

Aquarist (Native Freshwater Fish and Fauna)

Grade: 8

Reports to: Curator
Job Status: Non-Exempt, Full-Time

Department: Husbandry
Approval Date: October 2020

Job Summary:

Primarily responsible for the management of assigned native freshwater aquatic animal exhibits, demonstrating exceptional animal care and supporting public education goals; duties include all aspects of daily care, including feeding, cleaning, diving with scuba and surface supply, animal training and enrichment, and related record keeping; ability to collect, acquire and transportation of native freshwater fish, interaction with aquarium visitors, proper water quality and life support system maintenance and improvements

Essential Functions:

- Knowledge of South Carolina native freshwater fish and fauna
- Select, locate, and acquire desired specimens primarily via local collection efforts
- Evaluate animal health and life support requirements to maintain excellent animal health and welfare
- Develop and distribute a proper nutritional diet
- Quarantine and administer medications to animals
- Support the aquarium's animal behavior management program, including enrichment and training activities
- Maintain proper water quality in all assigned systems
- Maintain exhibit aesthetics, including proper tank and filter operation and periodic renovations
- Design, construct, and maintain life support systems
- Exhibit a high level of organization and daily backup area cleanliness
- Periodically interact with aquarium guests, providing education and conservation information
- Maintain accurate animal and enclosure records, supporting the daily use and advanced development of animal information software, TRACKS
- Order supplies and maintain equipment
- Perform dive related tank maintenance on any aquarium system as required
- Provide coverage for other Husbandry positions as required
- Be flexible with work schedule, being able to work weekends, holidays and evenings
- Work unsupervised and make decisions consistent with the team philosophy
- Periodically dive with and handle sharks, rays, venomous fish, eels and sea turtles
- Supervise Volunteers and Interns, providing mentorship and support for the aquarium's internship program
- Adhere to all South Carolina Aquarium policies and procedures
- Assist aquarium staff and visitors as needed in a pleasant, professional and courteous manner

Other Duties and Responsibilities:

- Supports the mission by participating in Aquarium sponsored programs and events on a regular basis, such as daily education programs, membership programs, and fundraising activities.
- Assist in the continual development of exhibits and educational programs that align with aquarium goals
- Other responsibilities as assigned (including meeting attendance, committee service, public relations support, social media content development)
- May be called upon to serve on the ride out team during severe weather/building closure

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- One year of experience using a backpack electrofisher and seins in streams
- Ability to recognize and prevent animal diseases
- Ability to properly collect and handle specimens
- Good working knowledge of water quality
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Understanding of the mechanical equipment necessary to maintain living exhibits, including sand filters, water pumps, protein skimmers, heat exchangers, ozone and UV filters
- Knowledge and demonstrated skill of minor plumbing, carpentry and electrical work
- Proficient in all MS Office Products including: Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook
- Ability to pass dive physical, dive skill evaluation and swim test within 2 months of hire
- Experience with diving in an aquarium setting
- Skilled in boat handling and navigation

Education and Experience Required:

- BS in biology, aquatic biology or a closely related field
- Minimum of 3 years' experience working with native freshwater fish

Licenses and Certifications Required:

- SCUBA Certification
- South Carolina Driver's License within 60 days of hire

Physical Requirements:

Requires average walking, standing, bending, stooping, and crouching, climbing ladders, sitting, kneeling, balancing, pushing and pulling, crawling, working with tools, computer tasks and phone usage; must be able to lift/carry at least 50 lbs.; requires driving Aquarium vehicles;

Working Conditions:

This position requires works in both an office environment and outdoors, sometimes in extreme weather including both hot and cold; requires weekend and late night work as needed; requires contact with customers, the general public, and outside vendors; requires carrying a cell phone and radio; requires occasional travel.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by people assigned to this classification. They are not construed to be an exhaustive list of all job duties performed by the personnel classified. The Aquarium is an "at-will" employer, and as such, employment with the Aquarium is not for a fixed term, or definite period and may be terminated at the will of either party, with or without cause, and without prior notice.