



Job Advert: Research Internship, CIRCLE

Deadline for applications 15th Aug 2011 – Interviews to be held Monday August 22nd

Title: Research Intern (three vacancies).

Time period: 1 year (1st October 2011 – 30th Sept 2012; dates flexible).

Pay: Voluntary (accommodation may be provided; part-time vacancies in the on-site catering and retail outlets will be available during summer months; subsidised food available in the staff canteen).

Working hours: Flexible. To be determined in agreement with zoo staff upon arrival.

Qualifications needed: Registration for B.Sc. or equivalent in a relevant field (e.g. conservation, zoology, psychology, education, environmental science). New graduates or sandwich year students are encouraged.

Experience needed: None. However, proven willingness to gain experience beyond the standard university education is strongly recommended. The position would suit someone seeking to gain practical research experience and training for a career in conservation, animal behaviour, education or zoo management.

Personal attributes: Hard working. Enthusiastic. Excellent inter-personal skills.

About CIRCLE: The Centre for the Integration of Research, Conservation and Learning is a new collaborative initiative between the University of York (a world top 100 university and Times Higher Education University of the Year) and the UK's most visited zoo, Flamingo Land (Malton, North Yorkshire). The aim of CIRCLE is to carry out ground-breaking research that will contribute to the conservation of wild animals and places, and to disseminate the information in a manner that is accessible, interesting and fun.

About Flamingo Land: The zoo at Flamingo Land is part of a global network of zoos and aquariums working together to manage the captive population of threatened animals, to educate visitors on biodiversity conservation and to raise funds for conservation causes. Included among the 130 animal species at Flamingo Land are several animals on the European Endangered Species Program, managed by a dedicated team of zoo staff. The park is unique among UK zoos as the site is shared with a large theme park and holiday village. The diversity of attractions includes a record-breaking roller-coaster, acrobats from Tanzania, educational zoo trails and a wide variety of shows, cafes, bars and restaurants. Together the zoo and theme park attract around 1.4 million visitors annually.

Job Description: As a research intern you will be based at Flamingo Land and responsible for carrying out a one-year research project in one of four disciplines (see page 2). The internship will begin with literature review and methodological planning under the guidance of experts in animal behaviour, conservation biology and education from the University of York and Flamingo Land. Interns will then undertake the research for a number of months before summarising their findings in a report. Development of a scientific paper will be strongly encouraged and interns will receive guidance in this. Interns will also make a final presentation on their work to zoo staff and at a relevant conference, and will be encouraged to participate in the general activities of the zoo, including fundraising events, meetings and public engagements. Interns will also have the opportunity to attend lectures and practical classes in applied ecology, quantitative methods using the advanced statistical package R, and other relevant courses at the University of York. Each intern will also have the opportunity to perform additional duties such as assisting in primary school classes, animal husbandry, library maintenance and presentations to the general public.

Submission requirements: cv, covering letter (stating one or more of the four research disciplines that you are interested in), full contact details for two referees (at least one from an institution of higher learning), copy of degree certificate (or most recent exam result transcript).

Postal applications: Dr. Andrew Marshall, Environment Department, University of York, YO10 5DD.

E-mail enquiries/applications: volunteers@flamingoland.co.uk. **Telephone enquiries:** 07725 010100

Four Disciplines of Research at Flamingo Land

1. Tropical Forest Conservation: Flamingo Land's Udzungwa Forest Project (UFP) in Tanzania carries out conservation research on tropical forest management, habitat restoration and monkey population ecology. The research will assist the Director of Conservation Science in analysis of field data. The most recent data gathered will include tree plot data from the range of the kipunji, one of the world's rarest monkeys. Using these data Flamingo Land and UFP are keen to determine the habitat requirements of this critically endangered primate. Other research data from the Magombera forest will include population counts of endangered colobus monkeys and growth rates of trees in disturbed areas of forest. Together it is hoped that these data will contribute to understanding forest regeneration for reversing the disastrous effects of deforestation on plants and animals. The intern will gain skills in tropical plant identification, statistical analysis and methods for surveying animal populations. The intern will also be encouraged to apply for grants to assist with fieldwork in Tanzania, and to assist with general fundraising and marketing.

2. Animal Management / Behaviour: The research will aim to understand the fundamentals of animal behaviour while also assisting in animal management. Key species under research at Flamingo Land include the scimitar-horned oryx, which is extinct in the wild and therefore entirely dependent on zoo populations for its continued existence. Zoo Management staff also have particular expertise in primates, following many years researching their behaviour and conservation. Of the various primates housed at Flamingo Land, the chimpanzees, Hamadryas baboons and white-crowned mangabeys all show complex behaviours of interest for understanding social interaction and contributing to Flamingo Land's ongoing environmental enrichment work. As members of the IUCN Flamingo Specialist Group Flamingo Land is also particularly keen to develop continuing research into flamingo breeding behaviour and husbandry.

3. Education (POST FILLED): Following a recent Knowledge Transfer Partnership Grant for education research and development, Flamingo Land is striving to become a nationwide leader in zoo education science. Flamingo Land's education program is linked to the national curriculum and covers various areas of wildlife conservation and natural history. The research will assist in the evaluation of various components of the education program, working closely with our Zoo Education Strategist. Education research is particularly rare among zoological collections, but will be important for understanding the best form of teaching practice for conveying environmental and conservation messages. Research opportunities may therefore include interpretation of zoo signage, effectiveness of different animal exhibits for holding visitor attention, evaluation of teaching methods and visitor surveys to determine the level of information transfer.

4. Native Conservation: The 375 acre site at Flamingo Land has various areas of land set aside for conservation of native wildlife. The research will help to understand the wildlife and develop habitat management. Flamingo Land is working closely with Natural England and the David Bellamy Conservation Award Scheme to improve habitat management for native wildlife. Although some data are already available, Flamingo Land is particularly keen to develop baseline data for all types of wildlife including plants, amphibians and vertebrates. These data will assist long-term monitoring and the continued development of the Flamingo Land Biodiversity Plan. Research opportunities could also investigate the biodiversity benefits of management practices including tree-planting, arboriculture, seeding and hedge-laying. British Trust for Ornithology bird ringers also work with zoo staff to survey native birds and zoo staff monitor the indigenous bat species.