

Animal Care & Conservation Internship Announcement

Department: General Services Department – Parks & Recreation

Division: Parks and Recreation – Micke Grove Zoo

Location: Lodi, California

Job Type: Internship (Unpaid or Academic Credit, if applicable)

Duration: Fall, Spring, or Summer Term

The Micke Grove Zoo is seeking a motivated and detail-oriented Animal Care & Conservation Intern to support animal husbandry operations, conservation initiatives, behavioral research, and zoological data management activities. This internship provides practical experience in zoo operations, habitat stewardship, conservation programming, and supervised animal care support within a municipal zoo setting. This opportunity is ideal for students pursuing careers in zoology, wildlife management, conservation biology, or animal care professions.

The Animal Care & Conservation Intern will participate in a structured term internship aligned with academic semesters or summer sessions. The internship introduces core zoo functions including zoological data systems, conservation landscape programming, behavioral research, and supervised animal care support. The intern will receive primary supervision from the Zoo Curator, with rotation oversight and mentorship provided by Animal Care staff and appropriate program leads. This is an unpaid internship. Academic credit may be available if coordinated through the student's educational institution.

Essential Duties:

Duties may include, but are not limited to:

- Editing and maintaining animal husbandry records within the Zoological Information Management System (ZIMS)
- Assisting with development and entry of environmental datasets including temperature, humidity, enrichment, and water quality logs
- Supporting botanical inventory efforts through the Hortis plant mapping platform
- Supporting preparation and maintenance of pollinator garden planting areas
- Assisting with care and monitoring of valley oak saplings associated with the zoo's landscape restoration program
- Collecting and documenting behavioral observations for assigned research projects
- Assisting with planting and maintenance of browse gardens
- Supporting routine maintenance of the Duck Pond including debris removal, filter maintenance support, vegetation control, and habitat upkeep
- Assisting with organization, sanitation, and inventory of animal care equipment and enrichment materials
- Supporting commissary organization and diet preparation activities under staff supervision.

Minimum Qualifications:

Completion of at least 60 semester units (or equivalent) from an accredited college or university, including a minimum of 18 units in biology, zoology, wildlife management, wildlife ecology, animal behavior, or a closely related field.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Strong attention to detail and record accuracy
- Ability to follow safety protocols and detailed instructions
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Interest in zoological management and wildlife conservation
- Ability to work outdoors in varying environmental conditions

Working Conditions:

Work is performed indoors and outdoors in varying weather conditions. Duties may involve standing, bending, lifting materials, and working in proximity to animals under supervision.

Schedule & Commitment Requirements:

Internship schedules are structured to align with academic terms.

Fall Semester (August–December)

- Minimum 150 total hours
- Approximately 10–15 hours per week

Spring Semester (January–May)

- Minimum 150 total hours
- Approximately 10–15 hours per week

Summer Term (May–August)

- Minimum 300 total hours
- Approximately 20–30 hours per week

Safety & Special Requirements:

- Completion of required zoo safety orientation and adherence to all safety and biosecurity protocols
- Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as required for assigned tasks
- Compliance with restricted animal contact guidelines and staff supervision requirements
- Successful completion and maintenance of a negative tuberculosis screening for the duration of the internship
- Current COVID-19 and TDAP vaccination status

How to Apply:

Interested candidates should submit the following materials:

- Cover letter outlining interest in the internship and relevant experience

- Current resume

Email application materials to: internships@sjgov.org

- Subject Line: Animal Care & Conservation Intern – Micke Grove Zoo

Optional Materials:

- Unofficial transcripts
- Letters of recommendation

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until positions are filled.
Selection interviews will be conducted by County staff.