



Internships at Ellen Trout Zoo!

The goal of the Ellen Trout Zoo's internship program is to provide pre-professional, experiential learning opportunities for dedicated students interested in animal care, zookeeping, environmental issues/ethics, informal education, visitor studies, communication and community service.

Through participation in the program, students will assist zoo staff with a variety of tasks which promote the fulfillment of the Zoo's mission to "connect people to the natural world through goals of a modern zoo: recreation, conservation, education, and research."

Ellen Trout Zoo (ETZ) is a City of Lufkin department and is an Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited zoo. The zoo houses over 800 animals and plants in Lufkin, TX and participates in the AZA's Species Survival plans along with many other conservation organizations.

Our internships are unpaid and interns will be responsible for their own housing.

Why intern at ETZ?

- Diversity of your experience - ETZ has a very diverse collection of animals in their care, so interns will gain experience with mammals, birds, and reptiles.
- Hands on Animal Care experience
- Shadowing knowledgeable supervisors
- Flexible scheduling - the zoo is open 10 am - 5 pm every day of the year (including Christmas) to the public; our staff is here every day from 8 am - 5 pm, with an hour break for lunch.

Available Internship Positions:

Animal Care Intern: Works alongside Collection Manager and Keepers to provide daily care and husbandry for...

- Mammals South Intern: a variety of hoofstock (hippos, tapirs, duikers), birds (emus, cranes, waterfowl), wallabies, and some reptiles.
- Mammals North Intern: a variety of hoofstock (rhinos, giraffes), birds (raptors, hornbills), carnivores (big cats, otters, bobcats) and clinic/quarantine animals.
- Asia/ Primate Intern: a variety of primates, birds (parrots, flamingoes), other mammals (racoons, porcupines, clouded leopards) and some reptiles.
- Herps Intern: a variety of reptiles, amphibians and some small mammals and birds.

Education Intern: Works alongside Education staff to assist with the teaching of on-site and off-site programs for children and adults, research and development of educational materials, summer camp programming and special events, and daily care and husbandry of Ambassador Animals.

Eligibility Requirements:

College student or recent graduate interested in pursuing a career in zoos, animal care or informal education

Must be at least 18 years old and a United States resident

Submission of completed application, resume and cover letter

Interview with Zoo's Education Department and Collection Managers

Signed Liability Release form

Dependable transportation

Positive attitude and strong work ethic

Attend orientation at beginning of internship

Internship Application Due Dates:

Spring: Session begins February 1st

Spring 2022- application due November 26, 2021

Summer: Session begins June 1st

Summer 2022- application due April 1, 2022

Fall: Session begins September 1st

Fall 2022- application due July 1, 2022

Application packet (application, resume and cover letter) can be delivered in person to the Ellen Trout Zoo Administration building, mailed to 402 Zoo Circle Lufkin, Texas 75904, faxed to 936-633-0311 or emailed to wheckler@ellentrouzoo.com

Internship Commitment

Interns must work a minimum of 240 hours (20+ hours per week, at least one 8- hour day) over 12 weeks. Interns can work up to 40 hours per week and must meet minimum per week requirements for internship. Schedule will be set during once internship has been accepted. No deviating from the set schedule unless something important (death, sickness, etc.) comes up or arrangements are made before the beginning of the internship. There will be required continuing education courses but they can be attended virtually or in person.

If you would like credit hours for your internship there are additional requirements:

- Letter of reference from a professor/ college advisor and their contact information for education staff to communicate with
- Must work minimum hours set
- Complete a presentation of one animal, enrichment item, study (behavioral, ethogram, training etc.) from the internship area, at the end of their internship to present to staff and turn in to professor
- Any other work assigned by professor (daily reports, essay, etc.)

All interns will receive an evaluation of their time as an intern, completed by area supervisor & education staff upon completion of internship and all interns must complete daily reports for every day worked.

Education Interns:

Public speaking skills and interest in working with children and the public

Must be willing to handle animals when necessary for programming purposes

Physical Requirements: Must be able to lift 50 pounds

Must be willing to work outdoors in all types of weather

Intern Benefits: Discount at the Zoo Gift Shop

Supervisory Relationship: The Director of Education serves as the internship coordinator for the Ellen Trout Zoo and is responsible for communication with the participating university supervisor and contract agreements with students.

Failure to fulfill expectations may result in dismissal from the program. Interns should realize that the internship program is in many ways equivalent to holding a paid position and that excessive tardiness, missing shifts, and continuous scheduling problems are not viewed positively by Zoo staff and may result in removal from the program.

1st - oral warning

2nd - written warning copied to course instructor

3rd - formal notification to the intern's advisor of unacceptable work performance and possible dismissal from the internship.

In event that a student fails to meet acceptable standards of conduct the Zoo reserves the right to discharge any student from participating in the program.

Contact Information

Whitney Heckler

Ellen Trout Zoo, Director of Educational Services

(936) 630-0574

wheckler@ellentrouzoo.com