



**markham**

**NATURE PARK & ARBORETUM**

PO Box 21338, Concord, CA 94521

925-681-2968

[www.markhamarboretum.org](http://www.markhamarboretum.org)

**VOLUNTEER  
ORIENTATION  
MANUAL**

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## **A: WELCOME TO THE MARKHAM**

Dear Volunteer:

I am delighted you have chosen to volunteer with the Markham Regional Arboretum Society. Volunteers are a vital part of achieving our goals of developing and maintaining the Markham Nature Park and Arboretum. I hope you find that your experience here and the work you will be performing fulfilling, rewarding and positive. The following information packet includes details about our organization and the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Administrative Assistant at [nursery@markhamarboretum.org](mailto:nursery@markhamarboretum.org) or the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@markhamarboretum.org](mailto:volunteer@markhamarboretum.org). Once again, welcome and thank you!

Sincerely,  
The Board of MRAS

## **B: ABOUT MARKHAM**

### 1. Mission Statement

In collaboration with the City of Concord and other agencies and organizations, promote the use and enjoyment of Markham Arboretum and Nature Park as a unique place for the display and preservation of trees and shrubs adapted to the inland, maritime influenced Northern California region.

### 2. Short History of Markham

The City of Concord purchased three properties between 1960 and 1983, comprising 16 acres, forming Concord Nature Park. The largest parcel of about 12 acres was purchased from Bea and Ira Markham in 1966. The Park was overseen by members of the Concord City Council as the Trees Committee. In 1975 the name was changed to Markham Arboretum. In 1981 a joint committee of the Concord Garden Club and the Markham Arboretum Society began the formation of a non-profit organization to oversee, develop and maintain the grounds and the City was presented with a Master Plan for the construction and development of the Arboretum. Non-profit status was obtained from the State in 1982 and in 1996 the name was changed to the Markham Regional Arboretum Society (MRAS). Today the property includes a garden center and nursery, 600 trees that traverse both sides of Galindo Creek, as well as a labeled Tree Walk of 40 marked specimens. The International Gardens were conceptualized in 1987, with construction beginning in 1994, including trees, shrubs and plants from North Africa, Australia, New Zealand, South America, the Mediterranean, Asia, California and the Southwest U.S. The City installed and irrigated the central lawn, irrigated the International Garden and built the Bud Hansen Wisteria Arbor. In 2002 the International Garden opened to the public. Many years of dedicated volunteer vision and effort, along with public and private funds have gone into making the Markham Arboretum and Nature Park the exceptional grounds you see and enjoy today.

### 3. Objectives/Goals (from MRAS Strategic Plan, updated 2013)

- a. Maintain the Markham Nature Park to display plants best suited to this region's climate, and encourage the presence of indigenous wildlife.
  1. Create an irrigation plan for the remaining garden areas (Europe, Mediterranean, North America)
  2. Develop a maintenance plan to reduce weeds and permit timely pruning of shrubs and trees
  3. Encourage presence of indigenous wildlife with the creation of a bee/pollinator garden.

- b. Develop and preserve significant and historic plantings in the Nature Park area.
  - 1. Survey Park to determine which trees have died, which need ID tags replaced and which need pruning, etc.
  - 2. Replace ID tags for trees and other plant ID signs as needed.
  - 3. Determine replacement tree care needs.
  - 4. Create map of International Garden with plant labels.
  - 5. Provide educational brochures for Arboretum and Park visitors with plant collection history, cultural and botanical significance of plants.
  - 6. Create and install interpretive signs.
  
- c. Create an environment and atmosphere that encourages membership and volunteerism.
  - 1. Identify organizational needs and recruit volunteers for the same (i.e., sales)
  - 2. Recruit a publicity manager
  - 3. Create and implement a Publicity Plan for the MRAS and Park.
  - 4. Provide workshops, in coordination with plant sales, on gardening, horticulture, conservation, natural history, with a bias toward environmentally responsible topics.
  - 5. Schedule an annual community and member activity, Picnic in White.
  - 6. Create a process for strengthening the partnership between MRAS and the community gardeners.
  - 7. Create ways to encourage volunteer and membership involvement in monthly Board meetings.
  - 8. Propose activities to enhance volunteer and/or membership.
  
