

Exotic Animal Care Internship

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge – Northwest Arkansas

About the Organization Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge (TCWR) is a GFAS-accredited non-profit sanctuary dedicated to rescuing abused, abandoned, and unwanted big cats. Located in the beautiful Ozark Mountains of Northwest Arkansas, our refuge provides a lifetime home for over 100 rescued animals, including tigers, lions, bears, and more.

Position Overview We are seeking self-motivated and passionate individuals for a full-time, six-month internship. This physically demanding role offers an incredible opportunity to gain hands-on experience in exotic animal husbandry. Interns are crucial members of our team and must have a strong desire to provide the highest standard of care to our animal residents. The ideal candidate is observant, able to keep detailed records, and works well both independently and as part of a team.

Key Responsibilities

- **Animal Husbandry:** Provide daily care for a variety of species including Tigers, Lions, Cougars, Black Bears, Brown Bears, Leopards, Servals, Bobcats, a Jaguar, and a Hyena.
- **Public Education:** Inform the public about our resident species and the big cat crisis in the United States.
- **Habitat Maintenance:** Ensure animal safety through daily exhibit checks, routine landscaping, clearing underbrush, and providing creative animal enrichment.
- **Diet Preparation:** Prepare specialized diets with prescribed supplements, maintain high standards of food quality and hygiene, and monitor each animal's food intake and waste output.
- **Health Monitoring:** Maintain detailed daily records of animal behavior, appetite, and health to quickly identify and report any signs of illness or abnormality.
- **Rescue Support:** Assist with preparations for animal rescue operations as needed.

Qualifications

- A degree in Zoology, Biology, or a related field is preferred.
- Relevant experience in exotic animal husbandry may be considered in lieu of a degree.
- Must be highly self-motivated, observant, and detail-oriented.
- Ability to perform strenuous physical work in varying weather conditions.

- Strong teamwork and communication skills.

Compensation & Benefits

- A weekly stipend of \$100.
- Free on-site housing is provided for the duration of the internship.
- **Housing Amenities:** Heat, A/C, paid utilities, full bath, kitchen, washer & dryer, TV and internet service.

Internship Schedule (Spring 2026 Session)

- **Positions Available:** 15
- **Internship Duration:** 6 months
- **Start Date:** February 1, 2026
- **Application Deadline:** November 1, 2025

How to Apply

Interested candidates should email a cover letter, resume, and two (2) letters of recommendation by the deadline to:

Emily McCormack

Animal Curator

Email: emily@turpentinecreek.org