

Wildlife Practicum—Herbivore Specialist Stream

Practicums are a unique and rewarding opportunity to help local wildlife, increase your awareness of local wildlife species and their natural history, and learn more about urban wildlife issues and welfare, while under the mentorship of professional wildlife rehabilitators. Wild ARC practicum participants volunteer full-time or part-time, under the supervision of staff to perform animal husbandry duties, medical treatments, and diet preparation and hand-feeding young wildlife. Participants will also have the opportunity to participate in workshops, access Wild ARC's library of rehabilitation resources, and ask seasoned wildlife rehabilitation staff any questions they may have.

Wild ARC's Herbivore Specialist practicum stream provides the opportunity for participants to specialize in sensitive herbivores like Black-tailed Deer fawns and Eastern Cottontail Rabbits. Participants will gain extensive, in-depth knowledge and hands-on experience in raising these species, and will build skills in assessment, treatment, medical diagnostics, husbandry, and release evaluation for these sensitive herbivores. Participants will be closely involved in patient examinations, rearing, medication dosage calculation and administration, and ensuring nutritional and enrichment needs are met. This stream is also of particular interest for candidates interested in biosecurity and disease management in wild animals.

All participants will acquire skills in species identification, enriching enclosure setup and proper husbandry techniques, safe animal handling, record-keeping, and data management.

Skills and Experience Required:

- Comfortable and patient around a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians
- Excellent communication, teamwork and observation skills
- Strong work ethic and ability to prioritize and work independently
- Previous wildlife rehabilitation or animal care experience is preferred
- Identification skills of BC plant species is preferred

Responsibilities:

- Specialize in the daily care and treatment of sensitive herbivorous wild species
- Clean and sanitize animal enclosures of greenery, enrichment items, food and feces
- Set up enriching indoor and outdoor habitats for wild patients
- Ensuring nutritional and enrichment needs of patients are met
- Prepare species appropriate diets and administer feedings to adult and juvenile wild patients
- Administration of medications and treatments for recovering wild herbivore patients
- Monitoring health and condition of animals under the guidance of wildlife rehabilitators
- Maintaining complete and accurate records for patient care files

Practicum Program Duration and Time Commitment

This practicum involves a full-time or part-time voluntary placement that can span from 3 to 5 months, and is available from April to October. It is strongly recommended that participants do not take on extra employment during the full-time practicum placement. Please see practicum application for detailed placement options.

All positions are voluntary; no stipend or salary is offered. Housing and transportation are not provided. Please note that Wild ARC is not located on a frequent public transit route, and thus reliable personal transportation is necessary. Insurance is the responsibility of the participant.

Working Conditions*:

- Work outside in a variety of weather conditions.
- Walk on uneven ground (mulch, gravel, grass, concrete), and up/down low grade hills
- Be on feet for long periods of time and bend/kneel/squat.
- Occasionally lift 40 pounds
- Use of fine motor skills (dexterity) for small patient feeding
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment to limit exposure to zoonotic diseases
- Use of BC SPCA truck to gather grazing materials for patients
- Considerable time and energy spent moving grazing/greenery materials down to patients.

*BC SPCA is an inclusive organization and will make reasonable accommodations to working conditions upon request. Please contact us if you have any concerns or questions.

Practicum Program Requirements:

- ✓ Minimum age of 19 years
- ✓ Strongly encouraged to have Tetanus vaccine within last 10 years
- ✓ Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- ✓ Ability to work independently and as a team member
- ✓ Strong observation and record-keeping skills
- ✓ Academic background in biological or environmental sciences, veterinary medicine or animal welfare studies preferred
- ✓ Volunteer experience in wildlife rehabilitation, wildlife management or animal care is beneficial but not required
- ✓ Meet practicum educational credit requirements (see below)

Practicum Educational Credit

Wild ARC's practicum program is an educational or professional development opportunity, and participants **must** be enrolled in an approved credentialled program. Approved programs include the Applied Animal Biology Practicum (APBI 496) at the University of British Columbia or the certificate course in wildlife rehabilitation training through the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC). The practicum may also meet requirements for various environmental or animal health programs at other institutions (University Science Program or RVT externship, etc.).

(Note: Acceptance into the practicum program is required before registering for credit.)

Please send completed applications to the Assistant Manager, Kelsi Arnott at wildarcvolunteer@spca.bc.ca.

Application Packages can be submitted from February 1st to 22nd and must include:

- ✓ Completed Practicum Application Form (PDF)
- ✓ Current Curriculum Vitae and Cover Letter detailing career aspirations
- ✓ Two references (at least one former employer)
- ✓ Valid Driver's Abstract (needed for operation of BC SPCA vehicles)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: February 22nd of each year