

The Garden's robust volunteer program provides support for programs and activities in public education, horticulture, collections, visitor services, special events, and other aspects of garden operations.

Hundreds of volunteers contribute thousands of hours to BBG each year. While many of the Garden's volunteers are members of BBGS and other partner organizations, membership is not required to volunteer.

All volunteer activities at the Garden are coordinated with the Volunteer Coordinator, a City of Bellevue employee. Volunteer management is a shared responsibility of Bellevue Parks & Community Services and BBG Partners.

An overview of the Garden's volunteer roles in each category is listed below. Training will be provided for all roles, and many do not require any prior experience. Copies of complete role descriptions, including schedule and tasks, are available from the Volunteer Coordinator or online at [BellevueWA.gov/bbg-volunteer-roles](https://BellevueWA.gov/bbg-volunteer-roles).

## Horticulture

### **General Garden Assistant**

Tue. and Thu., 9-11 a.m., Jan.-Oct.

Work with BBG City of Bellevue grounds staff to maintain gardens, paths, and natural areas which are not managed by a BBG Partner. This includes the Shorts Groundcover Garden, Urban Meadow, Yao Garden, Parking Lot, and Woodlands.

### **Hardy Fern Garden Assistant**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tues., 10 a.m.-noon., March-Nov.

Work with the Hardy Fern Foundation to maintain the hardy fern collection, rhododendrons, and other companion plants in the Rhododendron Glen.

### **Native Discovery Garden Assistant**

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wed., 10 a.m.-noon., year-round

Work with Washington Native Plant Society to maintain the Native Discovery Garden.

### **NPA Perennial Border Assistant**

Mon. and Thu., 9 a.m.-noon., year-round

Work with Northwest Perennial Alliance to maintain the Perennial Border.

### **Rock Garden Assistant**

Varying weekday mornings, 2-hour shifts, year-round

Work with the Northwest Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society to maintain the Rock Garden.

### **Waterwise Garden Assistant**

Every other Wed., 1-3 p.m., March-Oct.

Work with Bellevue Utilities to maintain the Waterwise Garden, a demonstration space of natural yard care to showcase sustainable, water-efficient gardening.

## **Visitor Experience**

### **Docent Tours**

Weekends and as scheduled, 2 to 3-hour shifts

Lead tours of the Garden. Stroll the Garden with visitors and share interesting information about the Garden and its history. Training is offered annually.

### **Garden Greeter**

Mon.-Sat. mornings and afternoons, 2-hour shifts

As an ambassador of the Garden, welcome visitors, answer questions, and help provide the best guest experience possible for over 425,000 annual visitors.

### **Trillium Store**

During gift shop hours, 2 to 3-hour shifts

Assist shoppers, work as a cashier, and provide inventory support.

## Education

### **Adult Education Class Facilitator**

Sat. mornings, some weekdays, 2 to 4-hour shifts

Set up and host our adult classes and programs.

### **Kids in the Garden**

Tue. and Wed., 9-11 a.m.

Prepare crafts and snacks for our preschool programs.

### **Living Lab**

Mon., Tue., Wed., and Fri., 9-11:45 a.m.

Assist during elementary school field trips.

### **Youth Tour Guide**

Schedule based on tour requests, 1.5 to 2.5-hour shifts

Lead tours of the BBG for school and youth groups.

### **Youth Workshops and Events**

Weekends and weekday afternoons, 2 to 5-hour shifts

Help during on-site and off-site youth workshops.

## Events

### **Arts in the Garden**

Last Fri.-Sun. of Aug., 2 to 3-hour shifts

Staff the informational desk, check in artists, assist visitors, patrol the grounds, and help staff with operational duties.

### **Garden d'Lights (GdL)**

#### **Build**

Thu., 10 a.m.-2 p.m., March-Oct.

Build the light displays that illuminate the Garden every holiday season.

#### **Installation & Take Down**

Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Participate in set-up and installation of light displays from the last week of October until the Monday of Thanksgiving week. Takedown is the first week of January.

## **Greeter and Event Support**

4:15-9:30 p.m., 2 to 3-hour shifts, Sat. after Thanksgiving-Dec. 31, except Dec. 25

Welcome visitors to the event, assist visitors, patrol the grounds, and help staff with operational duties.

## **Organization Support**

### **'The Buzz' Newsletter and BBG Blog**

Virtual with a flexible schedule

Write for the BBGS quarterly newsletter or Garden's blog.

### **Photographer/Videographer**

Flexible schedule

Take pictures and videos of our beautiful gardens, programs, and events for use in promotional and educational materials.

### **Plant Records and Database**

Scheduled in coordination with the Garden Curator

Work with the Curator to help update and maintain our database of plant records.

### **Youth and Children's Programs (Y&CP) Office Projects**

Flexible schedule

Help prepare materials used for our Youth and Children's Programs.



