

INTRODUCTORY ANIMAL TRAINING CLASS FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Nature of Wildworks will begin offering animal training classes for volunteers only. The training will be for volunteers wishing to expand their knowledge of the animals housed here and those wishing to work with or handle the animals on site (walking, exercising, etc.) or assist with the outreach programs. These classes will be on Saturday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00 am and are required for anyone wishing to have any hands-on contact with the animals at Wildworks. New volunteers must complete the online registration form and mail it to the Nature of Wildworks at the address listed below.

The classes will begin on Saturday, October 6th and will run five consecutive weeks. The training will cost \$35 for each class or a total of \$175. Anyone who pays in advance for the five week course will be given a discount of \$25 making the total cost \$150. Topics being covered will include:

- Information pertaining to the individual animals' personalities
- Basic operant conditioning techniques
- Protective contact training
- On-site handling
- How to handle the animals in public settings
- Animal presentation techniques

All participants should prepare to attend the five classes as each class will cover different and important topics.* There will be hands-on animal demonstrations and student participation each class. The first two classes will be for those wishing to work with the animals only on-site at Wildworks. The remaining three classes will include more detailed information for those wishing to assist with animal programs. While the classes are not mandatory, anyone wishing to work hands on with the animals must attend the classes pertaining to the particular animal they want to work with.

You will need to register prior to the first class by contacting Mollie at 310-455-0550 or email to wildworks1@aol.com. A registration form will be forwarded to all applications for the class. This form must be completed and returned to Wildworks prior to or on the first day of class. Those who complete the five-week course will be given a certificate of completion. A list of animals the participants are cleared to work will be issued based on individual capabilities. Due to time constraints, all animals may not be included in the training. In this five-week period, the classes will focus on the animals most often used in outreach programs and those most tractable.

The classes will be taught by Wildworks Founder Mollie Hogan who graduated from the Moorpark College Teaching Zoo and later became an instructor at the college teaching Wildlife Education and Entertainment and Education in Animal Parks. She also wrote, produced and participated in programs at the Los Angeles Zoo where she was employed as an animal presenter for 13 years. Additionally, she trained animals in behavioral training projects throughout the zoo. Working as a consultant for a behavioral firm called Active Environments she participated in the beginning of the "protected contact" work with the elephants at the San Diego Wild Animal Park and Drill Baboons at the Los Angeles Zoo. She is the founder of Cat Business which offers personalized training services for domestic felines.

*Classes will be offered again beginning in January 2008.

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