



South Carolina Master Naturalist Advanced Training Guidelines

How many hours of advanced training do I need?

As a Master Naturalist, you'll need eight hours each year to maintain certification. These hours can be used against the 30/hours/year of volunteer service. Statewide Master Naturalists are required to take 16 hours per year for certification.

What qualifies as advanced training?

Advanced training opportunities will provide exposure to some aspect of natural history, natural resource management or nature interpretation, including any specific methods or skills used to study these things. Unless otherwise approved, watching an educational TV program, movie or video on a natural history subject does not count as advanced training except when viewed during the course of an approved lecture, workshop or field trip. Travel time to an advanced training event will not count toward volunteer service hours.

Advanced training that teaches skills needed to complete volunteer projects is acceptable if the skills that are taught can be utilized in one of the four primary categories of volunteer service. Examples of some skills that might be needed include trail building, bird identification through song, GIS skills or others.

The four categories of volunteer service projects include:

- ecological services
- citizen science
- education and interpretation
- programmatic needs

Typically the training is acceptable if the focus is South Carolina-specific or southeastern as an alternative. However, additional advanced training on broad topics that might be beneficial to the state might also qualify. Examples of this include training on natural resources that transcend boundaries such as water resource issues, fire as a management tool, etc. The primary concern is demonstration of a direct benefit to the state through the participant.

Who offers advanced training?

Host Sites, locations where Master Naturalists receive their initial training, may offer advanced training. Typically, this training is organized through the State Coordinator's office. Registration for Host Site advanced training is done through the program's website www.clemson.edu/masternaturalist.

Partner organizations may offer advanced training. Registration for this training is usually done by the sponsoring organization.

How do I know if a certain program/training qualifies for advanced training under the SC Master Naturalist Program guidelines?

If the training is conducted by a Host Site, it will be listed as an advanced training option and thus automatically qualifies. If you are interested in advanced training by another organization, these should fulfill the guidelines listed above. If the training is questionable, then please contact the State Coordinator at naturalist@clermson.edu or 864-656-4859.