

# **Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center**

## **Wildlife Rehabilitation Internship Program**

### **History and Development**

Wolf Hollow's internship program has been gradually developed for over 30 years. Initially, a few students from local colleges and universities spent time at Wolf Hollow during their summer vacation. Now, we advertise our internships to 120 colleges and universities, in addition to posting the information on our web site. Young people from all over the US, Canada, and from overseas, including Denmark, Italy, Germany and Scotland, intern with us each year.

### **Duration and what we provide**

Currently, we offer 8 internship positions during the May to October period. Each internship lasts for 8-9 weeks. The schedule is arranged to have up to 4 interns working with us during the peak of our busy summer season. We provide on-site accommodation and a stipend to help cover the costs of travel, food or other expenses. Some interns bring their own vehicles, but we also ensure that other interns can make the most of their time on the San Juans by providing transportation in the form of bicycles and access to a vehicle.

### **Experience Gained**

Internships at Wolf Hollow provide the opportunity for you to gain hands-on experience of wildlife rehabilitation from rescue to release. You will work with experienced staff to learn diets, feeding, handling and care techniques for a wide range of wild species. Working with both injured adults and orphaned youngsters is likely. As Wolf Hollow is a general rehabilitation center, our interns can work with avians including swallows, eagles, owls, ducks and herons. We also receive many mammals and occasionally pinnipeds. Our aim is to release these animals back into the wild. Interns will experience the differences between working with wild versus domestic animals. You become familiar with the need for minimum human contact and for physical and behavioral conditioning. This gives rehabilitated animals the best possible chance of survival back in their natural habitat. At times, there may not be many animals in care, other needed maintenance projects may be assigned. All work done is valuable to the center, the wildlife, and you.

### **Career Advancement**

Our internships enable people from a wide range of backgrounds to find out what is involved in wildlife rehabilitation and explore career possibilities. Interns come from backgrounds in biology, ecology, veterinary sciences, wildlife management, and animal science. Some of our interns have gone on to become directors of wildlife rehabilitation centers, or to be wildlife veterinarians and technicians. For others, an internship at Wolf Hollow provides experience that is complementary to their studies or other work aspirations. Veterinary students who have worked with cats and dogs gain experience with wildlife, while Ecology or Wildlife Management students have a chance to learn about individuals to balance their studies of populations.

### **Opportunity to Work with Wildlife**

While it is relatively easy for you to gain experience working with domestic animals on a farm, at a vet clinic or at an animal shelter, it is more difficult to gain work experience with wildlife, so our internships are in demand. We have received up to 50 applications for our 8 internship positions and around 90% of these applications come from young women. Several of our interns have returned to Wolf Hollow in following years as Seasonal Wildlife Rehabilitators to further their training and experience, with the goal of making Wildlife Rehabilitation their career.

### **Professional Evaluation**

To encourage professional development, you will be evaluated midway through your internship and meet with the Executive Director and a rehabilitation staff member to discuss strengths, areas for improvement and aspects of our work you would like to learn more about. You are also evaluated at the end of your internship, as a basis for letters of recommendations. You are also asked to evaluate various aspects of the internship program and give your feedback on your experience during your internship. This feedback has been used to develop and fine-tune the internship program over the years.

### **Additional Experiences**

Many of our interns come from other parts of the country or the world. This complemented the wildlife rehab experience gained during their work at Wolf Hollow. To maximize the educational value of the internships, interns are introduced to the work of other wildlife or conservation organizations in our local area e.g. The Whale Museum, Soundwatch, Orca behavioral research at Lime Kiln Point State Park, and the Western Bluebird reintroduction program. Due to the generosity of local companies, they are also offered opportunities to go on sea kayaking and wildlife watching boat trips to increase their knowledge of the wildlife and ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest.

### **Benefits to Wolf Hollow and YOU**

Our internship program is a great benefit to Wolf Hollow in providing enthusiastic, energetic people to help care for the large numbers of wild animals we receive during our busy summer season. In return, you will gain a range of invaluable skills and experience which increases their job prospects and enables you to make informed decisions about your future career.

### **Practical Details**

Interns work 5 days a week and have 2 days off.

In the peak of the season, you will work shifts to ensure that animals receive care when needed:

8am-4:30pm with a break for lunch ~ Noon-8:30pm with a break for dinner ~ Split shift- 8am-Noon and 4pm-8:30pm

You will also take turns doing evening or night feeds and early starts in the morning when we have lots of nestling songbirds. You are expected to be responsible and carry

our evening shifts on your own, with a staff person on call for questions or emergencies. You will work independently and as well as part of a team.

You will also be answering phone calls from members of the public who have found an injured animal and conversing with animal transport volunteers of a wide range of ages and backgrounds.

Our on-site accommodation provides a bedroom, bathroom, living room, full kitchen and laundry facilities.