

## The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Senior Park Naturalist  
SERIES: Natural Science

CODE: 2316

GRADE: 18  
EEO: Professional

DATE: 6/22/21  
FLSA: Exempt

### Class Definition:

Under general supervision, provides interpretive, recreational, and educational programs in natural and cultural history to the public. Researches subjects, develops a program plan and design, and upon approval, takes all necessary steps to complete a program. Presents programs to various groups, responds to questions, and explains natural processes involved. Participates in the design and development of larger or more extensive programs led by higher-level naturalist staff. Assignments 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; 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 higher-level or supervisory naturalist staff, who provide work direction and guidance. As an individual contributor, work results in completed assignments that have a direct impact on matters of the areas of assignment. Applies knowledge of, and skill in, natural, life and physical sciences to develop programs relating to natural and cultural history, environmental education, or outdoor skills for visitors to Commission parks and nature facilities. Independently performs various types of research and analyses to solve regularly occurring problems, including a range of non-standard problems. Interacts with people inside and outside the organization, including the public, to exchange information, coordinate, instruct, guide, advise and obtain agreement or compliance or achieve other desired actions. Performs other duties, as assigned.

Assignments are made in terms of specific duties and responsibilities. The incumbent plans and carries out the work in conformance with established policies and procedures and accepted customer service practices, resolves commonly encountered work problems and deviations by selecting and applying the appropriate guidelines, and brings procedural exceptions and recommendations to the supervisor for guidance or resolution. Work is expected to be accurate and is subject to check for conformance with guidelines, quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and other factors.

### Examples of Important Duties (Estimated Percentages):

#### 1. Core Functions ( $\pm 75\%$ ) – assigned functions vary by position

- 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 the preparation of 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 natural processes involved.
- Participates in design and development of larger or more extensive programs under direction of higher-level 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 public.

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- Provides customer service; responds to guest's inquiries via email, phone and in person regarding matters of natural and cultural history as well as general nature center operations questions; greets visitors courteously, addresses appropriate concerns and directs guests to correct person for matters of greater concern.
  - Researches subjects for programs, collecting information, artifacts, and other items for use in program; obtains information from conferences, schools, specialists, professional organizations, and other sources for use in the development of interpretive programs.
  - 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 by providing daily care including cleaning, food preparation and routine medical care. Adheres to state and federal animal welfare regulations and standards.
  - Prepares natural and cultural history interpretive materials including interpretive handouts, trail guides, maps, and program promotional materials.
  - Performs facility operations including opening and closing procedures, checks in with program participants, collects fees and manages customer experiences; monitors building and grounds to ensure safety and security of facilities. Observes center cleanliness and makes changes as needed; responds to emergency situations and contacts police, fire, or rescue personnel as appropriate.
2. Other ( $\pm 25\%$ )
- Organizes and maintains 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.
  - Researches, plans, develops and maintains outdoor natural history study areas, interpretive gardens, and trails; conducts conservation and resource management projects such as monitoring water quality, wetlands planting, reforestation projects, and wildlife management projects.
  - Participates in studies to identify and evaluate natural resources such as plants, wildlife, wetlands, and geological features in parks.
  - Trains and leads volunteers, interns, and other part-time or occasional staff in work and conservation projects and provides performance assessments of such staff to supervisors as requested.
  - Participates in development of annual community festivals by proposing new activities and program ideas, collecting materials, preparing activities, helping coordinate volunteers for programs and presenting the programs to public during festival.

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### Important Worker Characteristics:

A. Good knowledge of, and skill in (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) outdoor and water safety; (7) cultural history of area\*; (8) specialized animal care\*; (9) education standards\* and (10) Commission organization, policies, and procedures\*.

*\*Typically acquired or fully developed primarily after employment in this job class.*

B. Skill and ability to (1) interpret technical natural and cultural history materials to patrons; (2) provide courteous service; (3) organize work efficiently; (4) develop program promotional advertising material; (5) and provide CPR and first aid.

C. Skill in problem solving to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem.

D. Skill in communication to understand verbal and written information (including facts, descriptions and ideas) and to express such information verbally so that others will understand. Examples include writing clearly, effectively, and concisely; and planning, developing, and presenting effective interpretive programs to the public of various ages.

E. Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented manner; this includes skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships and working as a member of a team.

F. Skill in operation of (1) audio-visual equipment; (2) field sampling equipment; (3) camera; (4) motorboat, canoe, kayak\*; and, (5) computer software. Drive a multi-passenger vehicle for camps and specialized programs, taking animals to the veterinarian, picking up supplies, attending meetings and other needs.

### Minimum Qualifications (MQs):

1. Bachelor's Degree in Natural Science, Life Science, Physical Science or any related field.
2. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total four (4) years.
3. Depending on area of assignment, a valid driver's license in accordance with both State and Commission rules and regulations. Driver's license must be unencumbered by restrictions, revocations, suspensions, or points that could limit the employee's ability to drive Commission vehicles or perform driving duties required by the position of assignment.
4. Pass Commission medical examination.

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Working Conditions:

Works in indoor and outdoor settings. Work is scheduled during weekends, evenings, and holidays. Exposed to inclement weather and outdoor hazards. Incumbents in this class must frequently: remain in a stationary position, move about and position self to complete work, communicate and exchange information with internal staff and the public, distinguish between colors and lift objects and equipment weighting up to 49 pounds. Drives to attend various meetings and educational programs.