

PDXWildlife

Giant Panda Internship – May 14th to Aug 3rd, 2018



Deadline to Apply: February 23rd, 2018

Decision Notification: February 30th, 2018

Cost: \$2500

Timeframe: May 14th, 2017 to August 3rd, 2018 (81 days)

We encourage anyone (all backgrounds, all ages) interested in researching Giant Pandas to apply. However, the majority of the applicants are usually undergraduate seniors or recently graduated biology/conservation majors. Your primary responsibilities will be to conduct research on Giant Panda Stereotypic and Endocrinology Projects.

Location

PDXWildlife has two research location- Gengda (Wolong) and Ya'an, Sichuan, China. Everyone will train together at Ya'an, and then the group will divide between the two research bases. You will work closely with the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda (CCRCGP) to research the effects of behavior on reproductive success in captive giant pandas. The interns primary job will be daily tracking of panda locations to track familiarity, score stereotypic observations, and prepare fecal samples for hormone analysis. Other duties might include, cataloging fecal samples, downloading videos weekly, and writing a bi-monthly blog post.

Conservation Focus

With connections to the San Diego Zoo and CCRCGP this internship provides a well-rounded and practical experience perfect for building a career in international biological conservation or zoo biology. PDXWildlife has an excellent track record for helping past interns with their resumes, writing letters of recommendation, and job searching.

Importance

This project has the potential to improve captive breeding methods currently utilized by both zoological and private breeding facilities of endangered species. Given the predicted results, the San Diego Zoo and CCRCGP can provide a model system of captive breeding that integrates both genetic and behavioral information to determine optimal mating pairs. It seems clear that conservation breeding

programs in zoos and breeding centers have much to gain from a more integrated approach, addressing both the importance of genetic management and natural mating preferences.

Local Living

Accommodations have with running hot water, electricity, and internet. Heaters are either by gas or electric and are provided in the housing if you are staying over the winter months. You will be expected to keep up with daily housekeeping, cooking and shopping on your own.

Panda interns are expected to work independently, with only minimal supervision, managing their own time and meeting any assigned deadlines. You will usually be able to take at least one or two days off each week, depending on current work priorities.

On approved days off you can hike, go wildlife watching or take trips to other cities but this will all be on your own money. There are various cultural events you may attend with local friends, such as festivals and national holidays, which can provide a fascinating and very personal insight into local traditions.

Medical facilities are extremely basic; anything beyond a minor medical emergency would require international evacuation where full medical facilities are available. All interns are required to have adequate insurance to cover any costs that ensue, since a full medical evacuation back to Europe could cost up to 100,000GBP. We will need relevant medical history and proof of travel insurance if selected.

Language

You will be encouraged to learn some of the Chinese language in order to be integrated as fully as possible into the community during your stay. This will come quickly with daily immersion and opportunities to practice with local staff and students. It is a good idea to bring a dictionary and audio learning materials with you in order to facilitate your studies.

Intern Contribution

Interns are required to work for a minimum of ~3 months (refer to dates listed above) and pay a contribution of **\$2500 USD** for the entire stay. This funding will contribute to the individual's accommodation and research- associated costs during the internship (see below).

All interns are required to cover their own travel to the country and insurance. We require proof of insurance before starting the internship. You are also required to cover your own food expenses. Average costs for shopping at the local grocery store is ~50 USD per week. Interns should budget approximately ~500 USD for food (grocery store and dining out) while conducting their internship.

All interns are required to get their Chinese Visa on their own (PDXWildlife will help you with all questions). These can be obtained via sending your passport and visa application materials to the closest Chinese consulate or through Trivisa.com. Please contact your local consulate or Trivisa for further details. Depending on the visa that you are approved for, you will possibly have to extend your visa in country at your own cost.

Qualifications

- Willing and able to serve a minimum of a 3 months or the above listed timeframe.
- Undergraduate, graduate, or degree in Conservation Biology, Biology, Natural Sciences, Education, Environmental Education or related field of studies, or an acceptable combination of education, training and experience.
- Passionate and knowledgeable about endangered species and conservation issues
- Outstanding relationship building skills and ability to connect with people
- Exceptional research, written, communication and presentation skills required
- Excellent organizational and time management skills; ability to prioritize projects and meet deadlines

- Ability to work independently and collaboratively
- Spoken and Written Chinese language ability is a plus... but not required
- References!!! (We need at least two, not related to the applicant)

How to Apply

Candidates are required to send the following items to PDXWildlife by February 23rd, 2018. Our submission email is nate@pdxwildlife.com. Failure to submit any of the below items will cause your application to be incomplete.

- . 1) Resume/CV that includes two references
- . 2) Cover letter (see below)

Please state in your cover letter:

- Where you heard about PDXWildlife
- Details of the experience you have either living / working / traveling in developing countries
- Your level of English & Chinese
- Your level of qualification as it pertains to research involving captive animals, animal behavior, wildlife conservation, and laboratory experience.

Applicants may also be interested in reading our blog and joining our Facebook group for recent news and photos from our programs. We encourage you to email us with any questions you have.

Sincerely, Your PDXWildlife Panda Team

Nathan Wintle & Meghan Martin-Wintle