

Pueblo Zoological Society
Job Description
Relief Keeper

***Pueblo Zoo Mission:** To empower people to engage in conservation of animals and their natural habitat. Empower. Engage. Conserve.*

***Pueblo Zoo Vision:** To be the trusted leader in our community raising awareness of the value of biodiversity and promoting conservation.*

***Pueblo Zoo Core Values:** Animal Welfare, Conservation, Teamwork, Education, Collaboration, Community*

Status: Full time, non-exempt, hourly

Reports to: Area Supervisor

Compensation: \$16.15/hour

Benefits: Competitive benefits package including HMO and HSA-qualified health plans, a 3% employer matched SIMPLE IRA, 10 days paid time off, eight holidays, and a commitment to professional development.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:

The Pueblo Zoo is a vibrant, collaborative, and flexible workplace. The Pueblo Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is home to nearly 200 animals representing more than 125 species. Driven by our mission to empower people to engage in conservation of animals and their natural habitat, we serve 100,000 annual visitors, provide educational outreach to tens of thousands of students, and directly support global species conservation. At its core, Pueblo Zoo values animal welfare, teamwork, education, collaboration and community. The Zoo is located in Southern Colorado and provides a great living experience in a big, small town that offers endless outdoor and cultural opportunities without the hassle of congested big city problems.

Job Summary

This is a second level position in animal care, following established protocols to provide outstanding animal care for species throughout the collection: food preparation, feeding, exhibit maintenance, pest control, and reproductive management. Relief Keepers participate in operant conditioning and husbandry programs, provide approved enrichment, work collaboratively to improve animal exhibits, and prepare and conduct both formal and informal talks for zoo guests.

Duties and Responsibilities

Animal Husbandry

- Provide overall daily care of assigned animals and exhibits to ensure animal health, safety, and welfare, staff and public safety as set forth by AZA, USDA, and PZ to include:
 - Observe and monitor animals' general health and behavior, reporting any abnormal behavior to a supervisor and/or veterinary staff.
 - Prepare and provide food for assigned animals, following written instructions, provide water and administer medication as instructed to ensure proper nutrition and health.

- Clean animal exhibits, holding pens, food prep areas, and equipment, maintain a high level of sanitation, conduct pest control activities and report any mechanical defects that would endanger the animal, zoo staff, and/or guests.
- Achieve the highest standards of animal welfare and wellness by providing environmental enrichment and training sessions, using operant conditioning as applicable.
- Participate in or assist with the capture and restraint of a variety of taxa including dangerous species.

Safety

- Provide assistance with animal transfers and/or procedures as directed.
- Follow all safety protocols and understand the animal keeper's role in emergency procedures, responding to emergencies as required.

Communication

- Update animal records and reports to ensure thorough documentation and enhanced knowledge of animal biology.
- Interact positively and professionally with animal care and veterinary staff and volunteers.
- Utilize the enrichment item/device proposal form to create new enrichment ideas and items to be added to taxa repertoires and properly record the results of enrichment items after use.
- Collaborate with other zoo personnel as needed to meet the zoo's mission. This can include, but is not limited to assisting and participating in media events, special tours, and public relations projects.
- Participate in and support zoo-wide initiatives, committees, and work groups.
- Be able to supervise and train volunteers and interns within the department as needed.

Habitat/Building Maintenance

- Perform general maintenance and repair of exhibits: painting, repairing fences and shelters, abating erosion, planting ground cover and removing weeds.
- Assisting with the beautification of the zoo by removing trash/debris whenever necessary
- Other duties as assigned

Guest Relations

- Actively encourage interest in wildlife through positive interactions with zoo guests via Keeper Talks focused on animals, biology, conservation, and environmental issues.

Knowledge, skills, & abilities:

Candidate must possess working knowledge of similar or related work, the ability to follow written and oral directions, exercise good judgment in evaluating situations and making decisions, supervisory skills, and ability to keep accurate records.

Physical & Environmental:

Candidate must possess physical strength and stamina, including lifting 50lbs, bend, climb, stoop, and reach. Requires working directly with grass hay, alfalfa, straw, and furred/feathered animals. Must have the ability to foresee and apply safety precautions when necessary. Must be able to work as an integral part of the zoo team and communicate effectively with co-workers, management, guests and employees. Must demonstrate the ability to be an effective leader and role model. Must obtain a valid CO drivers license within 30 days.

Minimum qualifications:

High school diploma (or equivalent) and 3 years zoo work experience, or 2-year college degree and 2 years work experience, or 4-year college degree and 1 year work experience (preferred). *Candidates currently enrolled in a related educational program will be considered.*

Last Updated December 2024