Naturalist at Blendon Woods Metro Park
Jacqueline Carlson / Natural Resource Management

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 e.g. 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.)

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.

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

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.

Camp counselor - lead a group of 9 kids in various activities (interpretive hikes, creeking, fishing, archery etc.)

Creeking with campers

Creeking with campers

His lunch on the lam

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

Our ambassador tree frog hungry for lunch

His lunch on the lam