

Working Internship Program

Internship Program

Blue Mountain Wildlife is offering internship positions for spring/summer/fall (May through October). Please read the following information before printing out an application form, and mailing it along with the required essay and current resume. **Closing date for applications is March 31.**

An internship at Blue Mountain Wildlife provides the opportunity to gain hands on experience working with many wildlife species, primarily raptors, and to learn skills such as handling techniques, diets, food preparation and feeding methods and to assist an experienced wildlife rehabilitator with treatment procedures. The internship is intended to provide on-the-job training in basic wildlife rehabilitation skills.

It is hoped that a working internship will help interns examine wildlife career opportunities. In return, we expect to work with enthusiastic, mature, hard working people who will become an integral part of the working staff and volunteers at the Center. There are no educational requirements for interns, although a background in biology, wildlife management, veterinary medicine, veterinary technician or environmental education may be helpful. More important are a strong interest in wildlife, enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.

About Blue Mountain Wildlife

Blue Mountain Wildlife is a volunteer, nonprofit organization licensed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Blue Mountain Wildlife, incorporated in 1992, is tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue tax code. Our mission is:

- to provide the necessary treatment and care to orphaned, injured or sick wildlife, primarily birds of prey, to enable them to return to their natural habitat
- to offer educational programs which enhance people's appreciation for both wildlife and a healthy environment in which all can live

Blue Mountain Wildlife is eastern Oregon and southeast Washington's primary wildlife rehabilitation and education facility, admitting 300 to 400 animals for rehabilitation each year. Educational programs are offered on-site as well as throughout northeast Oregon and southeast Washington. Most of the wildlife brought to Blue Mountain Wildlife have had a negative encounter with humans such as collisions with manmade structures, destruction of nests or gunshot wounds. Goals include training volunteers in rehabilitation techniques,

enhancing awareness and appreciation of wildlife, and providing a facility where concerned people can bring wildlife in need of care.

Baby Season

Injured wildlife are admitted to the Center throughout the year, but the busiest time is “Baby Season,” which usually begins in March or April and continues through August. Three-quarters of the annual admissions occur during these months. Juveniles are being prepared for release through September and into October.

Length of Internships

Internships are for a period of approximately eight weeks. This allows time for the intern to learn basic wildlife rehabilitation skills and techniques and then practice what they have learned. It also ensures that Blue Mountain Wildlife benefits from the work of trained interns after investing time and energy in their training.

Working Hours

Working hours are variable, but tend to be from dawn to dusk (or later) during the summer months. Since few mammals are admitted to the Center, night feedings are rare. There may be times when Center staff are gone for part of a day for off-site education programs. Once trained, the intern may be expected to work unsupervised during these times. Whenever possible, the schedule will be arranged to provide the intern with one day off each week.

Accommodation

The on-site housing for interns, a 32-foot travel trailer, provides bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and living room facilities. It will be shared by a maximum of two interns. It is a smoke free area. Laundry facilities are available.

Health and Insurance

All applicants must answer the questions concerning health on the application form, and those who are selected for an internship must provide proof of an up-to-date tetanus vaccination. While working, interns will be covered by Workman’s Compensation Insurance.

Transportation

Blue Mountain Wildlife is located in a rural residential area five miles south of Pendleton. Although not a necessity, it would be convenient for interns to provide their own transportation.

Course Credits

Some colleges and universities allow internships to count toward course credits. Please indicate on the application form if you wish to complete the internship for course credits.

Educational Content

Interns will gain hands-on experience in a variety of areas:

- wildlife rehabilitation including anesthesia, radiology & hematology
- animal husbandry
- captive animal management including capture & restraint, medication and fluid administration
- rearing of native species of birds and mammals under the supervision of an experienced and permitted rehabilitator.

Interns will assist in the daily activities of the center and may have the option of specializing in the care of a particular type of wildlife (i.e., raptors, songbirds, small mammals).

Interns will also learn about animal husbandry and captive animal management related to the center's educational birds of prey. Opportunities exist and are encouraged for special projects that relate to the student's field of study. Interns work under the direct supervision of the Center Director and in cooperation with other staff and volunteers.

Compensation

Blue Mountain Wildlife is a nonprofit organization, with a limited budget. The internships are unpaid positions, however, a small weekly stipend will be provided to help cover costs of food and transportation.

Program Policies

- To ensure that animals have the best possible chance for release, and for survival when returned to their natural habitat, we want to **MINIMIZE THE STRESS OF CAPTIVITY, AND KEEP THE ANIMALS WILD**. Some behavior that is suitable when caring for domestic animals is inappropriate

when dealing with wildlife. This means we **minimize human contact** (both the sight and sound of humans) when caring for wild patients. Minimal human contact is particularly critical for young wildlife.

- Much of the work at a wildlife rehabilitation center is **not glamorous**, but every job is important. All staff, volunteers and interns are expected to carry out a wide range of tasks including food preparation, cage cleaning, laundry and facilities maintenance.
- Working in a wildlife rehabilitation center is **physically demanding**. Staff and interns work long hours and are on their feet most of the time, working indoors and outdoors in all types of weather.
- Our goal is to treat all orphaned, injured or sick native wildlife brought to the Center and return them to the wild. Unfortunately this is not always possible. Approximately half of the wildlife admitted are too sick or badly injured to be treated and released. In these cases, **euthanasia** is an alternative that is considered.

The decision to euthanize an animal is never made casually. It is made by rehab staff in consultation with a veterinarian, and the animal is euthanized under direct supervision of a veterinarian. We consider euthanasia to be one of the alternatives available to relieve the pain and suffering in sick or injured animals. Euthanasia is a situation interns will encounter, and should come to terms with.

Blue Mountain Wildlife is a drug-free workplace.

The deadline for acceptance of applications is March 31. Applications received after that date will not be considered.

If you have further questions regarding an internship position at Blue Mountain Wildlife, please contact Lynn Tompkins, Executive Director, at 541-278-0215 or lynn@bluemountainwildlife.org.

Thank you for your interest.