



**Orange County Department of Education
Human Resources Department
Classified Class Specification**

**Class Code: 4044
Date Adopted: July 1, 2008**

**FLSA Status: Nonexempt
Union Representation: Represented**

Program Naturalist – Inside the Outdoors

GENERAL PURPOSE

Under direction, organizes, coordinates, and oversees the work of field naturalists engaged in providing science instruction to students from visiting schools at a variety of outdoor sites throughout Orange County; or delivers supplementary science education through the Traveling Scientist program; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Program Naturalists are responsible for the delivery of supplementary science education programs either at assigned outdoor sites or through the Traveling Scientist program. Incumbents organize, coordinate, and oversee the work of part-time field naturalists providing natural sciences education in such areas as biology, ecology, geology, and history. Incumbents participate in developing instructional activities and materials in conformance with state curriculum standards and provide instruction and conduct activities for visiting students and classroom teachers. When assigned to the Traveling Scientist program, an incumbent teaches science programs at elementary schools throughout Southern California, incorporating the use of animals, including birds, reptiles, mammals, insects, and amphibians, in ITO's collection.

Program Naturalist – Field and School Programs is distinguished from Senior Program Naturalist – Field and School Programs in that an incumbent in the latter class observes and evaluates work of the Program Naturalists and field naturalists and provides continuing training on curriculum content, teaching methods, and group management techniques.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to this class.

1. Organizes, coordinates, and oversees the work of field naturalists providing environmental science instruction to visiting students and teachers at assigned outdoor locations; provides training, observes and provides feedback on teaching techniques, group management skills, and instructional content; prepares evaluations of field teaching and general job performance; ensures program rules, policies, and procedures are followed.
2. Provides orientations and coordinates with classroom teachers, bus drivers, and adult volunteers for visiting school groups; explains activities, rules, and procedures for arrival/departure and while on site; prepares daily summary reports, billing reports, student counts, and safety/accident reports as needed.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (cont.)

3. Supervises, instructs, and leads hands-on activities for students, teachers, and volunteers in natural sciences applicable to the ecosystems of assigned sites, including biology, ecology, geology, and history; ensures instructional materials and content are consistent with state curriculum standards and program guidelines and standards; adjusts program activities in response to weather conditions, scheduling, group size problems, adult-student ratios, incomplete visiting school preparation, and other unplanned events; arranges for the needs of students or others with limited mobility; works with teachers and volunteers to resolve student behavior problems; takes appropriate action in the event of a medical emergency or injury.
4. Continuously monitors students to ensure their safety, utilizing group management techniques; coordinates activities and use of facilities with park rangers; interacts with the public to resolve any potential conflicts in site/facilities use.
5. When assigned to the Traveling Scientist program, drives to/from elementary schools throughout Southern California; coordinates daily and monthly schedules with ITO staff and school representatives, when required; communicates school's responsibilities in preparing for the Traveling Scientist program; develops lesson plans and teaches supplementary science education curricula, consistent with Program standards and guidelines and state standards; develops and maintains a variety of instructional materials and aids; cages and transports animals, birds of prey, and other species for use in classroom instruction; develops methods to explain or demonstrate information to students; demonstrates techniques, processes, and methods for students; returns animals to ITO facilities, providing any care required and medical attention when necessary to ensure an animal's health and well-being.
6. Sets up and arranges materials, supplies, and equipment for instructional activities; maintains, repairs, or replaces program equipment and instructional aids as needed.

OTHER DUTIES

1. Drives OCDE vehicles to field locations; performs driver-level safety checks and maintenance of vehicles.
2. Attends a variety of meetings, training sessions, conferences, and workshops.
3. Administers CPR and first aid as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

1. Assigned specialized science subject matter areas, including applicable state and OCDE standards and regulations.
2. Methods, practices, and techniques of improving student science knowledge through specialized lesson plans, teaching techniques, instructional materials, and hands-on activities.
3. Methods and practices of child instruction and tutoring.
4. Correct English usage, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
5. Administrative practices and procedures, including record keeping and filing practices and procedures.
6. CPR and first aid.

Ability to:

1. Perform specialized tasks applicable to instructional subject areas.
2. Operate a computer, other standard office equipment, and specialized equipment and materials.
3. Organize, set priorities, and exercise sound judgment within areas of responsibility.
4. Monitor and control student behavior in both indoor and outdoor settings.
5. Organize and maintain confidential student records and files.
6. Communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
7. Understand and follow written and oral instructions.
8. Prepare and maintain a variety of records, reports, and files.
9. Deal with sensitive and difficult situations.
10. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with OCDE management, administrators, faculty and volunteers from visiting schools, staff, students, and others encountered in the course of work.
11. Must demonstrate attendance sufficient to complete the duties of the position as required.

Education, Training, and Experience:

A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from a four-year college or university with a major in a natural science; and at least one year of experience working with school-age children in an organized educational environment; or an equivalent combination of training and experience. Experience in providing instruction in an outdoors environment is highly desirable.

Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:

A valid California driver's license and the ability to maintain insurability under OCDE's vehicle insurance policy.

Obtain valid CPR and First Aid certifications.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Physical Demands

While performing the duties of this position, an employee is regularly required to stand, walk, and sit; talk or hear, both in person and by telephone; use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects or controls; reach with hands and arms to at or above shoulder level; bend, stoop, push, pull, grasp, squat, kneel, twist, crawl, climb, and balance to access materials or equipment, and lift and or move up to 50 pounds from ground, waist, and chest level. When working in the field, an employee in this class is required to hike over varied terrain which may include gravel, dirt, rocks, mud, ice, and snow at high elevations. Employee will need to hike quickly up to two miles over uneven terrain in emergency situations. Some locations may have stairs and will not have elevators.

Must pass a pre-employment physical examination related to job duties/assignments and in accordance with relevant codes and regulations.

Mental Demands

While performing the duties of this class, the employee is regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret information; analyze and solve instructional and group management problems; observe and interpret students, instructional situations, and potential hazards and sources of injury; use math and mathematical reasoning; learn and apply new information or skills; perform detailed work under intensive deadlines with constant interruptions; and interact with OCDE management, administrators, faculty, and volunteers from visiting schools, staff, students, and others encountered in the course of work.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Employees typically work in an outdoor environment and the noise level can be loud. Employees are exposed to outdoor weather conditions, extreme heat and cold, walk and climb on uneven terrain and may be exposed to wild animals.