

Reptile Zookeeper Internship

The current application period is for an internship running from May 19, 2022, to September 5, 2022. Interns working at the zoo must commit to wearing designated PPE (personal protective equipment) as assigned, such as masks and gloves, and be vaccinated for COVID.

Are you interested in gaining valuable, hands-on experience in the zoological field and first-hand knowledge and mentoring from experienced animal care professionals? Come join the Reptile team at the Virginia Zoo! We are currently accepting applications for interns in the Animal Services department from motivated individuals interested in pursuing a rewarding career as a zookeeper. Interns will learn all aspects of animal care and management in an AZA-accredited zoological organization.

Zookeeper interns at the Virginia Zoo work directly alongside zookeepers, animal managers and veterinary staff as we strive to continuously provide the best possible care for the animals here. Under the guidance of experienced zoo staff, interns have the opportunity to gain experience in many aspects of zoo keeping, including but not limited to: daily animal husbandry, care and nutrition; regular cleaning and maintenance of animal areas and exhibits, as well as an understanding of exhibit set-up and design; direct involvement in our animal enrichment and positive reinforcement training programs; an understanding of animal behavior and experience in behavioral observations and animal welfare/wellness assessments; record keeping; and guest interactions. Interns will gain daily work experience as well as specialized training through a series of instructor-taught classes and skills training sessions.

Qualified applicants must be able to work in a team environment and work outdoors in a variety of weather conditions and temperatures. While performing the duties of this position, the intern is frequently required to walk and stand for long periods; reach with hands and arms: stoop, kneel or crouch; lift up to 50lbs and talk or hear.

Applicants should either be college graduates, currently in college, or have some college semester credits completed. Applicants need to be able to commit to the four-month program, with a weekly work schedule of 40 hr/week. The internship does not provide an hourly salary but can qualify as paid zoological experience through a small monthly stipend for living costs.

The Reptile team works with a wide variety of reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates and aquatic species, including several species of lizards, snakes (venomous and nonvenomous), tortoises, turtles, Siamese crocodiles, seahorses, frogs and other amphibians – including a frog lab with several diverse species. Many species are in breeding programs. This team works primarily out of the recently renovated World of Reptiles building, as well as additional herpetological exhibits around the zoo.

Applicants should submit a resume, 3 references (include phone numbers and email addresses of references given) and a cover letter to Zookeeperinterns@norfolk.gov. **Please indicate that you are applying for the zookeeper internship-Reptiles team by typing: “Zookeeper Internship-Reptiles” in the subject line of the email.** No phone calls or in-person inquiries at the zoo please. Due to the volume of applicants, only those selected for an interview can be contacted. **Applications will close on April 15, 2022, or when positions are filled.**