- d. Provide a functioning and efficient organizational structure to oversee Markham activities and ensure fiscal responsibility.
  - 1. Develop and adopt a strategic plan for the next 2-3 years.
  - 2. Review and revise description of Board executive committee and chairperson duties.
  - 3. Develop a succession plan for expiring Board members.
  - 4. Identify organizations (such as CCWD, EBMUD, other gardens and arboretums, garden clubs) that may be willing to co-sponsor maintenance, educational, planning and/or assessment activities.
  - 5. Purchase and/or propagate plants for the purpose of income.
  - 6. Develop an operational calendar.
  - 7. Create list of volunteer and grant eligible needs and projects for which we have appropriate staffing/resources.
  - 8. Create donor recognition plan.
  - 9. Create policy for endowment and restricted funds.
  - 10. Redo aging irrigation system within the nursery.

#### 4. Impact

##### a. To the community:

1. Provide and sustain 16 acres of maintained public parkland and landscaped gardens.
2. Develop and maintain trees and plants native to other parts of the world that will thrive in N. CA soils and climates.
3. Educate the community about plants and trees native to CA and other parts of the world.

##### b. To the individual:

1. Pride in assisting in the development and maintenance of the Park and International Gardens for public enjoyment.
2. Opportunity to learn horticultural skills, plus gain access to a network of rich contacts in gardening, landscaping and public works.

#### 5. Board, Staff and Volunteers

##### a. Board Members

1. A volunteer Board of 10-13 members runs MRAS.
2. MRAS runs the Park and International Garden in partnership with the City of Concord.
3. The Board has an executive committee consisting of a President, 2 Vice Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer.
4. Project committees are formed as needed from all existing Board members.
5. Board meetings are held monthly, currently Wednesday evenings from 7-9.

##### b. Staff

1. MRAS has 2 part-time employees, a nursery manager and an administrative assistant.
2. The nursery manager (NM), [nursery@markhamarboretum.org](mailto:nursery@markhamarboretum.org), works a full day on Tuesdays, plus 6-7 Saturday sales and other hours as required.
3. The administrative assistant, [info@markhamarboretum.org](mailto:info@markhamarboretum.org), works Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9-12.

c. Volunteers

1. MRAS is run primarily with volunteer effort, from the Board to the Tuesday volunteer workers.
2. The Tuesday volunteers maintain and propagate the nursery for Tuesday morning plant sales, plus 6-7 Saturday fundraising sales throughout the year.
3. The Tuesday volunteers also weed the International Garden and propagate from the foliage found there, and plant selected materials directly in the Gardens with supervision of the NM.
4. Please contact the administrative assistant to contact other Tuesday volunteers.

6. Emergency Procedures

- a. Report or call the Concord police if you observe any crimes in progress, including problems with people, in the park.

7. Hours of Operation

- a. The Park and International Gardens are open to the public every day from dawn to dusk.
- b. The Nursery is open to the public every Tuesday from 9-12 and 6 Saturday sales from spring to fall.
- c. Volunteers work every Tuesday, between 9-12 and assist at scheduled Saturday sales, between 9-1 and other days as requested by the NM.

8. Parking

- a. Tuesday volunteers may park inside the gates to the nursery on Tuesdays.
- b. There is a main parking lot for use of the Park and International Gardens, which is open from dawn to dusk.

9. Communications

- a. All MRAS members receive periodic e-mail newsletters discussing current events and/or highlighting some aspect of work in progress and/or new plant materials.
- b. All MRAS volunteers receive a weekly e-mail newsletter from the NM, highlighting the tasks for the next Tuesday and/or other topics of interest.
- c. MRAS maintains an informational website at [www.markhamarboretum.org](http://www.markhamarboretum.org).

## C. VOLUNTEER SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### 1. Why Volunteer

- a. To do something you love.
- b. To give back to your community.
- c. To test or challenge yourself.
- d. To share your passion.
- e. To feel useful or needed.
- f. To use existing skills or develop new ones.
- g. To have fun.
- h. To meet new people, make new friends.
- i. To help others.
- j. To enjoy a beautiful park.

