



## Animal Care Specialist Intern: Herpetology & Aquatics

The Herps and Aquatics department houses a significant portion of Brookfield Zoo Chicago's fish, invertebrates, reptiles, and amphibians. Herpetology (Herp) interns will gain hands-on experience caring for these animals in a dynamic and challenging setting, preparing them for future careers in animal care and training. The objective of the internship program is to equip interns with skills that are transferable to any animal facility, while also demonstrating how we deliver exceptional animal care.

Interns in this department will collaborate closely with keepers to learn about the husbandry and management of various species, including fish, snakes, turtles, caecilians, frogs, salamanders, lizards, and crocodilians. They will be involved in diet preparation, exhibit maintenance and design, record-keeping, animal training, life support maintenance and design, animal observations, incubation techniques, and animal handling techniques. Through their direct work with keepers and engagement with recommended reading materials, interns will gain practical experience in keeper duties and understand various aspects of captive animal management.

As part of their internship, interns are required to undertake a brief research project related to any aspect of animal husbandry they choose. Suggested topics may include coral growth, coral fragmentation study, light studies, iguana habituation, tarantula breeding, and more. Our aim is to provide interns with a comprehensive experience and foundational skills essential for starting a career in animal care.

## AT A GLANCE

**PAY RATE:** Unpaid

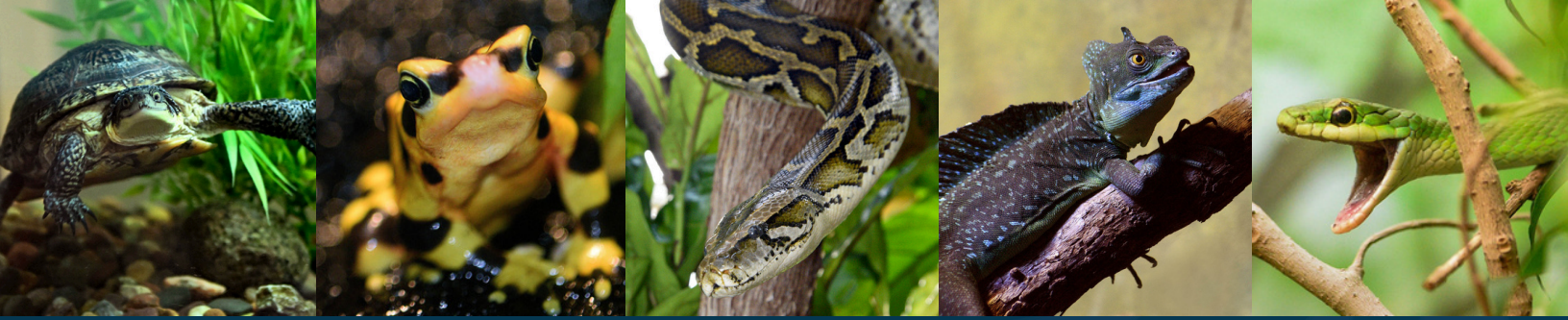
**HOURS/WEEK:** Full Time (35+ hours/week)

**COMMITMENT:** 10-12 weeks

**LOCATION:** Onsite at Brookfield Zoo Chicago

**PREREQUISITE:** At least 1 year of college credit & experience

**COLLEGE CREDIT:** Available upon request



## Position Details: Herps & Aquatics

### Physical Requirements

Animal Care Specialist positions are physically demanding, and interns may be subjected to a variety of physical demands and environmental factors and exposures. Candidates must have the ability to perform essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations, such as:

- Ability to stand, walk, kneel, or squat for extended periods.
- Ability to lift up to 50 pounds regularly
- Comfort working outdoors in varying and extreme weather conditions, including inclement weather, extreme heat, and cold temperatures.

All interns, regardless of proximity to animals, must have an up to date TDAP (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis) vaccination (booster within the last 10 years) and test negative for TB (Tuberculosis) within the last 12 months.

### Scheduling Expectations

Brookfield Zoo Chicago operates 365 days a year. Schedules vary by position, but may include weekends, holidays, early mornings, and evenings. Successful interns exemplify a positive attitude, strong work ethic, an eagerness to learn, and an ability to work effectively both in a team and independently. Given the competitive landscape of professional animal care, candidates should be mindful of the following scheduling requirements:

- Must be willing to commit to 10-12 weeks in a term, not to exceed 480 total hours.
- Availability is required for the full internship term, including weekdays, weekends, holidays, early mornings, and evenings.
- Schedules may change based on animal and departmental needs, with advance notice provided whenever possible.
- Any anticipated scheduling conflicts should be disclosed during the interview process.

### Preferred Qualifications

- Preference is given to those who have completed at least 2 years of college.
- Multilingual ability, Spanish fluency a plus.