

South Bay
Botanic Garden
Volunteer
Manual
2013

About Us

Although South Bay Botanic Garden was officially established in January of 2008, its history really began in 1974. As a new college horticulture program, the garden started as an empty field, one greenhouse, and no plants. However, through the efforts of countless students learning the skills of planting and hardscape installation, the garden has grown into a park-like setting of hundreds of different varieties of plants.

The South Bay Botanic Garden consists of 4 acres of trees, shrubs, flowers, grounds covers, various turfgrasses, plant collections, and water features all framed in a pleasant setting. As part of the Landscape and Nursery Technology (LNT) Program at Southwestern College, the garden continues to be a learning facility for students pursuing degrees in the horticultural fields. Don't be surprised to see a group of students working on the garden or learning a horticultural skill.

The garden is located on the Southwestern College campus in eastern Chula Vista, about 8 miles from the Pacific Ocean to the west and 5 miles from the Mexican border to the south. We are located about 20 minutes from downtown San Diego. Our climate enjoys the cooling effect of the nearby Pacific Ocean but is inland far enough to receive consistent sunshine.

Contact Us

Address

South Bay Botanic Garden
900 Otay Lakes Road
Chula Vista, CA 91910

Staff Contacts

Eddie Munguia (Field Site Manager)

emunguia@swccd.edu

619-421-6700 Ext. 5416

Email is the primary method which the Field Site Manager contacts volunteers

William Homyak (LNT Department Chair)

whomyak@swccd.edu

619-421-6700 Ext. 5371

Volunteer inquiries sent to Department Chair will be forwarded to Field Site Manager

There are also various other part-time staff members. Should you need to contact them, see either the Field Site Manager or the Department Chair.

Schedule

Garden Hours

Tuesday-Saturday: 7:30am – 4pm

We are closed all major holidays and school holidays.

Schedule Changes

Should our Field Site Manager need to cancel a day you were planning on volunteering, you will be notified by 7:00am on the day of cancellation. Rain cancels outdoor work.

Volunteer Responsibilities

- To be sincere in the desire to serve the community by enhancing the beauty of the garden
- To respect the program and treat all staff, students, and visitors with kindness and respect
- To accept only those tasks which can realistically be completed (please let us know if you need any assistance)
- To accept the guidance and direction of staff and other volunteers
- To be sober and drug free while volunteering
- To be punctual! Please notify the Field Site Manager of absence by 7:30am the day you were scheduled to volunteer
- To sign in/out of the volunteer log

Volunteer Tasks

The typical tasks given to volunteers are the “day-to-day” tasks of maintaining a public garden: Weeding, leaf raking, light pruning, composting, mulching etc. If there is a specific area of gardening you wish to learn, by all means let us know! Our Field Site Manager will work with you to see if it something we can help you with. Other tasks may be available as well.

Previous gardening experience is helpful, but not required. We will provide all the training you need to accomplish any task assigned to you.

Time Commitment

There is no minimum time commitment to volunteer at the garden. If you are volunteering for community service, or court appointed hours, all necessary paper work must be presented before volunteering. It is the responsibility of the person volunteering to keep track of hours should it be required.

Age Requirement

The minimum age for volunteering is 15 years. Volunteers under 18 must have the written consent of a parent/guardian before volunteering.

Starting Out

Before Volunteering

1. Call/email either our Field Site Manager or Department Chair (*Volunteer inquiries will be forwarded to Field Site Manager*) OR come out and speak with our Field Site Manager.
2. Fill out a Volunteer Service Form
3. Schedule your first day of volunteering. Walk-ins are welcome, but scheduling ahead of time is preferred. Orientations are done on a one-on-one basis with our Field Site Manager.

When You Arrive...

1. Check in with our Field Site Manager
2. Sign in on the volunteer log (don't forget to sign out!)
3. Be ready to work!

General Volunteer Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy

Southwestern Community College District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, or marital status.

What should You Bring?

While we provide all the tools necessary for assigned tasks, we recommend bringing a pair of work gloves, water, snacks, sun screen, a hat, etc. In other words, be prepared to work outdoors and dress accordingly! NO open-toed shoes are allowed.

We do have a secure location where personal items may be stored while volunteering.

Interacting With Students/Visitors

The South Bay Botanic Garden is a public garden. Throughout the day there are students/visitors roaming through the garden. Should a visitor ask for directions, have questions, etc. please direct them to the nearest staff member.

Smoking

The South Bay Botanic Garden is a smoke free facility. Smoking is permitted in the parking lots.

Pets

Pets are not allowed on the Southwestern Community College Campus.

Parking

Parking permits are required in all Southwestern Community College Parking lots. Volunteers without parking permits may park inside the garden grounds at the discretion of the South Bay Botanic Garden Staff.

Limitations on Volunteer Service

Volunteers are accepted at the discretion of the South Bay Botanic Garden Staff. Grounds for cancellation of volunteer status:

- Physical, verbal, or sexual harassment of any kind
- Negligent or willful damage of property
- Theft
- Unsafe behavior
- Working under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- Unfriendly/uncooperative attitude
- Repeated tardiness/no-shows

Harassment of any kind, property damage, drug/alcohol use, unruly behavior, will be reported to the Southwestern College Police Department.

Safety Policies

- Safety is a priority for all of us at the garden. We ask all our volunteers to support and promote a safe working environment.
- Follow safety directions/guidelines given by staff members
- Report any unsafe working conditions immediately to any of our staff members
- Report any accidents immediately to the Field Site Manager
- First aid kits are available in the main shop

Promote Us

You can help recruit for more volunteers, share your experiences volunteering at the garden, etc. by following us on our social media pages:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthBayBotanicGarden>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/SBBG_SWC

Photo Sharing

You may share pictures of the garden/volunteer events on our Facebook and Twitter page. Please do not take pictures of visitors and/or students. Any pictures featuring staff members must have consent prior to being posted.

Representation

Please be aware that your actions and words as a South Bay Botanic Garden volunteer reflect on the organization. While you are encouraged to promote us, please be aware of how your behavior represents us!

Thank you for volunteering with the South Bay Botanic Garden!