



All Hands Ecology

LIVING WITH LIONS

Lion Ambassador Training in Marin

Dates: Thursday, December 10 and Friday, December 11

Time: 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Place: Lyford House, Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon

We're excited to be expanding the Lion Ambassadors program into Marin County!

What is a Lion Ambassador

Many people in Marin County might be unaware that they share territory with one of America's top predators. As part of the education component of the All Hands Ecology Living with Lions study in collaboration with True Wild Conservation, Lion Ambassadors are educating the community, through visits to school children, teaching about the essential role these apex predators play in the local food web, the survival challenges lions face, the importance of research, and the ways that we can coexist with our wild neighbors. Lessons are designed for 3rd - 5th grade.

Lion Ambassadors visit approximately 50 classrooms/year, reaching over 1000 students annually with multi-media slideshows, discussions and hands on activities to teach about mountain lion research and conservation.

This training is for dedicated volunteers to visit Marin County elementary schools. Becoming a Lion Ambassador requires:

- Observing an elementary class in action prior to the training (if possible)
- Reading various materials provided
- Attending two 4-hour sessions (*Must attend both sessions*)
 - Thursday December 10 and Friday, December 11 from 10 a.m.–2 p.m., Tiburon
- Mentoring with a seasoned Lion Ambassador
- Long-term commitment

For a first-hand account of Lion Ambassadors in action, read our blog post: [Lion ambassadors are building bridges between people and lions](#)

Lion Ambassadors Overview

Our Vision

To live in a world where human beings from all backgrounds enjoy a feeling of connection to the natural world, an understanding of basic ecology, and an awareness of the importance of healthy and functioning ecosystems in each of our lives. We believe that responsible environmental stewardship is rooted in our individual and collective understanding of and affinity for the natural world.

Mountain Lion Education Program Goals

- To develop a sense of curiosity about, connection to and empathy with mountain lions and all our "wild neighbors";
- To increase knowledge about mountain lions;
- To dispel misconceptions and fears about mountain lions;
- To give students access to science in a way that is real, makes sense and uses local, relevant data;
- To empower students to become ambassadors for mountain lions themselves.

Mountain Lion Unit for Teachers

Teachers receive an online Teacher's Folder, containing a series of lessons which they do with their class. After completing these lessons, a Lion Ambassador does a 90 minute session in their classroom. This session is designed to answer students' questions, explore the research and interpret data like a scientist, discuss solutions for co-existence, and have some fun with a game. The session ends by collecting descriptive phrases from the students which the Lion Ambassadors later puts together as a poem and sends back to them.

Lion Ambassador Role

Lion Ambassadors will have a deep knowledge of mountain lions and will work to dispel people's fears and misconceptions about them. Lion Ambassadors will build understanding and create connection between people and lions. Ambassadors are representatives of lions, bringing a lion's perspective to the human communities who share the mountain lions' territories.

Though Lion Ambassadors will focus on the elementary school program they can also serve as ambassadors for mountain lions in their conversations with family, friends and neighbors.

Lion Ambassador Preparation, Training, Mentoring and Commitment

The training and program is designed to be intimate, collaborative, thorough and ongoing.

Preparation: Ambassadors will be expected to observe a class in action prior to the training if logistically possible, and to prepare for the training sessions by reading various material provided and reviewing updates on the Living with Lions Project on the [All Hands Ecology](#) and [True Wild Conservation](#) websites.

Training: There will be an initial training consisting of two 4-hour sessions. Both sessions are essential and must be attended by trainees. Training 1 focusses on background information

about mountain lions and the research of the Living with Lions Project. Training 2 focusses on the classroom session and working with 3rd – 5th graders.

Mentoring: Ambassadors will go through a practice and mentoring process in classrooms, including: observing, assisting, co-leading, leading with mentor present, 'fledging' when ready.

Commitment: We are looking for a long-term commitment, where Lion Ambassadors will go through the training process, review all materials, stay updated and current in addition to being available for an ongoing program of classroom visits. Lion Ambassadors have access to the schedule of dates requested by teachers and sign up for those dates and locations that work for them. Teachers can request sessions any day of the week throughout the school year. It is critical to follow the guidelines regarding sensitive issues laid out in the documentation titled 'Responsibility and confidentiality agreement' which will be provided at the training.

The importance of education to the goals of the Living with Lions project cannot be overstated and we are excited and grateful to be working with you on this. Thank you for your commitment.

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