# Volgistics, Scheduling, and Timekeeping

The Garden uses Volgistics to manage volunteer records. Volgistics is volunteer management software used by more than 3,400 organizations worldwide. BBG volunteers use two Volgistics products, VicNet and VicTouch. Volgistics accounts are created for all volunteers when they submit a volunteer application.

**VicNet** is the Volunteer Information Center. Every volunteer, including applicants, has a VicNet account which is used to update their personal information, adjust their volunteer preferences, sign up for volunteer activities, and record at-home volunteer hours.

To log into VicNet, go to [BellevueWA.gov/bbg-volunteer](https://www.bellevuewa.gov/bbg-volunteer) and click 'Volunteer Login'. A written how-to guide for using VicNet can be found at <https://www.volgistics.com/ex/Help.dll?ACT=21&TOPIC=4010> A video tutorial for VicNet is available at <https://www.volgistics.com/Videos/HT4010A.htm>. Paper copies of the how-to guide are available from the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers use **VicTouch** to sign in and out at the Garden. To access VicTouch, use the kiosk in the breakroom or scan a QR code.

Volunteers who aren't able to use or access a computer or mobile device are invited to contact the Volunteer Coordinator to make alternative arrangements.

## Scheduling Volunteer Activities

Volunteers sign up for opportunities in one of three ways:

- Signing up for a volunteer shift in VicNet on the Schedule page
- Replying to an email from the Volunteer Lead
- Showing up for a regularly scheduled opportunity, in agreement with the Volunteer Lead

More information is included in each role's description.

## **What if I scheduled myself to volunteer, but can no longer attend?**

If you signed up in VicNet, you may remove yourself from the schedule up to three days before your shift. If it's within three days or you did not use VicNet to sign up, call or email the Volunteer Lead directly.

## **Signing In and Timekeeping**

Each volunteer is automatically assigned a volunteer number used to sign in. You can find your volunteer number in your VicNet 'Profile'. During orientation, you will be provided with a BBG contacts card that will also have your volunteer number on it. Please save the information on this card so it is always accessible to you while volunteering. Many volunteers save the details in their phone. Volunteer numbers are also available in a booklet in the breakroom next to the sign-in station.

To sign in, enter your volunteer number on the tablet in the breakroom or scan a 'BBG Volunteer Mobile Sign In' QR code with your smartphone and follow these steps:

1. Press 'Yes' to confirm it's you.
2. Press 'Sign-in'.
3. Select your assignment\*.
4. Press 'Yes' to confirm.
5. Press 'OK', and if using your cell phone press 'Exit'.

\*If you do not see your assignment listed, press 'I'm Not Sure'.

The Garden requires volunteers to sign in before starting an assignment for two reasons.

1. The Garden is responsible for providing a safe environment for program participants and we take this responsibility seriously. We need to know when there are volunteers at the Garden and what activities they are doing.
2. By signing in, your volunteer hours will be automatically recorded.

## **Do I need to sign out after my shift?**

We ask that volunteers also sign out before they leave. But if you forget, the system will automatically record a preset number of hours based on the role you selected when you signed in. The number of hours automatically recorded for each role is posted in the breakroom.

## **Why is tracking volunteer hours important?**

Tracking volunteer hours is important for you and for the Garden. Having an accurate record of volunteer hours ensures that you remain eligible to participate in volunteer activities, appreciation events, and social events. Volunteer hours also help with resource allocation and when applying for grants to grow the Garden and our programs.

## **How do I record volunteer hours for at-home projects?**

If you need to record volunteer hours for at-home projects, you can do so on the 'Service' page of VicNet.



# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## **How do I stay up to date with what's happening in the Garden?**

It's recommended that volunteers sign up for BBG email updates (<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/xpXJuHJ>). You can also find information about what's happening in the Garden, volunteer needs, and current operational guidelines and procedures on the 'Home' page of VicNet.

## **What's that plant?**

Our plant collection is recorded in an online database accessible to the public. To access the BBG Plant Collection, go to <https://bbgcollection.bellevuewa.gov/> or to [BellevueBotanical.org](https://BellevueBotanical.org) and click *Plant Collection Search* at the top or in the menu if you're on a mobile device. There are QR codes throughout the Garden that link to our Plant Collection. Each QR code is connected to a list of plants in a particular garden bed.

## **What's a QR Code?**

A QR code helps someone quickly access a website using their mobile device's camera app. To use a QR code, open your camera app and center the QR code in the camera's frame. Click the link that appears. You do not take a picture. Here is an example that will take you to our website:

[bellevuebotanical.org](https://bellevuebotanical.org)



## **What should I wear and is there anything I should bring with me?**

This varies by assignment. Check your role description for more details.

## **The parking lot is full. Where should I park?**

There is additional parking at Wilburton Hill Park, a third of a mile away. To get there, turn right (east) on Main Street from our parking lot, drive down the hill, and turn right into the Wilburton Hill Park lot where the road bends. During periods of high attendance, volunteers who are willing are encouraged to park at Wilburton Hill Park to preserve parking for visitors.

