Fall Visiting Naturalist Field Instructor Job Description

Job Summary: Have fun, work outdoors, and make a difference this fall as a Field Instructor with the Montana Natural History Center! Instructors will provide leadership and instruction for the full-day Visiting Naturalist in the Schools fall field trips, located at natural areas throughout the Missoula area.

The Visiting Naturalist in the Schools (VNS) program brings professional naturalists into 4th and 5th grade classrooms to teach science and the natural history of western Montana. Seven months out of the year we work at the school itself. During the remaining two months, we go on day-long field trips to local natural areas where students take wildlife hikes with binoculars, learn about insects, and explore local flora and fauna. The VNS Field Instructor will lead stations on these field trips during the month of October.

Commitment: This is a 6-week position running from Monday, September 25 – Friday, November 3, 2017. The work week will average 30 hours, five days a week, approximately 6 hours/day. Days generally range from 8:00am to 2:00pm, though this may vary by field trip location, with some days shorter and some longer. All field staff will participate in two mandatory days of training prior to leading field trips, September 25th and 26th. There will be two days off on October 19th and 20th, when all Montana schools are closed, and other days off may occasionally be assigned as our teaching schedule requires.

Benefits:
• Experience teaching a variety of natural science curricula in an outdoor setting
• Spend the fall exploring, teaching, and learning in local natural areas
• Expand and enhance your knowledge of natural history, place-based, and inquiry-based education
• $10.00/hour. (Total hours worked cannot exceed 150)

Specific Duties:
• Teach groups of six to ten 4th or 5th grade students on day-long natural history field trips on topics that could include local wildlife, birds, plants, and insects. This will include teaching provided curriculum activities, as well as taking advantage of teachable moments that may arise.
• Mentor volunteers who will help teach stations and serve as a role model for our young naturalists.
• Maintain field equipment on an ongoing basis

Qualifications:
• Undergraduate degree in related field (or equivalent experience).
• Experience teaching, preferably elementary-aged children in an outdoor setting.

Our mission is to promote and cultivate the appreciation, understanding, and stewardship of nature through education.
Our mission is to promote and cultivate the appreciation, understanding, and stewardship of nature through education.

- Knowledge of local flora and fauna
- Must be self-motivated and be able to work efficiently both individually and as a team. Individuals will work closely with staff Naturalists and volunteers.
- Commitment to stewardship and hands-on, experiential education.
- Flexibility, dependability, responsibility, and a positive attitude
- Valid driver’s license, clean driving record and willing to use personal transportation (will be reimbursed as necessary for mileage).
- Although this position is mostly based outdoors, basic computer skills are necessary.
- Current First Aid/CPR certification

This position is subject to:
- Criminal Background Check
- 30 day probationary period—may be terminated during this time without cause

To apply:
Submit a cover letter, resume, and contact information for 3 professional references to spotts@montanaturalist.org. Please write “VNS Field Instructor” in the subject line. Application review will begin September 1st, with priority given to applications received before that date. After September 1st, applications will continue to be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until all positions are filled.

For questions, contact Stephanie Potts at 406-327-0405 or spotts@montanaturalist.org.