



Natural History Intern (High School Student)

Students are the future of environmental and science leadership. Experiences in scientific research and investigation are important opportunities to foster the next generation of environmental leaders. The Highlands Center for Natural History (HCNH) is offering paid internships to local high school students in areas of natural history work. This year, the opportunity is silk moth rearing.

I. Objectives - For Interns to:

- * Develop leadership skills and gain volunteer experience that encourages career choices in environmental science, nature interpretation, or natural resource management.
- * Explore, investigate, and begin to interpret the natural world alongside trained professionals.
- * Generate the ability to communicate their knowledge developed to our community.

II. Requirements - Applicants to the Internship Program need:

- * Current or entering sophomore-senior
- * Availability to meet at the Highlands Center or on zoom with their mentor
- * Ability to care for caterpillars in their home
- * Complete an application with a letter of recommendation.
- * Complete an interview

III. Internship opportunity

This project intends to engage students in a fascinating and fun project rearing giant silk moths from caterpillar to cocoon. In addition to observing the mystery of the life cycle of these magnificent silk moths, one of the goals is to produce cocoons from specific species as part of a study at the University of Cincinnati. The study focuses on evolutionary factors affecting cocoon architecture.

Caterpillars will be reared indoors in 14" high, net butterfly cages. Ideally, each cage should hold no more than 10 caterpillars. Participating students are expected to replace fresh host plants for caterpillars every few days, and in later stages, the need for fresh greens could be daily. Students will have the opportunity to closely observe five distinct larval growth stages (known as "instars"). After the final instar, each caterpillar will spend 24 to 48 hours spinning a silken cocoon. The entire project may take approximately 2 months from start to finish (end of March-end of June at the longest).

This internship can be completed for school credit if you discuss options with a mentor from your institution.

IV. Completion: To complete the internship, you must fulfill your hours agreed on and submit a final project based on your observations. This project can be in the form of an article, video, or presentation, etc. After completion of all requirements, students will receive a stipend.

VI. Terms of acceptance

No applicant will be considered without completion of the application and the interview process.

The Highlands Center reserves the right to change its calendar, withdraw or modify a course or substitute mentors at any time. It also reserves the right to require the withdrawals of any student whose conduct is antithetical to the program or the mission of the Highlands Center, or if there are personal conflicts or physical limitations preventing the intern from fulfilling program requirements.

VII. Application Process

Applications will be required for all students of the Internship Program. Applicants will go through an interview process to ensure that all participants have a clear understanding of the requirements of the program. Applicants will be selected through a committee.

VIII. Code of Conduct

If an intern does not complete the hours agreed upon at hire or submit a final project, they will not receive the monetary stipend.

Contact Erin Nixon, Education Coordinator, with any questions.

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