



The Hidden Orchard

Volunteer Welcome Guide

Welcome to The Hidden Orchard

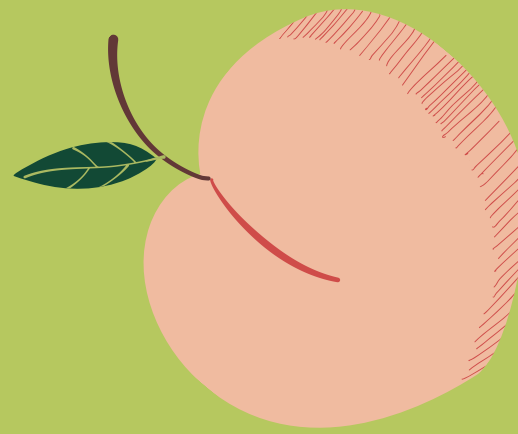
Thank you for registering as a volunteer with The Hidden Orchard! We are an entirely volunteer-run organisation, and we appreciate your interest in joining us.

On the following pages you'll find some important things that we want you to know as a Hidden Orchard volunteer.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions.



How do harvest work?




You'll receive an email from us each time we have a new harvest opportunity. In our busy season, there can be 2 or 3 harvests per day. Choose any harvest that you would like to join, and book a ticket through the link provided in the email.

Who runs the harvests?

Our Harvest Leaders are all skilled volunteers and they'll meet you at the harvest location. When you arrive at the harvest site, the Leader will explain to all the volunteers what and how to harvest, safe use of any tools or equipment, and manage weighing and distribution of the fruit.


Listen carefully to any safety information or instruction provided by the Harvest Leader, please only pick where you have been asked to pick.





**If you find that you can't make it
to a harvest, please let your
Harvest Leader know as soon as
possible!**

**There's often a waiting list of
volunteers who want to join the
harvest.**



Can I bring....



a friend?

Friends are always welcome, however they must register as a volunteer with The Hidden Orchard first, and then book their own ticket using the link in the email (it's fine to share the link once they are a registered volunteer).

my child?

Some harvests are more suitable for children than others – we provide general information in our harvest emails about the location, however, we have not completed a full assessment of risks.

If you decide to bring children along, you are always responsible for their safety and supervision for the safety of the area and homeowner's property.

my dog?

We don't encourage pets at harvests. The tree owner may have their own pets, or may not want animals coming into their garden.



Is it hard work? How fit should I be?

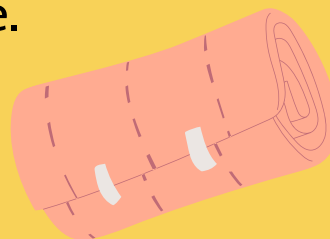
Volunteers of all ages and fitness levels are welcome at harvests. We don't expect anyone to undertake anything they are not physically comfortable doing.

Know your limits, and volunteer safely – you don't need to prove anything or wear yourself out during the harvest. Let your Harvest Leader know if you need to stop or take a break at any time.

What if I (or someone else) get injured while harvesting?

You are always responsible for your own insurance cover for any illness or injury arising from providing volunteer services to The Hidden Orchard. The Hidden Orchard and Ballarat Permaculture Guild, and their members, are not legally responsible for any injuries you suffer using their equipment or while providing volunteer services.

You also accept responsibility for the safety of other persons participating and any injury occurring as a result of your careless act, omission or negligence.



What do I need to wear and bring?

It's important to dress appropriately for the weather and the task at hand. We suggest bringing a sunhat, sunglasses and sunscreen as well as wearing long sleeves / long pants for sun protection and to minimise scratches if you're harvesting in close quarters with a tree or shrub!

Closed-toe shoes or boots are essential to protect your feet, and a pair of gardening gloves are useful too.

Don't forget to bring a water bottle so you can stay hydrated – harvesting can be hot and thirsty work.

Your harvest emails will include a reminder on everything you'll need to bring.



What about ladders and other equipment?

The Hidden Orchard will provide any equipment needed, though you are welcome to bring anything you think may prove useful.



If you can't, or don't want, to go up a ladder, you can still be part of a harvest – we've got stick pickers that allow you to harvest high fruit from the ground when everything that can be reached by hand is harvested.