### 2. Why Volunteer with Markham

- a. To allow this organization to survive and function as an all volunteer organization.
- b. To develop, maintain and preserve the unique Nature Park and International Gardens for public use, education and enjoyment.
- c. To learn about trees, shrubs and plants native to other parts of the world, but which thrive in local climate conditions.
- d. Love of gardening, to learn new eco-friendly techniques and about unusual and native plant materials.
- e. To propagate plant material for Saturday sales which support the financial needs of developing and maintaining the Nature Park and International Gardens.

### 3. Paid Staff and Volunteer Relations

- a. Staff and volunteers work in tandem toward the common goals and objectives of MRAS.
- b. Volunteers do not replace or displace paid positions.
- c. Experience and insights of staff and volunteers are equally valued and feedback about MRAS is encouraged from both.
- d. We encourage feedback by speaking with the Volunteer Coordinator, phoning or emailing suggestions to the President or speaking with another Board member.

#### 4. Markham's Commitment to Volunteers

##### a. MRAS Standards for Volunteer Involvement

1. The MRAS Board and staff acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving MRAS' purpose and mission.
2. Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of MRAS.
3. Policies and procedures are adopted by MRAS to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.
4. Program Administration: MRAS has a volunteer coordinator responsible for the volunteer program.
5. Volunteer assignments address the mission or purpose of MRAS and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and backgrounds of the volunteer and MRAS.
6. Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices. Each volunteer receives training customized to the volunteer work and individual needs of the volunteer, as needed.
7. Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.
8. The contributions of volunteers are deeply appreciated. The organization hopes you will feel welcome and thanked for all your hard work.
9. The impact and contribution of volunteers and the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.

#### 5. Personnel policies

- a. An initial interview and a quick annual review of nursery procedures will be held for each volunteer.
- b. Safety Procedures for Volunteers:
  1. Do not handle chemicals without instruction.
  2. Wear gloves whenever possible.
  3. Use perlite with care; do not inhale dust.
  4. Use all gardening tools with caution and care.
  5. Do not lift beyond your capabilities.
  6. Do not use ladders untended.
  7. Use care when bending, kneeling, digging, etc.
  8. Do not try and perform any task you are unsure of or are unsuited for.
  9. Let us know if you have any physical limitations.

- c. Volunteer Recognition and Benefits
  - 1. An annual appreciation event, currently Picnic in White, is held each October for volunteers and members.
  - 2. An annual volunteer potluck is held in December.
- 6. Liability Waiver
  - a. All volunteers must sign and have on file with the administrative assistant, a Release from Liability Waiver. Included as Appendix A.
- 7. Job Descriptions
  - a. MRAS job descriptions are available as a separate handout.

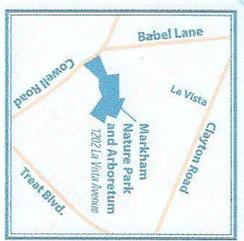
January 24, 2014  
Version 1



Please begin your tour in the Shade Garden on the south end of the parking lot at the end of La Vista Avenue.

