



Montana Natural History Center

Connecting People with Nature

120 Hickory Street
Missoula, MT 59801
406.327.0405

www.MontanaNaturalist.org



Position Title: Teaching Naturalist
Position Category: Part-time (average 20 hrs per week) Non- Exempt
Start Date: August 26, 2019
Salary: \$14.00/hr

Scope of Position:

The Teaching Naturalist will be a key part of the Montana Natural History Center’s teaching team, providing instruction and program support for MNHC programs including Visiting Naturalist in the Schools, Summer Camps, and others. Duties will primarily include teaching, working with volunteers and interns, material prep, and organizational outreach.

This position averages 20 hours per week, but weekly hours will vary slightly based on the Visiting Naturalist in the Schools teaching schedule and other programmatic needs. Total hours are not to exceed 1040 hours annually. Much of this work time will occur during the school day, but teaching naturalists are also expected to be available to work weekends or evenings as needed and scheduled. During the school year, the majority of this position’s time is devoted to teaching Visiting Naturalist in the Schools classes to 4th and 5th grade students. Teaching naturalists will work with the Youth Programs Coordinator and their VNS teachers to set a schedule that is mutually agreeable for the teachers and the naturalist. During school breaks, and at other times as needed, the Teaching Naturalist will also work in other MNHC educational and outreach programs.

Benefits:

- Paid vacation, holiday, and sick leave
- Discounts for all Montana Natural History Center programs
- Participation in professional development opportunities and a reflective teaching community that values ongoing innovation and skill development to meet our educational goals. This includes training in environmental education best practices, ability to participate in professional organizations like the Montana Environmental Education Association, and learning opportunities around natural history topics.
- \$14.00/hour

To Apply for this Position:

First, read the entire job description below.

Then, send an email to Stephanie Potts, Youth Programs Coordinator at spotts@montananaturalist.org with the following materials:

1. A cover letter detailing why you are interested in the position and how you are specifically qualified to be a Teaching Naturalist with the Montana Natural History Center
2. A resume detailing relevant experience to this position, both professional and personal/volunteer
3. Contact information (both email and phone is preferred) for 3 references who can speak to your ability to teach others and to work as part of a professional team



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You MUST put *“Teaching Naturalist Application”* in the subject line in order for your application to be reviewed.

Application review will begin Monday, July 29th. Applicants are encouraged to apply before July 29th for best consideration. Applications received after the deadline will be reviewed on a rolling basis only if needed.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Provide lead instruction for 15-20 Visiting Naturalist in the Schools classrooms (4th and 5th grade students) from September-May, including full-day outdoor field trips in October and May
- Provide instruction and support for full day Summer Outdoor Discovery Day Camp programs in June-August
- Provide instruction for other school-aged youth activities, including developing and leading programming during spring break and when school is not in session
- Lead additional educational activities when available for the Center Tour program, miniNaturalist preschool program, Saturday Kids’ Activities, pop-up programming, Travelling Naturalist/Museum on the Go, and other community outreach activities
- Actively participate in professional development opportunities and reflective teaching practices to continuously develop skills and experience in best teaching practices
- Assist with preparation and maintenance of materials for lessons, as well as other educational resources and collections
- Assist with training, supervision, and recognition of interns and volunteers
- Assist with teacher and educator workshops
- Participate in evaluation of programs and curricula
- Maintain clear and consistent communication with appropriate staff, supervisors, VNS teachers, and others
- Contribute as appropriate to the website content, *Field Notes*, and *Montana Naturalist Magazine*
- Assist with other programs and other duties as assigned

Required Qualifications:

- Minimum 1 year (combined) naturalist experience in the role of a teacher/educator, ideally in the field and in the classroom
- Experience with, and willingness to work primarily with elementary-school audiences
- Ability to use or comfort learning how to use basic naturalist tools, and ability to teach others how to do so. (For example, ability to teach 4th graders how to use field journals, binoculars, weather instruments, aquatic and terrestrial insect nets, maps, microscopes, etc.)
- Interest and engagement with the study of natural history. Desire and willingness to learn more about the natural history of the local area
- Flexibility and a positive attitude to deal with things like weather, teacher schedule changes, kid group dynamics, and other unexpected circumstances that may arise
- Proven ability to plan and implement educational activities using a variety of curriculum sources



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- Proven oral & written communication skills with supervisors, co-workers, and others
- Strong organizational skills, including the ability to manage multiple teaching dates and other calendar events, maintain communications with many people at once, and keep equipment organized and well-maintained
- Proven ability to work independently with little direct supervision as well as in a team environment
- Ability to accept responsibility, act professionally in all situations, and be self-motivated
- Valid driver’s license, clean driving record and willing to use personal transportation to get to teaching sites. Many teaching sites are in Missoula, but we do travel as far as Hamilton and Pablo for VNS lessons. MNHC reimburses for work-related travel at the federal mileage rate.
- Must be willing and able to drive a small school bus and transport passengers and equipment. This does not require a CDL. MNHC will provide training to help with this process.
- Willingness to work and teach both outdoors (for up to a full day, in all conditions) and indoors
- Ability to lift and transport up to 40 lbs. of equipment for up to ½ mile over potentially uneven terrain
- Willingness to work weekends and evenings as necessary
- Ability to use basic computer programs including Google suite (email, Drive, Sheets, etc.), Microsoft Word and Excel, and others
- Willingness to work to meet goals of organization above and beyond assigned duties

Additional Desired Qualifications:

- Proven ability to deliver educational and interpretive natural history programs such as nature walks, field trips, and group presentations on a wide range of topics
- Experience teaching a wide range of audiences from young children to adults
- Proficiency in natural history knowledge of NW Montana, including a broad knowledge of native flora and fauna, cultural history of the region, and understanding of ecological processes and systems common in the region
- Practical knowledge of methodologies in natural history education. (Examples include constructivist learning theory; place-, inquiry-, and project-based learning; interdisciplinary learning; service learning; hands-on approach to learning; etc.)
- Experience and interest in recording and studying nature as an artist, writer, and/or scientist
- Proven ability to develop, write, and implement curriculum
- At least a B.A. or B.S, or equivalent life experience, in a related field (i.e. Education, Environmental Studies, Biology, Environmental Science, Conservation, Environmental Education, etc.)

Reporting Relationships:

Teaching Naturalist reports to and is supervised by the Youth Programs Coordinator, with additional supervision by the Community and Museum Program Coordinators as needed for programs.

This position is subject to a 6-month probationary period, and is conditional upon passing a criminal background check.



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