



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Conservation Educator

DEPARTMENT: Conservation Education

JOB RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to: Curator of Conservation & Education

Supervises: N/A

BASIC FUNCTION: This position connects guests to animals and nature by providing conservation driven educational programs, enriching guest experiences, and contributions to conservation science. Educators present programs for all ages, engage guests during interactive animal/habitat interpretation, provide mentorship for volunteers, help plan educational events, as well as research and write education material. Educators operate in a fast-paced work environment and must be able to adapt to changing needs while receiving individual/on-going assignments from the Curator of Conservation & Education, who defines standard operating procedures, objectives, tasks, priorities, deadlines, and assists with unusual situations that do not have a clear precedent. This seasonal position is part time and requires 20-35 hours of work per week.

PANDEMIC UPDATE: We are striving to put our employee health and safety first with daily, mandatory facial coverings/temperature checks, socially distanced markers, hand health and other safety measures during the global pandemic to ensure a safe work environment for team members and animals. Operational restrictions due to the pandemic may impact duties and responsibilities as noted below when followed by a **P**.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Attend all required trainings (interpretation skills, conservation, zoo history, animal areas, on-line coursework) and be proficient in communicating learned material and utilizing interpretive techniques.
2. Research and write educational materials such as interpretation worksheets, animal fact sheets, display information, web content, and materials for educators (lesson plans, presentation content, etc.).
3. Actively serve as an animal/habitat interpreter, oversee volunteer Naturalists, Interns and mentor Junior Zoo Keepers. **P**

4. Present on-site educational programming including classes, Zoo Camp, Critter Chats with biological artifacts. **P**
5. Lead on-site educational tours for school field trips and guest tours. **P**
6. Assist with Zoo2U educational outreach programs presenting biological artifacts and possibly ambassador animals (if certified). **P**
7. May receive training in handling and presenting ambassador animals. **P**
8. Assist in the planning and implementation of animal event days and special events. **P**
9. Receive training on Education Office operation, answer phone, reply to emails and follow up on messages.
10. Maintains a professional appearance in proper designated uniform during regular zoo hours.
11. Maintains professional behavior and positive attitude toward guests, co-workers, volunteers, interns, and at all times when in uniform.
12. Represents the zoo and the conservation education department in a professional manner and promotes its interests both internally and externally.
 - a. Represents the zoo's position and interests in conservation, animal care, welfare and other issues in a professional, well-informed, positive, and responsive manner.
 - b. Keeps abreast of trends, information, and emerging issues related to areas of responsibility.
13. Follows all safety procedures that pertain to the duties performed.
14. Performs other related duties as assigned.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS:

Education, Experience, & License Requirements

- Must have obtained or be in pursuit of bachelor's degree in fields related to biological/environmental/life sciences, education, etc.
- One year of experience involving formal or informal education
- Experience with public speaking, interacting with the public and excellent communication and writing skills required.
- Prefer experience in handling of a variety of animals but not required
- Must have an appropriate, valid driver's license.

Competency and Knowledge Requirements

- Knowledge of the animal kingdom and natural history.
- Ability to work around all types of live animals (invertebrates, reptiles, birds, small mammals, amphibians) used in programs.
- Organize and present enthusiastic, educational and interactive programs.
- Must be dependable, courteous and able to work with people of all ages.
- Must be able to research and interpret data and implement into written plans for classes, camps, activities, events, and interpretive presentations.

- Strong interest in/commitment to conservation, animals, and the natural world.
- Gain knowledge of departmental policies, procedures and put practices to effective use following established operating procedures.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, volunteers, Rock Island County Forest Preserve District representatives, dignitaries, and the general public.
- Ability to be an effective decision-maker and problem-solver.
- Strong interpersonal and communications skills, including verbal, written, and listening skills.
- Strong observation, analytical, and organizational skills and abilities.
- Must be flexible, cooperative, and able to adapt easily to shifting priorities.
- Must be willing to work weekends, evenings, and holidays as needed.
- Ability to perform duties in all weather types as well as indoor/outdoor environments.

Time Requirements

This seasonal position is part time and requires 20-35 hours of work per week. Training will begin upon hiring and continue on the job.

* Time off requests of greater than one week or during busier parts of the season may not be considered.

Physical Requirements

Position involves the regular, and at times sustained, performance of heavier physical tasks such as walking over rough or uneven surfaces, bending, stooping, climbing, working in confined spaces, and lifting or carrying items moderately heavy (up to 30 pounds); or may involve the complex operation of gasoline/electric machinery or office equipment requiring the manipulation of multiple controls, fine adjustments or both; or the sustained operation of items such as a keyboard.

Environmental requirements

Position may require frequent exposure to adverse environmental conditions. Must tolerate heat, cold, smells, dirt, biological functions, moisture, etc.

Sensory Requirements

Position requires visual perception and discrimination. Position requires color perception and discrimination. Position requires sound perception and discrimination. Position requires taste perception and discrimination. Position requires odor perception and discrimination. Position requires depth perception and discrimination. Position requires texture perception and discrimination. Position requires oral communications ability.