

# Guidelines for CTMN hours

In answer to questions and confusion about what qualifies at CTMN hours, the officers are issuing the following guidelines:

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## **Non-profit vs. For-profit:**

We are a 501c organization and must follow the government regulations to keep that designation. ALL CTMN volunteer hours must be for non-profit projects and organizations. If your service hours end up making money for a for-profit business, please do not count them for CTMN. That endangers our tax status.

Key: Is someone making money from your service?

Examples:

NO - If you serve at a nursery and recommend patrons use certain plants that they may buy there, do NOT report those hours. The nursery is making money from your service.

YES - If you are docenting at a garden tour and recommend what native plants grow well here, but they have to buy them elsewhere, that counts as CTMN hours.

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## **Meets our Mission:**

Mission Statement: “Texas Master Naturalists are dedicated to the conservation, preservation, and restoration of our natural resources, and promoting ecological education for all. The Texas Master Naturalist organization encourages and supports trained Master Naturalist volunteers in providing community programs and projects that increase appreciation of our natural environment, promote the maintenance of and sustainable use of public open spaces, and protect and preserve native flora and fauna and their habitats. Our mission is to develop a group of well-trained volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our own communities.”

Key: Does it increase appreciation of our natural environment, promote the maintenance of and sustainable use of public open spaces, and protect and preserve native flora and fauna and their habitats?

Examples:

NO - If you serve on your local Parks and Recreation Board, it is admirable community service, but may not address the necessary sustainable natural and native environment.

YES - If you serve on the Board for Ft. Worth Nature Center or Tandy Hills Natural Area, which are both dedicated to preserving the natural native environment.

## **AT or Volunteer:**

Whether your service hours count as volunteer or advanced training (AT) depends on if you are receiving or giving most of the information. AT hours are intended to further your education in the natural realm, where you are a student learning additional information from an expert. Attending a lecture, talk, class or monthly meeting is AT. Volunteer hours are time you are actively engaged in applying your own naturalist knowledge to a project. **Sitting vs. Moving Rule:** If you are passively listening and learning, it is generally AT. If you are doing things and actively moving (building, planting, clearing, etc.) it is volunteer. The sitting vs. moving rule has some exceptions: Field trips to learn bird or plant identification, or habitat characteristics are generally AT. Active participation in a board, planning session or program development is volunteer.

**Key:** Is the major part of the information exchange coming in to me (AT) or being shared by me to others (volunteer)?

Examples:

AT - If you go on one of Jeff Quayle's wildflower identification walks to learn to identify the native plants in our area so you can recognize them yourself and learn general plant characteristics.

Volunteer - If you use the knowledge you've learned on an identification walk to docent a group and identify the native plants in a specific park.

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## **Milestone Pins:**

Milestone pins will no longer be automatically awarded. If you qualify for a milestone pin, please notify the timekeeper that you have reached that level. We are on an honor system; if you feel you qualify for that milestone pin, please request it.

As initial certification is achieved by members throughout the year, their certification status will be reported at monthly meetings and name badges given out at that time. All other pins, awards and name badges will be presented at the annual awards meeting."

Be sure to let the timekeeper know sufficiently in advance to order the appropriate pins.

Milestone Pin Levels:

250 Hours of Service - Bronze

500 Hours of Service - Silver

1,000 Hours of Service - Gold

5,000 Hours of Service - Gold with Diamond-

Initial Certification - completing 40 hours of training, 40 hours of service, and 8 hours of advanced training in the first year

Annual Re-certification Pins - completing, 40 hours of service, and 8 hours of advanced training in the current year