

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**POSITION TITLE:** Conservation Specialist

**CREATED:** May 2024

**SUPERVISOR'S TITLE:** Director of Animal Health and Conservation

**FLSA Status:** Nonexempt

### PURPOSE

The Conservation Specialist provides daily care and ensures appropriate animal wellbeing (welfare) for ongrounds conservation animal care programs. This position advances the zoo's ongrounds conservation efforts and builds involvement with local partners, staff, and the community. This position also contributes to positive guest experiences and performs other duties as required.

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

#### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

- ▶▶ Performs husbandry practices for conservation animals in accordance with established protocols.
- ▶▶ Assists with development of husbandry practices, enrichment strategies, and enclosure design for conservation animals.
- ▶▶ Maintains animal care documentation, reports observations, and provides treatment as directed.
- ▶▶ Utilizes operant conditioning techniques, provides opportunities for species-appropriate behavior, and conducts regular wellbeing assessments.
- ▶▶ Engages with guests informally and through formal presentations (e.g., Keeper Chats, Wild Encounters, VIP tours, etc.).
- ▶▶ Conducts minor repairs and improvements to animal exhibit/holding areas and maintains all equipment and supplies in good working order.
- ▶▶ Operates vehicles to transport supplies, equipment, and animals within the zoo and between other facilities.
- ▶▶ Collaborates with communication and education departments to promote green practices and local conservation efforts.
- ▶▶ Coordinates field work opportunities for staff members with local conservation organizations and state agencies.
- ▶▶ Attends state agency meetings related to wildlife and conservation.
- ▶▶ Researches additional animal conservation programs that can be incorporated into the FWCZ collection, including identifying potential conservation needs, stories, staff involvement, facility needs, husbandry, budgetary costs, supply ordering, and future environmental impact.
- ▶▶ Conducts data collection of dedicated hours, funds, and skills dedicated to specific conservation efforts.
- ▶▶ Serves on the Green Practices Committee to connect staff and community involvement.
- ▶▶ Assists in implementation of staff training programs through topic presentation and outside speakers.
- ▶▶ Assists other department roles with quarantine and hospital husbandry duties, along with environmental quality testing.
- ▶▶ Assists in supervising interns within environmental quality, conservation, or animal health programs.
- ▶▶ Participates in maintenance, operations, and education functions of the zoo as necessary.
- ▶▶ Supports the zoo's commitment to continued growth of diversity, equity, access, inclusion, and belonging for zoo team members, volunteers, guests, and supporters.
- ▶▶ Assists with special projects and helps other zoo employees as needed.
- ▶▶ Actively contributes to positive guest experiences.

### EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE

To perform this job successfully, an individual must have the following education and/or experience.

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- » High school diploma or GED is required.
- » Valid driver's license is required.
- » Bachelor's degree in an animal-related or conservation field is preferred.
- » Three years of experience in a zoological or conservation setting is preferred.
- » Experience with hellbender husbandry is preferred.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities required to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- » Knowledge of advanced animal care and handling.
- » Demonstrated knowledge of zoo policies, standards, operations, cleaning, and maintenance techniques.
- » Knowledge of the natural history for the species under direct care.
- » Knowledge of animal wellbeing concepts and ability to apply that knowledge to assess the wellbeing of individuals or groups of animals.
- » Ability to utilize specialized tools (ladders, hand drills, etc.).
- » Ability to adapt to a rapidly changing, dynamic work environment.
- » Ability to professionally and effectively communicate with others through written correspondence.
- » Ability to troubleshoot, analyze situations, and make sound business decisions.
- » Ability to make independent decisions and manage time effectively.
- » Knowledge of Microsoft Office software.
- » Strong organizational skills.
- » Ability to work a highly flexible schedule; weekend, evening, holiday, and irregular hours will be required.
- » Ability to handle confidential information.
- » Ability to understand and follow all safety regulations.
- » Ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously.
- » Ability to arrive to work on time and maintain a positive attendance record.
- » Ability to serve in every respect and at all times as a goodwill ambassador for the Fort Wayne Zoological Society and the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo in contacts with zoo visitors and the general public.
- » Ability to deal tactfully and politely with guest questions and misbehavior.
- » Excellent communication skills to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, volunteers, partners, and/or the public.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- » Ability to operate office equipment, including computers, copiers, fax machines, and phones.
- » Ability to professionally and appropriately interact and communicate with others, both in person and through phone, email, and written correspondence.
- » Ability to regularly travel assigned areas several times per day and efficiently enter all assigned areas.
- » Ability to negotiate a confined workspace while working with one or more coworkers.
- » Ability to properly lift and carry items up to 50 pounds.
- » Ability to stand and sit for periods of time and to move intermittently throughout the workday.
- » Good speaking and listening skills.
- » Ability to perform focused work with close attention to detail.
- » Ability to work both indoors and outdoors, with exposure to extreme temperatures and inclement weather conditions; the environment may include wet, icy, or muddy conditions.
- » This position may include exposure to hazardous materials, fumes/odors, dirt, and dust.
- » This position may include exposure to potentially dangerous or venomous animals.
- » This position may include exposure to zoonotic diseases.
- » This position may include exposure to noxious native plants.
- » This position may include exposure to native biting insects and arthropods.