



Become an Astronomy Volunteer (VIP) at Cedar Breaks!

Cedar Breaks National Monument is seeking enthusiastic astronomy volunteers (Astronomy VIPs) for the summer 2017 season. Come be part of an enthusiastic team dedicated to preserving our dark night skies for future generations!

At an elevation of 10,350', Cedar Breaks conducts the highest regularly scheduled astronomy programs in the National Park Service. The high altitude, clear air, and dark skies make Cedar Breaks an excellent place to educate the public about the night sky. Cedar Breaks hosts weekly "star parties" during the summer season (Memorial Day to Labor Day) that are often attended by more than 200 visitors. The monument also has a robust astronomy & dark sky outreach program that educates citizens throughout southwestern Utah about the importance of preserving dark night skies.

Cedar Breaks is seeking volunteers who are willing to commit to at least four weeks of service (shorter term or intermittent volunteers are also needed, but no housing will be provided) during one of the following time periods:

- **Memorial Day - early July**
- **mid-August – mid-September.**

Exact start and end dates are negotiable. No stipend is provided but free housing is available. A free RV site with hookups may also be available. All volunteers will receive training on the monument and its resources, a uniform, and the satisfaction of helping educate the public about the night sky and how to protect it.

Responsibilities:

Astronomy VIPs are an essential part of Cedar Breaks' summer operations. Volunteers will support both the National Park Service mission and our goal of night sky protection by:

- Setting up and operating telescopes during evening astronomy programs
- Leading daytime solar viewing sessions
- Making informal visitor contacts about night skies and other monument resources

- Assisting with astronomy program logistics
- Occasionally helping staff the visitor center information desk.

The typical workweek will be 30 hours, but will vary from week to week. Depending on the interests and skills of the volunteer, additional opportunities to get involved in the monument's dark sky outreach & education program may be available. Volunteers may give talks on dark sky preservation to local community groups, help develop standards-based curriculum on dark skies, and assist with the development of the monument's new "Master Astronomer Program."

Qualifications:

Cedar Breaks is seeking volunteers with a scientific knowledge of astronomy **and** a passion for communicating it to the public.

The ideal applicant will be outgoing, flexible, self-motivated, knowledgeable, approachable, and a good public speaker. A willingness to learn about and utilize NPS interpretation techniques is also required. A working knowledge of how to operate a variety of telescopes is highly desired, although staff can provide training if necessary. At a minimum, applicant should be familiar with the night sky and be able to readily identify and point out prominent stars and constellations.

Volunteers are welcome to use the monument's telescopes or bring their own (although the monument is not responsible for damages to personal equipment). Cedar Breaks owns several telescopes, including Celestron 8" and 11" SCTs, two 4" SCTs, a 10" Dobsonian, and two pairs of 25x100 astronomy binoculars.

Living and Working at Cedar Breaks:

Cedar Breaks is a small but very busy park with an annual visitation of ~750,000. More than 7000 people attended a star party or solar viewing session in 2016, so the volunteer will be working in a busy and fast-paced environment.

Astronomy volunteers will live in private quarters within seasonal staff housing at an elevation of 10,350'. Altitude sickness is a possibility. Limited services are available in Brian Head (10 minutes) and full services are available in Cedar City (35 minutes) and St. George (1.25 hours). Daytime temperatures at the monument range from 40-80°F, with nighttime lows ranging from 20-50°F. Weather is highly variable at this altitude and can change in an instant. Snow is often still on the ground when the monument opens Memorial Day weekend. Cell phone reception is limited but can usually be obtained near the rim of the amphitheater. Limited internet access may be available at the Ranger Station.

Cedar Breaks is surrounded by the Dixie National Forest which offers a wide array of recreational opportunities. Cedar City is home to a variety of festivals and attractions, including the Utah Shakespeare Festival, the Southern Utah Museum of Art, and Southern Utah University. Many national and state parks are located within a few hours of Cedar Breaks, including Bryce Canyon NP, Zion NP, Grand Canyon NP, Snow Canyon State Park, and Capitol Reef NP.

How to apply:

To be considered for this volunteer opportunity, please download and fill out the

[**Astronomy Volunteer Application PDF**](#)

[**Astronomy Volunteer Application Word Document**](#)

Send questions and applications to:

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