

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANSC STUDENT EMMA LAWLOR



Q: Where did you intern, and when?

I interned at Southwick's Zoo in Mendon, MA from August 2014- July 2015. I interned twice a week but the time commitment is negotiable, particularly during the school year.

Q: Was it a paid internship? What did you do there?

This was not a paid internship but college credit can be earned. I spent my first 8 months as an Earth Discovery Center Intern. The Earth department is a great place to start because it exposes you to a large variety of species. The animals I care for on a daily basis included various arthropods, reptiles, birds, and mammals (tarantulas, scorpions, lizards, crocodylians, turtles, tortoises, snakes, parrots, owls, marmosets, sloths, potbellied pigs, and kangaroos just to name a few). Every day I started out by cleaning enclosures and feeding each animal. Some days I went with a keeper on "zoo mobiles" or in school presentations. On weekends we would have in zoo shows educating guests on animal adaptations and conservation issues. I got to prep diets, create behavioral enrichment, and train show animals. I also assisted with several unique projects such as bringing in the kangaroos for the winter, hand rearing a coati and kangaroo, building a painting devise for our porcupine, and assisting with various medical procedures.

I will now be moving into the primate and hoof stock departments for the next few months. I have shadowed in both departments throughout my time as an Earth Intern and am excited for the opportunity to gain more hands on experience with a variety of new species.



Some enrichment I designed at the zoo: A Christmas tree with edible decorations for the porcupine, a painting apparatus for the porcupine, and jack o lantern enrichment for the bush baby

Q: When did you apply for this internship?

I applied the summer before my senior year, but any current college student or recent graduate is eligible to apply!

Q: How long did the internship last?

A typical internship at Southwick's lasts 3-5 months, but I loved it so much I stayed longer!

Q: How did you learn about this opportunity?

I found out about this internship online at <http://www.earthltd.org/internships/>

Q: Anything else you'd like to add about your experience?

This internship is unique because it allows more hands on experience than many other zoological internships. I have watched a giraffe birth, bottle fed many neonatal animals, assisted with medical procedures, and even spear headed some of my own training and enrichment projects during my time at Southwick's. I have gotten to know all of the keepers and management in my department and others and have learned a lot from each of them. Each day is different at the zoo, and in my 9 months and counting I have learned something new every day!

Q: What is your area of interest as an ANSC major?

I am most interested in exotic animals and behavioral husbandry.

Q: So, what are your plans when you graduate?

I am planning on attending the Exotic Animal Training and Management program at Moorpark College and working toward a career in the zoo industry.

Q: If someone has questions, can they contact you regarding your internship experience?

Of course! My email address is lawlorejl@gmail.com and I would be more than happy to answer any and all questions!

