

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Park Naturalist I
SERIES: Natural Science

GRADE: G
DATE: 06/22/99
FLSA: Exempt

CODE: 4410

Class Definition

Under direction, provides interpretive, recreational and educational programs in natural and cultural history to the public. Park Naturalists I apply knowledge of natural, life and physical sciences to develop programs relating to natural and cultural history, environmental education, nature crafts or outdoor skills for visitors to Commission parks and nature facilities. Employees research subjects, develop a program plan and design, and upon approval, take all necessary steps to complete a program. Park Naturalist I's participate in the design and development of larger or more extensive programs led by senior naturalist staff. Assignments for Naturalists I are intended, in part, to increase the knowledge and understanding of area natural and cultural history, and to develop skills in developing and presenting nature programs. Park Naturalist I's are capable of presenting a variety of different programs and providing appropriate scientific information regarding natural and cultural history subjects to visitors. Work is usually reviewed by senior or supervisory naturalist staff, who provide work direction and guidance. Performs other related duties as assigned.

Essential Job Functions:

1. Provides interpretive, recreational and educational programs in natural and cultural history to the public. Researches subjects and develops program plans; upon approval, takes all necessary steps to complete a program including preparing presentation materials, aids and a presenter's guide. Presents programs of own design or those of others to varied groups; responds to questions from the groups, explaining the natural processes involved.
2. Participates in the design and development of larger or more extensive programs under the direction of senior naturalist staff. Conducts research for programs and develops parts of or designated aspects of larger and more extensive programs. Presents or assists in presenting such programs to the public.
3. Responds to visitor, telephone, and staff inquiries concerning natural and cultural history and conservation matters. Greets visitors, provides interpretive program information, makes program reservations and collects program and other fees, when appropriate. Promotes positive public relations for nature center programs and encourages public appreciation for the natural environment.
4. Prepares natural and cultural history interpretive materials including interpretive handouts, trail guides, maps and program promotional materials.

Essential Job Functions: (cont.)

5. Researches subjects for programs, collecting information, artifacts and other items for use in programs. Obtains information from conferences, schools, specialists, professional organizations and other sources for use in the development of interpretive programs.
6. Organizes and maintains a multimedia library of naturalist research, program and interpretive materials. Collects, catalogs and maintains natural artifacts such as insects, rocks, minerals and skeletons for program and exhibit use.
7. Plans, develops and maintains interpretive displays and exhibits. Preserves cultural history objects and artifacts. Maintains live animals for display, exhibit and use in various interpretive programs.
8. Assists senior naturalist staff in the research, planning, development and maintenance of outdoor natural history study areas, interpretive gardens and trails; or in conducting conservation and resource management projects such as monitoring water quality, wetlands planting, reforestation projects and wildlife management projects.
9. Participates in studies to identify and evaluate natural resources such as plants, wildlife, wetlands, and geological features in parks.
10. Monitors buildings and grounds to ensure safety, security and cleanliness of facilities. Makes minor repairs to exhibits and other structures. Calls police, fire or rescue personnel in emergencies.
11. May train and lead volunteers, interns and other part-time or occasional staff in work and conservation projects and provide performance assessments of such staff to supervisors as requested.

Important Worker Characteristics:

Good knowledge of: (1) natural, life and physical science; (2) environmental science; (3) principles and practices of interpreting natural history and culture to the public; (4) effective instructional methods and techniques; (5) natural resource management; (6) CPR and first aid; (7) outdoor and water safety; and (8) Commission organization, policies and procedures*.

Skill in operation of: (1) audio-visual equipment; (2) field sampling equipment; (3) camera; and (4) motor boat.*

Important Worker Characteristics: (cont.)

Ability to: (1) plan, develop and present effective interpretive programs to the public; (2) communicate effectively with the staff and the public; (3) write clearly, effectively, and concisely; (4) interpret technical natural and cultural history materials to lay persons; (5) speak clearly and effectively to large groups; (6) provide courteous service; (7) organize work efficiently; and (8) develop program promotional advertising material.

*Developed primarily after employment in this job class.

Minimum Qualifications:

1. Bachelor's degree in Natural, Life or Physical science or related field; and one year of park naturalist experience; or
2. An equivalent combination of education and experience.

Working Conditions

Works in indoor and outdoor settings. Work is scheduled during weekends, evenings, and holidays. Exposed to inclement weather and outdoor hazards.