

Education – Internships 2023

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Number of Volunteers: 3 (0 spring, 2 summer, 1 fall)

Number of Hours: 946

- Spring – March thru June - 0 total hours, we were not able to hire a spring intern
- Summer (2 interns) – 644 - total hours - May thru August
- Fall (1 intern) – 302 total hours - September thru November

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Environmental Education and Interpretation: creating and leading programs for a wide age range
- Nature center/Park operations: including animal care and garden and trail maintenance
- Assist year-round staff with wildlife monitoring projects as available

Including -

- CHESPAX Programs – spring interns assist with the 3rd grade Terrapins field trips, fall interns assist with 5th grade Oysters field trips
- Other in-county groups (non-CHESPAX)- May include day cares, home-school groups, private schools, middle or high school classes, or other public-school grades who want some more time in the parks between CHESPAX visits.
- Homeschool Fridays and Teen Homeschool
- Summer Camps
- School's Out Camps/overnights
- General public programs as available

QUALIFICATIONS:

- College junior, senior, or recent graduate with education background in environmental science, environmental education, biology, recreation, or related field of study
- Work/volunteer experience with children
- A demonstrated interest and passion for environmental education and the natural world
- Intern must provide their own transportation (will be traveling to various sites in Calvert County)
- Current First Aid and CPR certification preferred, but not necessary

Optional, but preferred, skills

- Have general knowledge and interest of the local natural world and ecosystems. Volunteers will be trained with program-specific information, but prior knowledge or initiative for extra research is always helpful.
- Have excellent communication skills
- Be self-motivated

- Be capable of working independently with mentor guidance as well as in a team with patience and flexibility

VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- Independently lead groups of approximately 10-20 people (students and chaperons) for 20-30-minute intervals
 - Lead activities/stations: give clear, complete instructions; supervise the group and provide assistance where needed; guide students to record and interpret data
 - Take groups on short hikes over varying terrain and point out animals, plants, or habitats related to the curriculum
- Use various types of scientific equipment; understand their function and resulting data
- Assist naturalists with set up, clean up, and transport of equipment. May include sorting, re-stocking, cleaning, hosing off, lifting, and carrying various items and weights.

REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

- Come appropriately dressed and prepared for the weather. The beginning and ends of each season may bring high heat, wind, rain, or cold, accordingly. Volunteers may also be exposed to ticks, mosquitoes, poison ivy, and unexpected wildlife.
- Be excited about exploring and spending time in nature and be able to share this excitement with others.
- Spend long periods of time standing, walking, and moving over various terrains and inclines (may include dirt, gravel, grass, sand, boardwalks, and hills or steps).
- Be knowledgeable about the program and parks. Fully complete training before assuming a leadership role and take advantage of refresher trainings.
- Be on time and prepared for all programs.

TRAININGS

- Initial orientation in-person with program leader.
- Complete at least two observation days for most field trips.
- Attend additional trainings and enrichment events as available.
- Interns are provided supervision by staff naturalists and experienced volunteers.

PROJECT DATES

Three internship terms are available. Exact start and end dates will vary depending the program calendar and on and intern's availability.

- Fall (September to November)
- Spring (March to June)
- Summer (June to August)

SUMMARY OF 2023 ACTIVITIES

- Starting in Summer 2023, interns are hired through the Calvert County government HR department. This streamlines things for both the interns and CCNRD staff.
- CHESPAX fieldtrips - fall 2023 – Oysters program at Chesapeake Beach

- Summer Camp – plan and lead PreK and assist with others (Wild Waters, Marvelous Mud, Birding Adventures, Wet and Wonderful Water)
- Our fall intern, Riley Brown, researched, planned, and lead an LGBTQ+ inclusivity workshop for our staff.
- Improvements in time keeping and administrative tasks – all intern work hours now go on the Calvert Stewards website. This way all their hours are kept in one place and was a big improvement for both interns and for timekeeping after the season was over.
- Shadowing other park staff as time allowed.
- Assist naturalists with wildlife projects including: monarch/milkweed monitoring, dragonfly sampling, and bird banding.
- Independently preform animal care tasks at Flag Ponds Nature Park.
- Assist with outreach everts and the planning of activities for these events Invasives Fest, Youth Day at Calvert County Fair.
- Interns are paid their stipend through Calvert County Finance & Budget payroll system. F&B invoices Calvert Nature Society quarterly for reimbursement of the stipends.

FUTURE PLANS

- Talking to St Mary’s College career center to create “mini-internships” to help out with TERPS/Oysters. This mini-internship would allow for more freedom (and fewer hours and commitment) from the intern. They would be acting in the role our teaching volunteers currently fill. This would open opportunities up for younger students (minimum age would be 18) and those with more full class schedules. These interns would be asked to commit to volunteering at least one day a week after going through training. There may be opportunities through the college for these students to receive funding and/or college credits for the mini-internship.
- Planning on scheduling several virtual info sessions through the college to meet and recruit with interested students.
- Attend spring and fall career fair days at St Mary’s.
- Continue to look for other outlets for recruitment, including MAEOE, NAI, Towson University, Goucher College.
- Continue to develop best practices for training the interns in environmental education.

Supporting Calvert County's nature parks and natural spaces



CALVERT STEWARDS

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A partnership between Calvert Nature Society and Calvert County Natural Resources Division

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Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: www.calvertparks.org

Calvert County Natural Resources Division:
www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources

