

Wildlife Rehabilitation Internship Program

The Organization

Lindsay Wildlife Experience, a natural history, environmental education, and wildlife rehabilitation center located in Walnut Creek, California, connects people with wildlife to inspire responsibility and respect for the world we share. Founded in 1955, Lindsay houses a collection of live native California animals, an Exhibit Hall with hands-on discovery activities for children and changing natural history exhibits, and a wildlife rehabilitation hospital. We are licensed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. With a caseload of over 4,000 native wild animals each year, we are one of the oldest and largest rehabilitation centers in the nation.

The goal of Lindsay's wildlife hospital, started in 1970, is to rehabilitate and return injured and orphaned native wild animals back to their natural habitats. To give them a chance for survival after release, our patients are kept as wild as possible. Animals are handled only when necessary for feeding, cleaning, and medical care; infant animals are raised with their own species and are not socialized by humans.

The Internship Program

This unpaid educational position requires a self-motivated, flexible, and responsible individual with good problem-solving skills for a job that can be intense, fast-paced, and often repetitive. The intern helps with care and treatment of injured or orphaned native California birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

Working in conjunction with Lindsay staff and approximately 200 volunteers, interns are given the opportunity to learn about all aspects of wildlife rehabilitation with hands-on experiences. Wildlife rehabilitation combines aspects of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry, and biology/natural history to provide rehabilitation care specific to each native species. (Lindsay annually sees about 100 species commonly or semi-commonly, with about 100 additional species seen infrequently.)

With the internship, skills you can learn include: identification of the most common species in the region, basic care and husbandry needs of native wildlife, proper handling and restraint procedures for a variety of species, wildlife nutrition, basic bird and mammal anatomy, medication preparation and administration, fluid therapy, basic initial exam procedures, parasitology, microscope skills, basic raptor care, and time management skills. Interns work closely with Wildlife Rehabilitation Technicians, RVTs, volunteers, and veterinarians.

Primary Duties

- General husbandry of all patients in the hospital at any given time, including neonatal birds
- Caring for neonatal birds and mammals, which includes hand feeding, weighing, and cage cleaning
- Prepare species-specific enclosures and diets for incoming and existing patients
- Maintaining a clean working environment in the hospital, which includes sweeping, laundry, dishes, wiping down counters, cleaning syringes, restocking linens, putting away clean supplies or enclosures
- Documenting daily care and special notes for the patients online as well as on paper charts
- Administering oral fluids and medications
- Assisting with exams and medical procedures
- Basic diagnostic lab work

Program Completion Requirements

The program requires completion of:

- A minimum of 200 Intern Program hours, including the 12-week program session.
 - Minimum of three 5.5-hour shifts per week for the 12 session weeks, usually 2 weekday shifts and one weekend day shift per week. Two of the weekly shifts are patient care/husbandry shifts, one shift is a medical shift under the direction of wildlife rehabilitation technicians and veterinarians. Additional medical or husbandry shifts may be added by prior arrangement.
 - Shifts are usually 8:00 am - 1:30 pm (AM shift) or 1:30 pm - 7:00 pm (PM shift)
 - During “baby bird season” (May – August) there is opportunity for additional shift coverage from 7:30 - 8:00 am and 7:00 - 8:00 pm. During the extended shift hours there is more opportunity to work closely with the technicians.
 - Includes weekend and holiday shifts.
 - Alternate scheduling, including an extended timeframe later in the season, may be available by prior arrangement. Interns can choose to continue on after their session ends to receive more advanced hands-on instruction and accumulate additional hours.
- All required training, including orientation classes on Sunday May 24th and Monday May 25th, and weekly class sessions on Monday evenings from 6:00 – 8:30 pm. (Some of the required training may require attendance on a non-shift day.)
- An intern project.

Program Session

The 12-week Intern Program session is scheduled to align with college/university semester system calendars. The program session includes required orientation classes on Sunday, May 24th and Monday, May 25th, and regularly scheduled “hands-on” training classes on Monday evenings from 6:00 – 8:30 pm. Interns are expected to be on-site with a regular work schedule.

- **May 24 - August 15:** Timed to correspond with common college/university semester system summer breaks.

There is the opportunity, by previous arrangement, to start husbandry shifts at an earlier date, gaining additional credit for intern program hours. An early start requires acceptance into the hospital shift volunteer program and completion of initial training.

Application Process and Program Updates

For current program information, updates, and important dates, please go to:

- <https://sites.google.com/lindsaywildlife.org/lindsayvolunteeropportunities/wildlife-rehabilitation-hospital/internships>

Candidate Requirements

- Minimum age of 18 at the start of the program
- Must follow current Personal Protective Equipment requirements, including wearing a mask as required.
- Ability to work well both independently and with others
- Ability to follow directions
- Ability to professionally and productively handle stressful/difficult situations
- Ability to bend, kneel, twist, stoop, squat, reach, lift and move 20-pound objects, and do repetitive tasks
- Ability to stand on a concrete floor for long periods of time
- Ability to prepare diets which may include live/dead mealworms or mice
- Must be willing to get their hands dirty
- Can tolerate unique or sometimes unpleasant smells
- Can work well in sometimes loud, busy environments

- Willing to work outdoors in various weather conditions for short periods of time
- Emotional ability to work with injured and/or orphaned wildlife, which will involve exposure to death, suffering, and possible euthanasia
- Science background preferred

How to Apply

To apply, submit a cover letter, resume, and a summary of availability (there is an online form for submitting availability at the updates link above) for a program session. References or letters of recommendation that would assist in our evaluation may be included.

- Email submission to: hospitalrecruiting@lindsaywildlife.org
- Please include “Intern Application” as part of the email subject line.

Note: If your work experience and references are not directly related to the field, then the cover letter becomes very important, relating your past experience and career goals to the wildlife rehabilitation intern position.

Important Dates

Application deadline:

Lindsay reviews applications:

Lindsay schedules interviews:

Lindsay notifies applicants of decision:

11:59 PM April 1, 2026

April 2 – 4, 2026

April 5 – April 11, 2026

By April 19, 2026

- **If accepted, please let us know within 7 days whether or not you will accept the internship position.**

Deadline to accept internship and submit required paperwork:

Shift schedules are posted:

Orientation:

11:59 PM April 30, 2026

May 15, 2026

Sunday May 24, and Monday May 25, 2026

We also offer Research Internships for students working on degree programs, please inquire for more information.