- 1 • *Scarlet Oak* *Quercus scarnea*
- 2 • *Western Redbud* *Cercis occidentalis*
- 3 • *European Redbud* *Cercis canadensis*
- 4 • *Copper Beech* *Fagus sylvatica*
- 5 • *Canary Island Pine* *Pinus canariensis*
- 6 • *Red Oak* *Quercus rubra*
- 7 • *Himalayan Birch* *Betula utilis* var. *japonensis*
- 8 • *Peacham Parrotia* *Parrotia persica*
- 9 • *Scout Gum / Tulepopal* *Myrica spicata*
- 10 • *Coast Live Oak* *Quercus agrifolia*
- 11 • *Jeffrey Pine* *Pinus jeffreyi*
- 12 • *Hudson Stone Pine* *Pinus banksiana*
- 13 • *Incense cedar* *Calocedrus decurrens*
- 14 • *Buryny Birch* *Betula utilis* ssp. *birulae*
- 15 • *American Linden* *Tilia americana*
- 16 • *Japanese Liquidambar* *Eurotia japonica*
- 17 • *Valley Oak* *Quercus laevis*
- 18 • *European Horns Chestnut* *Amygdalus hippocastanum*
- 19 • *Chinese Yellow Tree Sapium* *Sapindum chinensis*
- 20 • *Golden Rain Tree* *Kalmeghiana parviflora*
- 21 • *Silver Dollar Gum* *Eucalyptus polygama*
- 22 • *Catalina Ironwood* *Lyonothamnus floribundus* ssp. *californicus*
- 23 • *Chinese Parasol Tree* *Fernandesia stipularis*
- 24 • *Zelkova* *Zelkova serrata*
- 25 • *California Bay* *Umbellularia californica*
- 26 • *Coastal Pine* *Pinus contorta*
- 27 • *Beardwood/Side Oak* *Quercus agrifolia* ssp. *oblongifolia*
- 28 • *Allegheny Pine* *Pinus strobus*
- 29 • *Short Dipped Pine* *Pinus sabiniana*
- 30 • *Interspersed Row Elder* *Sambucus racemosa* ssp. *racemosa*
- 31 • *Bottle Tree* *Brasylmonea populifera*
- 32 • *Chitalpa* x *Chitalpa lobata* ssp. *californica*
- 33 • *Alder Cedar* *Cedrus atlantica* ssp. *glauca*
- 34 • *London Plane Tree* *Platanus x acerifolia*
- 35 • *California Buckeye* *Aesculus californica*
- 36 • *Coast Oak* *Quercus laevis*
- 37 • *Silk Oak* *Grevillea robusta*
- 38 • *Chinese Pistache* *Pistacia chinensis*
- 39 • *California Pepper Tree* *Schinus molle*
- 40 • *Carob* *Ceratinia siliqua*
- 41 • *Holly Oak* *Quercus laevis*
- 42 • *Flaxen Popcorn* *Malbaica linearifolia*
- 43 • *Blue Oak* *Quercus douglasii*
- 44 • *Deodar Cedar* *Cedrus deodara*
- 45 • *Honey Spruce* *Picea alata*

**Climate Conditions in Concord, California**  
 Latitude: 37° 57' 30" North  
 Longitude: 122° 07' 15" West  
 Elevation: 140-160 feet above sea level  
 Mean Temperatures:  
 • Summer: highs average 80-93°  
 • Winter: lows average 30-39°  
 • with occasional frosts to 11°  
 • Average Annual Precipitation: 20 inches  
 USDA Plant Zone: 9  
 Sunset Plant Zone: 14



**Markham**  
 NATURE PARK & ARBORETUM  
**Tree Walk**

## Appendix A: Liability Waiver

Markham Regional Arboretum Society  
PO Box 21338, Concord, CA 94521  
925-681-2968  
www.markhamarboretum.org

**HOLD HARMLESS WAIVER AND ASSUMPTION OF THE RISK**

In consideration of the City of Concord accepting my services as a volunteer, I hereby waive and release the City of Concord, its departments, officers, employees or agents, and the Markham Regional Arboretum Society from any and all claims for damages or loss to my person or property which may be caused by a negligent act or failure to act of the City of Concord, its officers, employees, or agents, and the Markham Regional Arboretum Society in connection with and arising out of my volunteer services in and for the Markham Nature Park and Arboretum, to wit:

**Miscellaneous work**

- I agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Concord and Markham Regional Arboretum Society for any loss suffered by the City of Concord or Markham Regional Arboretum Society arising out of my negligence or willful misconduct in the course of providing volunteer services as stated above.
- I hereby assume all risk of physical or bodily injury or property damage I may suffer in the course of providing volunteer services as stated above.
- I have read the above waiver and release and understand that I assume all the risk, directly or indirectly, in the course of providing volunteer services as stated above.
- I agree that this waiver, release, and assumption of risk are binding on my heirs, successors, and assigns.

**PLEASE PRINT INFORMATION BELOW**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes! Please add my **email address** to the Markham Email List: \_\_\_\_\_