## Where can I store personal items while volunteering?

It is recommended that you do not leave valuables in your vehicle. There are lockers you can use while volunteering. Please bring your own padlock and take it with you when you leave. Personal items may be stored in lockers at your own risk. The BBG is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen personal items.

## Do you have a lost and found?

Yes, there is a lost and found in the Shorts House (Copper Kettle Coffee Bar), the Trillium Store, and in the BBG Admin Office. For items lost recently, check the Shorts House and Trillium Store first. After several days, lost and found items are moved to the administrative office.

## I've been volunteering for a while and would like to do more. How do I volunteer for more assignments?

Keep your assignment preferences up to date on your VicNet 'Profile' to receive emails about volunteer needs. Volunteer opportunities are also posted on the VicNet 'Home' page. You can always email [BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov) to check on the status of an assignment. Volunteers who aren't able to use or access a computer or mobile device are invited to contact the Volunteer Coordinator to make alternative arrangements.



## How do I maintain my active volunteer status?

An active volunteer is someone who has both passed a criminal background check and has recorded volunteer hours within the past 12 months.

Active volunteers will continue to receive updates about volunteer opportunities and social events.

## What if my active volunteer status has lapsed and I would like to volunteer again?

If you have previously been an active BBG volunteer and would like to return to volunteering at the Garden, email [BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator to let us know.

## What should I do if I can no longer volunteer at the Garden?

If you can no longer volunteer at the Garden, let us know by emailing [BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

# Volunteer Recognition

We greatly appreciate the dedication and generosity of our volunteers. Our success depends on you, and your efforts make the Garden truly unique.

To facilitate comradery around stewardship, we host social events throughout the year to which all active volunteers are invited. We also host an annual volunteer appreciation event in the fall.

Volunteers are invited to the appreciation event if they contributed at least 9 hours in the 12 months leading up to the event.



# Emergency Preparedness and Incidents

## First-Aid Supplies

First-aid kits and automated external defibrillators (AEDs) are in the Shorts House and the Visitor Center near the breakroom.

## Assembly Location

If an evacuation is necessary, our assembly location is the gravel area in the NW corner of the Garden, next to the service gate. This location is shown to volunteers during orientation.

## Lost Children

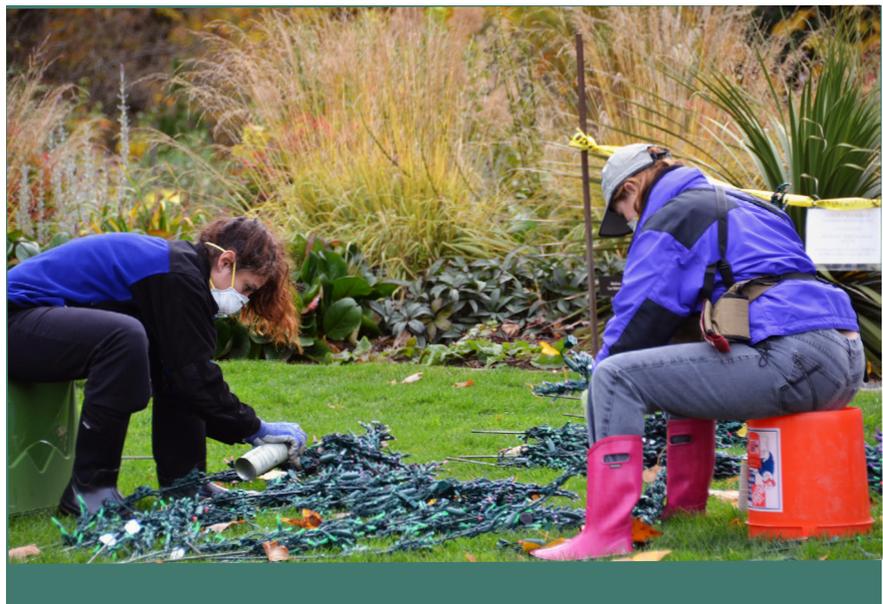
- Walk the child or parent to the Trillium Store to collect information and for reunification. If the Trillium Store is not open, contact a staff member.
- Follow the BBG's Lost Child Procedures. Copies are available in the Trillium Store, BBG Admin Office, or from the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Incident and Injury Reporting

Forms to report incidents and injuries are available in the BBG Admin Office. Completed forms should be delivered to the Volunteer Coordinator's mailbox.

## Urgent Maintenance Needs

When onsite staff are unavailable, volunteers may call Parks Maintenance at 425-452-6855 for urgent maintenance requests, e.g., a flooding toilet, broken window, roof leak, or other issue that requires immediate attention.



# Contact Information

For more information about volunteering at the Bellevue Botanical Garden contact the Volunteer Coordinator:

Email: [BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:BBGVolunteers@bellevuewa.gov)

Phone: 425-452-6826

Address: 12001 Main Street, Bellevue, WA 98005

Office hours: Tues.-Sat. 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