Please be mindful of your safety when using any equipment:

- Ladders should be placed on firm ground – ask a fellow volunteer to hold the ladder securely if necessary
- Always face the ladder and use both hands to climb up and down
- Keep three points of contact on the ladder at all times – both feet and a hand
- Always hold on with one hand, and never reach too far to either side or to the rear
- Be aware of other volunteers around you and leave plenty of space, especially when using stick pickers or pruning equipment

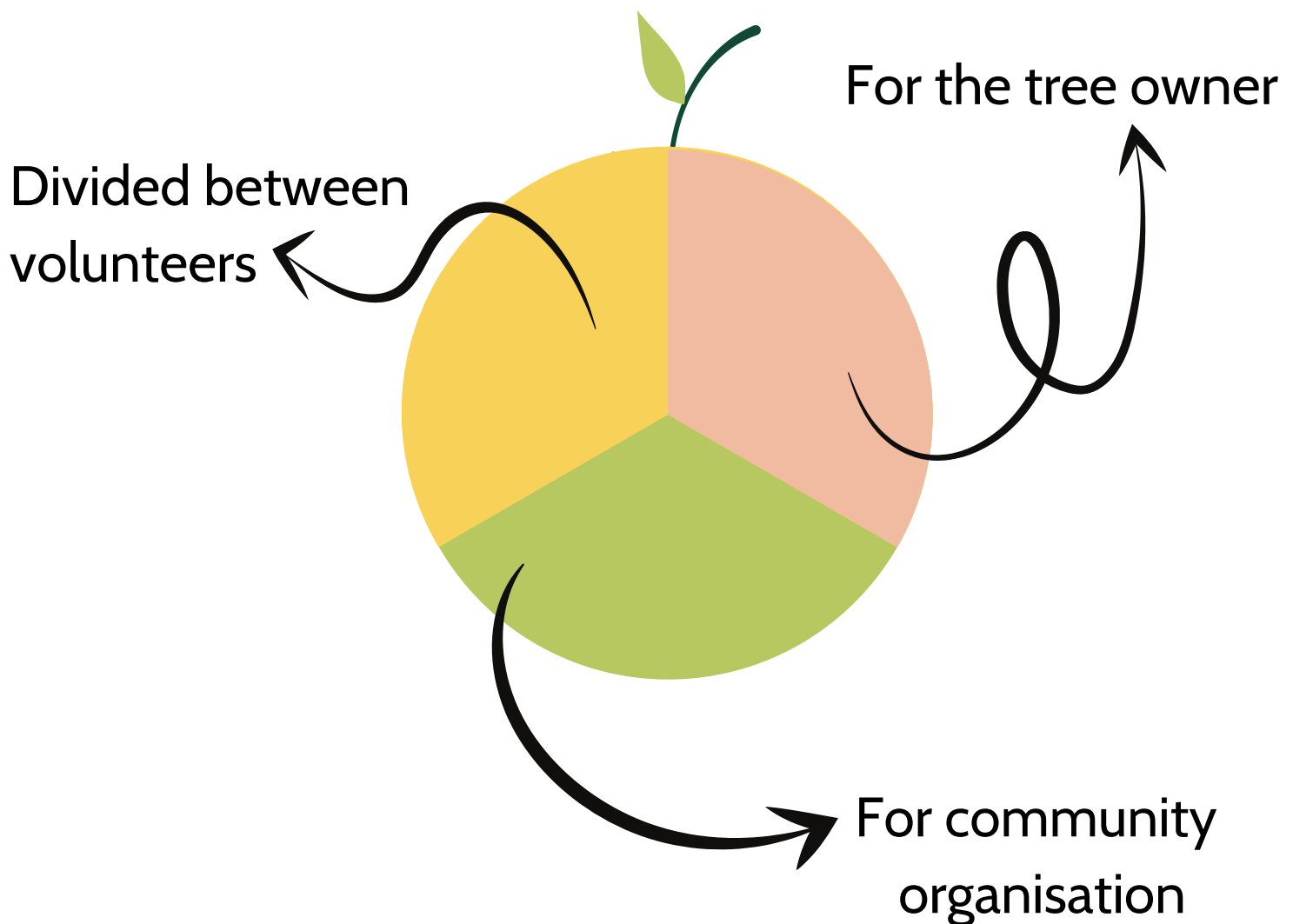
**Remember harvesting is not a race
– The Hidden Orchard is also a social
activity.**

**Take your time and take care to
volunteer safely. Always ask your
Harvest Leader for help if you are not
sure how to use equipment or
harvest safely.**



How is the harvest shared?

As a harvest volunteer, you will have the opportunity to share in a third of the fruit harvested each time. The rest of the fruit is shared between the tree owner and our charitable partners. If you know of a good cause that would like to receive fruit, you can encourage them to [register on our website](#).





Respecting our tree owners

Our private tree owners generously allow us access to their property, and it's important that we respect their garden and property.

Don't wander into areas of the garden or house uninvited, and please follow any directions in relation to parking so we don't upset neighbours.



A note on COVID restrictions

We follow all current protocols required by the government. Please bring a mask and observe any current social distancing requirements. Hand sanitiser will be provided by Harvest Leaders.

If we need to cancel a harvest, we will contact you to let you know.

And of course, please cancel your participation by contacting the Harvest Leader if you feel unwell or have any symptoms.



**See you at
the harvest!**

