

JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION: Summer Naturalist Intern
REPORTS TO: Education Programs Manager
CLASSIFICATION: Non-exempt | Seasonal
LOCATION: Avalon | On-site
UPDATED: April 2025

POSITION SUMMARY

The Summer Naturalist position is a paid internship that offers a unique and immersive experience for individuals passionate about environmental education, conservation, and public engagement. Interns will gain valuable skills and knowledge while actively contributing to Catalina Island Conservancy's mission. As a member of the Conservancy's Education Department, you will play an important role in showcasing Catalina Island's natural beauty as you guide visitors and locals of all ages through sights such as the Wrigley Memorial and Botanic Garden (WMBG), Two Harbors, and the Airport in the Sky. This position offers a meaningful chance to develop as an environmental educator while connecting with hundreds of visitors each year.

LOCATION

On-site role based in Avalon, CA.

Responsibilities will be conducted across various locations, including our Avalon offices, the Wrigley Memorial and Botanic Garden, Two Harbors, and the Airport in the Sky. Naturalists are required to live in Conservancy-provided housing on Catalina Island for the full 8-week duration of the position.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Interpretive Activities

- Help engage the public through educational activities, events and community outreach at WMBG, Two Harbors, and/or the Airport in the Sky.
- Support public understanding of the mission and work of the Conservancy by fostering learning and community connection.
- Share curriculum materials and activity sheets for early learners.
- Provide support to the Education Department with Avalon City Summer Camp and other departmental activities.
- Lead guided hikes and walking tours of WMBG.
- Support the Education Department with on-site evaluations such as visitor surveys.

- Assist with special projects and programs as needed.

Office Responsibilities

- Maintain records of program attendance and visitor interactions.
- Organize program attendance data and survey data in spreadsheets.
- Other duties as assigned in support of the Education Department goals.

Conservation Workdays

- Participate in weekly Conservation Department workdays, contributing program support to both botanical and wildlife projects.

End of Season Report

- At the end of the 8-week internship, you'll present a final report to staff across Education, Conservation and other teams. This is a chance to showcase what you've learned and help shape the experience for future interns.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to stand and walk for extended periods of time including hiking up to 5 miles per day over moderately inclined and uneven terrain.
- Ability to occasionally lift and move items weighing up to 30 pounds.
- Ability to safely navigate outdoor environments, including exposure to sun, wind, and uneven ground.
- Comfortable working in proximity to wildlife and natural habitats.
- Ability to bend, reach, stoop, and perform physical tasks associated with outdoor education and fieldwork.
- Visual and auditory ability to identify environmental cues, engage with guests, and ensure safety during programming.
- Ability to carry a backpack and field gear as needed throughout the day.
- Must be able to work primarily outdoors in a range of weather conditions.

QUALIFICATIONS

As a role designed to provide practical experience, prior formal experience is not required. Instead, the ideal candidate will demonstrate the following qualities:

- **Interest in Environmental Education** – Enthusiasm for learning about local ecology, conservation, and natural history, with a willingness to explore topics related to Catalina Island's unique environment.
- **Communication and Public Engagement** – Willingness to develop and refine public speaking skills, with the ability to engage diverse audiences in a positive and informative manner.

- **Initiative and Professionalism** – Self-motivation, reliability, and a strong sense of responsibility in representing the Conservancy and its mission.
- **Collaboration and Adaptability** – Ability to work effectively as part of a team, while also demonstrating independence and problem-solving skills in a dynamic outdoor setting.
- **Outdoor Experience** – Comfort with working in an outdoor environment, whether through work, academic experiences, or personal activities.
- **Technical Skills** – Basic proficiency with word processing and spreadsheet software for data collection and reporting.
- **Multilingual Skills (Preferred)** – Spanish language proficiency is a plus, enhancing the ability to connect with a broader range of visitors.

Education & Experience

- Recent high school graduate or college student interested in pursuing a degree in biology, environmental science, education, conservation, or other related fields.
- Coursework, extracurricular activities, or related volunteer work is a plus.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

\$20.00 - \$22.00 an hour

This internship offers a range of benefits, including comprehensive Naturalist training, practical experience collaborating with Conservation staff, opportunities for professional development and networking, as well as skill building and invaluable firsthand conservation experience.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMITMENT

Catalina Island Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability status, genetics, marital status, medical condition, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a resume and cover letter to jobs@catalinaconservancy.org, listing the job title in the subject line. All applications must be submitted online, and interviews will be scheduled by appointment. Thank you for your understanding.

We welcome applications from all qualified individuals and encourage students from the Avalon community to apply.

OUR STORY

The mission of the Catalina Island Conservancy is to be an exemplary steward of Island resources through a balance of conservation, education, and recreation.

The Conservancy's vision is for a beautifully functioning Island ecosystem for all to enjoy.

Just off the densely populated Southern California coast, Catalina Island is home to approximately 4,000 year-round residents and more than 60 endemic species of plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth.

The Catalina Island Conservancy protects 88 percent of Catalina Island's approximately 48,000 acres, including the region's longest publicly accessible undeveloped coastline.

The Conservancy is a research and conservation leader, protecting and restoring vulnerable habitats and species in its Mediterranean climate. Conservancy staff guides Island ecosystem recovery with the goal of generating a resilient, self-sustaining ecosystem with no endangered forms of life.

The Conservancy offers recreational experiences and educational programs for not only the 300,000 annual visitors who choose to visit the unique and special Conservancy "Wildlands Ecosystems" but also inspires the nearly 1.2 million visitors to other parts of the Island.

Recreation, educational engagement, service opportunities, and partnerships connect the Island's unique resources to people's lives, inspiring environmental stewardship and action.

The Catalina Island Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charity established in 1972 to protect and restore Catalina Island for future generations to experience and enjoy.