

Marine Science Center

Volunteer Job Descriptions and Requirements



Bird Hospital

This department provides excellent opportunities to work directly with the rehabilitation of injured birds and husbandry of our resident birds. Volunteers will gain experience with a wide range of bird species including raptors and migratory bird species. The duties supply the volunteers with a wide variety of experiences helpful to seek employment in the veterinary industry, growing zoo and aquarium industry and the enjoyment of working with and helping conserve birds.

Job Description

- Learn basic husbandry tasks including cleaning and sanitizing enclosures, observing bird health and behavior, and record keeping.
- Identifying exhibit and enclosure maintenance issues (loose boards, evidence of predators, protruding nails or screws, damaged mesh/wire, etc.)
- Perform basic life support maintenance to ensure the biological, mechanical, and chemical filtration systems are operating correctly. This includes changing and cleaning filters.
- Learn the life history and conservation issues of the exhibit and rehabilitation birds, MSC Bird Hospital history and statistics, general hospital operations to help educate visitors to the bird sanctuary about birds and conservation efforts.
- Learn the diets and husbandry record keeping of the exhibit animals. This will require knowledge of the identification, life history, and nutritional requirements of the animals.
- Prepare daily diets for the exhibit and quarantine animals. This duty involves handling, cutting, and weighing raw seafood, rodents, and baby chickens.
- Using knowledge gained from the previous duties; create enrichment items to help stimulate the birds. This includes assessing the mental health and emotional health of the birds and developing new enrichment ideas to propose to the Bird Hospital Manager.
- After at least one year of committed volunteer training and above-mentioned prerequisites, the volunteer can begin the Bird Handling Program. This program will allow volunteers to build relationships with exhibit birds, receive advanced bird handling techniques, train birds to stand on a perch or scale or load into a transport carrier, and, eventually, participate in live educational programs.
- Perform health assessments of exhibit and rehabilitation birds.
- Participate in bird transports and rescues.

Volunteer Commitment and Requirements

- There is a four-month commitment required to volunteer with the Bird Hospital. Volunteers are required to complete four hours per week without missing two consecutive shifts to stay active.
- Volunteers are required to work in dirty, smelly environments that contain dead fish, rats, mice and bird feces.
- Volunteers may be exposed to zoonotic diseases.
- Volunteers may be required to lift 25 pounds. Volunteers canD be accepted with lifting restrictions but may be limited in qualified duties.
- Exposure to inclement weather, uneven terrain, wet conditions, cleaning chemicals, and standing for long periods.
- Communicate any health issues or allergies (immunocompromised) to the department manager.