

## **Volunteering Opportunities @ Natutarian Farm & Experience Centre, Karjat**

Want to experience a self-sustainable permaculture farm near Mumbai /Pune and help it flourish further?

At Natutarian Farm & Experience Centre, we are excited to share our life with those looking for a peaceful, natural co-existence with nature. Located close to the most pristine surroundings of the Western Ghats, in a green zone, this is a 4-acre property, about 1.5-2 hours away from the cities of Mumbai and Pune, near the well-connected town of Karjat, in Raigad District of Maharashtra.



*Picturesque Natural Views @Natutarian Farm*

Set up about 4 years back, the farm has a well-managed and growing permaculture food forest with house and huts, with robust supporting infrastructure such as solar power, overhead tanks, and water management systems, vegetable beds, plantations, garden, a functional outdoor café, adequate accommodation, and cute farm animals to keep you company.

We are looking for like-minded nature enthusiasts, with a variety of skill-sets, who will work with nature to help us with plantation, farming, carpentry, natural building and more, and contribute to achieve self-sustainability, while learning and enjoying in the process and building their credentials.

For volunteers, we offer free **accommodation and plant-based food**.

### **Volunteering Activities**

This is a fully-functional farm, where the permaculturist owners are residing most of the time, and are fully involved in farm management activities, with the support of some local villagers. We are now looking to do progressive enhancements at the farm, with the help of volunteers.

**For 2023, we are looking for volunteer contribution with these skill sets:**

- **Farming & Gardening the Permaculture Way**

The work comprises tree and seed plantation, developing a gardening landscape, tending to vegetable beds, de-weeding, mulching, harvesting, watering trees, composting, general clearing up, and other tasks associated with permaculture farming, and also small DIY gardening projects to improve the overall aesthetics of the place.

- **Carpentry / Bamboo Working**

We are looking for those with experience in carpentry or something similar (and experience in use of natural materials like bamboo preferable), to help us build Tree Houses, Bamboo Huts, furniture making, and DIY décor items.

- **Natural Building (Sustainable Architects)**

We are looking for young architect volunteers with the passion and enthusiasm to build natural structures such as Cob Oven, Amphitheatre, Dorms, Tree Houses, and Bamboo Huts, using local available material, which will also help them build their portfolio and credentials, and also to improve the overall aesthetics of the place.

- **Photographers & Videographers**

We plan to capture the progress and method during the course of the above-mentioned DIY projects, and also work on the Natutarian Documentary, to help bring more awareness amongst city folks, on natural ways of self-sustainable living, food growing, and permaculture farming. For this, we invite volunteers with experience in photography and videography. In addition to this, these volunteers would need to assist in ongoing tasks, on need and skill basis.

- **Art Projects**

This would include Painting / Pottery / Weaving/ Creative Artefacts

- **Content Creation / Social Media Management**

Looking for volunteers in content creation and social media management, with a hybrid stay option (partly remote and partly residential).

- **General Maintenance & Housekeeping**

We have opportunities for nature enthusiasts to help with farm maintenance, plant-based cooking and other activities. With a varied type of ongoing work at the Natutarian Farm, this is a great learning ground for them to hone their skills in permaculture, architecture, natural healing and natural building.



*Volunteer Accommodation*

## What to Expect

### **The Farm**

The Natutarian Farm & Experience Centre is located on the foothills in Karjat, in a very serene, natural environment full of greenery, adjacent to a reserved forest. It overlooks a beautiful 270-degree view of pictorial hills and seasonal cascading waterfalls, as well as a fresh water river flowing close by.

The farm has a naturally preserved forested area, food forest with a variety of fruit trees, vegetable beds / melons, a kitchen garden, herb / flower garden, outdoor kitchen, natural ponds, a towering Machan, huts, tents, toilets, and residential and supporting structures. This natural ecosystem supports human living in a happy, peaceful locale, with least damage to its immediate environment.



*The bounties of nature @Natutarian Farm*

The farm is powered by solar panels; all of the lights, borewells and other systems run 24 hours on solar power. There is a big stainless steel overhead tank which supplies water for the entire farm needs all through. This is a gated and well-fenced farm, buzzing with many ongoing activities. We are constantly working on natural enhancements, seasonal plantation, natural buildings and other similar activities here.

To bring in elements of fun, we plan to do joint cookouts, dabble with DIY pottery, creative art, décor and painting projects. We play with the cutest of cats, Tochi and Chibi, run around with the chickens and ducks, soak in the fresh morning sunlight and air, and do so much more.



*Adorable farm-mates*

## Safety Measures

Keeping all safety measures in mind, the farm has a sturdy 12-foot fencing across its boundaries, and a secure gate at the entrance and the backside. The farm area is fully covered by CCTV cameras. The owners stay at the premises most of the time, and there is a dedicated day caretaker, and a night watchman at the farm, to ensure further security.

## How to Get Here

Karjat is well-connected with the towns of Mumbai and Pune, by bus, train and road. Reaching the Natutarian Farm takes about 20 minutes from Karjat Town, which is well connected to Mumbai and Pune through main highways and well-maintained roads.

From the station or Karjat Town, one can easily get a shared/ private auto rickshaw, depending on availability and convenience, till the Natutarian Farm, which will take about 20 - 30 minutes to reach.

**Farm Location:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/pz4JuvntZwY3zm6x6>

**Address:** Natutarian Farmstead, 71/1/A, Humgaon, next to Vajinath Village, via Tata Power Road, Karjat, Raigad Distt, Maharashtra.

**Contact Us at:**

**Email:** [natutarian@gmail.com](mailto:natutarian@gmail.com)

**Whatsapp/ Call:** +91-7045004600

**Arrival Time:** On your first day (or when traveling during your days off from the volunteering work), please reach the farm between 10 AM - 6 PM, and not beyond that, as getting the conveyance from Karjat town to the farm could be a challenge, and also cost much more.

## Some Guidelines for Volunteers

**Food** - Volunteers will be provided with uncooked foodgrains and farm grown / locally grown vegetables / fruits as per availability, and cooking equipment equivalent to two to three meals a day per individual. Volunteers will have to cook food for themselves. However, the hosts also cook and share cooked meal with the volunteers sometimes during lunch hours. Being a plant-based vegetarian farm, we encourage cooking and eating only plant-based meals.

**Free Accommodation** – We offer separate accommodation for our male and female volunteers. This will be in the nicely made wood and metal hut, tents, or at the farmhouse, basis availability. If there is a couple, the couple can be given the same room to share.

Mattresses, pillows, quilts, and mosquito nets could also be provided, if needed. However, you could also carry your own sleeping bags, pillows etc.

**Power supply & Internet** – The farm runs on solar power, so you will have access to electricity and water through the day.



*Isn't volunteering fun!?*

Most mobile connections get adequate signals in the outdoor spaces at the farm. WiFi access is also available in the café area, from 9 AM to 10 PM.

### Work Policy

We are inviting volunteers to help with the activities explained above.

#### **Contribution Timings**

Though we encourage free-flowing work contribution, as per the convenience and preference of the individual; however, we expect the individual to contribute about 25 hours per week to the work activities.

As per the climate, the suggested timings are:

#### **For a 5-day volunteering week:**

**Summers:      Morning - 7 to 10 AM      Evening - 5 to 7 PM**

**Winters:      Morning - 8 to 11 AM      Evening - 4 to 6 PM**

Alternatively, volunteers can choose their work contribution timings for 5 hours in the morning (from 7 AM to 12 PM), and can have the rest of the day to themselves.

**This does not include the time spent on cooking for your own meals.**

**For the rest of the daytime, people are free to spend time playing with animals, spending time on the Machan, reading, or indulging in personal activities.**

#### **Minimum Stay**

We require a minimum of 1 week for volunteers coming to work with us. The maximum duration of the stay will vary based on the understanding between the host and volunteers, as per

requirements. This is to ensure that the time invested in on-the-job training by us, and the learning time spent by the individual, are both well utilized.

There will be a weekly discussion of the contribution done by volunteers with the founders. If the contributions are mutually acceptable and both are satisfied, then the volunteer can continue to stay if s/he wishes to, provided there are tasks to be achieved. In case visible gaps are observed in the contribution by the volunteers, and their efforts are not in line with the policy as mentioned, then the volunteers will have to seek other opportunities outside.

### **Age Group**

We would prefer the age range of volunteers between 18-40 years. However, a senior person bringing in specific skills and experiences would also be entertained.

### **What to Carry**

**Photo IDs** - Please carry any 1 original Government ID for verification purposes (Aadhar Card, Passport, or Driving License, or any other Government ID with your permanent address).

**Foreign nationals need to carry original Passport and Visa for verification purposes.**

**Experience / Qualification Certificates** – such as Permaculture, Architecture certification etc.

Comfortable shoes for farm work

Towels, hats, clothing

### **NOTE:**

- Under no circumstances, the **consumption of any intoxicating drugs** of any kind such as alcohol, cigarettes, bidis, marijuana or any such drugs / chemicals shall be done at the Natutarian Farmstead premises.

Even after the days off, when volunteers are returning to the farm, they are expected to not have indulged in intoxication of any kind.

- This is an organic and plant-based (pure vegetarian in the real sense) place. No animals-based foods (Meat, eggs, milk, honey) are consumed here. You are requested not to use any animal-based and processed foods from outside, as we encourage people to consume only whole-foods-plant-based organic food in this premises, for health and environmental protection.
- Please do **not to consume factory made, chemical laden hygiene products (such as soaps, shampoo, toothpaste, oils)** brought from outside.
- We encourage usage of water jets in the commode in the washroom, as we consider toilet paper environment unfriendly and unhygienic. However, if someone cannot do without it, then we can make arrangements for it in exceptional cases.

- Natutarian Farmstead being a food forest and having some area preserved as a natural forest, has occasional or **rare incidences of snake sightings**. Hence, you are requested to watch your step when walking in the food forest or natural forest, and not walk in these areas after sunset, to avoid any accidents. This is to ensure that no animal or human life is impacted adversely. Creatures such as snakes do not harm the humans unless provoked, cornered or accidentally stepped upon, as humans are not their natural preys.

Once provoked or stepped upon, they might bite in self-defense. However, not all snakes are venomous, majority snakes are non -venomous and in fact part of natural ecosystem which help farmers, and in many cases, they only dry bite in self-defense, which is not as harmful. However, in an exceptional scenario when such as case happens, the person has to be kept calm and taken to a nearby govt hospital in Karjat Town, without being given any food or anything to consume. The Natutarian Farmstead Management is not responsible for such accidents, as, in natural surroundings, the person him/herself has to be mindful of the guidelines and caution shared here.