

Scioto Audubon Seasonal Park Ranger Internship

Jamie Reed – Environmental Policy & Decision Making



Me with one of the many turtles I moved from the road during the summer at the park

Background

- I worked as a Seasonal Park Ranger at Scioto Audubon Metro Park in Columbus, Ohio from May – August 2022
- **Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks** is the company that I worked under at this park
- I found this job by asking a friend what they did when she posted a video online of a possum at work one day and she referred me for the job!
- Being a park ranger was a childhood dream job of mine; I was very excited to start at a job that I had been dreaming of doing for so long

The Role of Park Ranger

- I was responsible for patrolling the park to ensure safety of guests, adherence of park policies, and maintenance of park property. This includes:
 - Vehicle patrol
 - Foot patrol
 - Bike patrol
 - Clean-up of trash
 - Verbally reminding guests of rules if they are being broken
 - Weeding gardens
- Scioto Audubon is the “dispatch” park, so I was occasionally responsible for communicating via radio with other parks/rangers for reasons such as:
 - Needing a license plate looked up (abandoned vehicle)
 - Needing EMS/Fire/Police assistance in park
 - Hourly time-check to hear from on-duty rangers in all parks



(left) Park Truck filled with weeds and weeding tools from a volunteer program hosted at Scioto Audubon with the group **Friends of Metro Parks**

(right) A sunset from the Upper Multi-Use Trail in Scioto Audubon while I was foot patrolling one night in June



Reflections of the Experience

- Modern-day park ranging is far closer to being a police officer than it is working with the environment and educating park guests.
- I learned to communicate with the public in a more professional manner through enforcing park rules.
- I found that I was more productive on the job when working with other rangers in a vehicle (rather than independently) and collaborating to make decisions was very beneficial in my professional discussion skills.



Above: Me doing traffic control for a high attendance race being held in the park in June 2022.

- Despite the praise of my coworker rangers, the park managers rated my performance on the job poorly, citing things they understood when hiring me (summer classes, late start, moving, etc.), and I overall felt as though I was treated unfairly compared to the other seasonal rangers.
- All in all, the interview process for this position led me to believe that this job focused on customer service but was quickly shown to be incorrect. I wish that I was given more insight into the reality of the position before I accepted it, I will ask more questions during future interview processes.



Above: A picture of the moon during a sunset in July 2022 at Scioto Audubon Metro Park.
Below: A gaggle of geese on the main road of Scioto Audubon Metro Park one evening in August 2022.



Left: A skunk that ran through the parking lot one evening in July 2022, there is a high skunk population in the park during the summers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my coworker rangers for teaching and encouraging me all summer. I would not have made it the whole summer at the park without your support.



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