



Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary Lead Naturalist

JOB DESCRIPTION

Definition

The Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary Lead Naturalist is a full-time environmental educator and site lead responsible for leading and teaching programs at the Sanctuary, guiding the Naturalist team, and helping ensure a welcoming, safe, and positive experience for students, teachers, families, visitors, and neighbors.

As a primary ENC staff presence at Tucker, the Lead Naturalist serves as a liaison with the surrounding community and helps keep the Sanctuary functioning smoothly day to day. The position may work at the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach or other program locations as needed, up to approximately 20% of work time.

Supervision: The Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary Lead Naturalist works under the direct supervision of the Education Programs Manager and works closely with ENC leadership and the Horticulture team regarding Sanctuary operations and community relations.

Essential Functions/Duties Include but Are Not Limited To:

Educational Programming & Naturalist Leadership

1. Teach and prepare environmental education programs at Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary and other ENC locations, including field trips, traveling naturalist programs, scout programs, camps, bEARTHday parties, and enrichment programs.
2. Teach and support extended learning programs at Tucker, including early childhood programs and other recurring programs that provide children, families, youth, and adults with opportunities for sustained engagement with nature.
3. Serve as the lead educator at Tucker, coordinating the Naturalist team, assigning responsibilities, helping programs remain on schedule, and ensuring curricula are taught consistently with program requirements and the ENC's mission.
4. Support the training and development of Naturalists through modeling, observation, feedback, and assistance with staff trainings.
5. Provide supervision of students during programs, support positive student behavior, and maintain the highest possible degree of safety.
6. Contribute to the development and improvement of curricula, educational materials, and interpretive experiences for school, extended learning, and other environmental education programs.
7. Communicate with teachers, group leaders, parents, and other program participants before, during, and following programs as needed.

Visitor & Community Relations

1. Serve as a welcoming and knowledgeable ENC representative, answering visitor questions about the Sanctuary, its wildlife, programs, and appropriate use of the property.
2. Serve as a day-to-day liaison with neighbors and members of the surrounding community, maintaining positive relationships, responding professionally to questions or concerns, and communicating significant issues to ENC leadership.

Sanctuary Operations

1. Carry out routine opening and closing responsibilities, including checking public areas, restrooms, parking, trails, signage, and visitor spaces.

2. Monitor the Sanctuary for safety, cleanliness, visitor needs, and operational concerns, communicating maintenance, horticulture, facility, or safety needs to appropriate ENC staff.
3. Perform routine visitor-area upkeep, including cleaning and restocking restrooms as needed, replenishing supplies, neatening the Nature Store and educational spaces.
4. Assist with routine care of Tucker's education animals and wildlife-support features, including feeders, ponds, and fountains.
5. Support Nature Store operations, visitor transactions, program materials, signage, emails, and other routine administrative needs.
6. Assist with special programs, community events, volunteer activities, and other Sanctuary duties as needed.
7. Conduct other related duties as assigned.

Qualifications & Requirements

1. Commitment to the mission, vision, and core values of the ENC.
2. Experience and confidence handling a variety of animals, including amphibians, mammals, arthropods, and reptiles.
3. Strong leadership/organizational skills, with experience in environmental education and coordinating staff or volunteers.
4. Ability to work independently with minimal supervision and demonstrate flexibility.
5. Knowledge of California's plant and animal life highly desirable.
6. Knowledge of California Native Americans and local indigenous people highly desirable.
7. Ability to memorize and recall facts, figures, and information.
8. Ability to move up to fifty pounds, carry and set up equipment, and traverse stairs, trails, and uneven terrain.
9. Ability to make independent decisions and respond to immediate needs of students, emergency situations, program needs.
10. Ability to work outside in a variety of weather conditions and temperatures.
11. Regular, reliable, and punctual attendance is essential.
12. Ability to work irregular hours, including occasional weekends and evenings.
13. Computer experience, including Macintosh and Microsoft Office, required or willingness to learn.
14. A valid California Driver's License and reliable transportation to and from work.
15. Fingerprinting for a background check will be required.

Skill to:

1. Effectively communicate environmental education concepts to students of all ages in both indoor and outdoor settings.
2. Interact successfully with supervisors, teachers, parents, volunteers, students, visitors, and community members, demonstrating an understanding, patient, and receptive attitude with people of all ages in small and large groups.
3. Communicate effectively in the English language, both orally and in writing.
4. Understand and carry out oral and written instructions independently.
5. Understand and apply pertinent personnel policies, laws, rules, and regulations.

Education, Training, and Experience:

1. Bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university with major course work in science, education, or a related field.
2. Three years of experience working with children in an environmental education setting as an interpreter, naturalist, or equivalent. A strong background in thematic, hands-on programs is desired.
3. Current CPR and First Aid Certificates are required within two months of employment.

Starting wage: \$23.00 per hour. This is a full-time, hourly position.