

Naturalist at Blendon Woods Metro Park

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Background

- I worked for Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks at Blendon Woods in Columbus, OH
- Metro Parks Mission: To conserve open spaces, while providing places and opportunities that encourage people to discover and experience nature.
- Metro Parks are unique because they offer unlimited opportunities to connect with the people in the Columbus community through nature.
- I found this job through the CFAES career fair

On the Job

Daily

- Interacted with and assisted the public
- Maintained the Nature Center
- Fed and cared for reptiles and amphibians

Other Job Duties

- Prepared interpretive materials eg. a storybook trail
- Lead programs such as Tree ID, nature hikes, critter talks, etc.
- Painted animals for a critter scavenger hunt
- Collected bluebird box data
- Camp counselor - lead a group of 9 kids in various activities (interpretive hikes, creeking, fishing, archery etc.)



Creeking with campers



Our ambassador tree frog hungry for lunch



His lunch on the lam

Reflection

- This job helped me improve my communication skills, especially with kids, which will help in all my future endeavors.
- Moving forward I would really love to get some NPS experience in a position relating to visitor services or maintenance.
- Long-term I'm keeping my options open, I want to get more experience to see what I really enjoy.
- I don't see myself continuing as a naturalist in the future. I didn't enjoy leading programs but, I did love having casual conversation with people in the park. I also enjoyed taking care of the animals and helping with camp.

Recommendations

- I would recommend this career if you love talking to people and sharing your nature knowledge.
- Make sure you enjoy talking in front of groups and are interested in doing kids programming (that's who we mostly programmed for) / have ideas to get other age groups involved.
- Have some program goals in mind / some ideas you would like to implement before starting the job.



A black swallowtail in the butterfly house (Lots of interpretation took place here)