



California Giant Salamander Conservation Academic Internship

Marin County: Mount Tamalpais

Virtual and In-Person

Part-Time, Summer 2023

Available only to students currently enrolled at COM, SFSU or CCSF

Introduction

The California giant salamander is a charismatic and iconic species that lives in Mt. Tamalpais' streams and forests. Known for its protruding eyes, marbled skin, and appetite for banana slugs, at between roughly 7 to 12 inches long, it is among the largest terrestrial salamanders on the planet. This salamander is notoriously elusive and the community (citizen) science can help us learn about it and better protect it.

This amphibian conservation project is part of One Tam's Peak Health work. One Tam is a land management collaborative composed of the National Park Service, California State Parks, the Marin Municipal Water District, Marin County Parks, and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. One Tam combines the skills and resources of its partners to support work that is vital to the health of Mt. Tamalpais, enriches the experience of its visitors, and inspires and educates a new generation of stewards.

Internship Overview

The Academic Internship Program runs Tuesday May 30 - Friday August 4, 2023 (10 weeks total)

Are you interested in learning about amphibian conservation, exploring crowdsourced data, spending time in some of the most beautiful places in the world, and sharing appreciation for nature and science with all kinds of people?

In this academic internship, you will assist in One Tam's amphibian conservation efforts and learn about conservation science, community science, and public engagement. Office work can be completed remotely. Fieldwork and outreach events will take place in-person on Mt. Tamalpais.

This internship will focus heavily on gathering obscured salamander observations from iNaturalist and annotating salamander photos. iNaturalist allows observers to upload evidence (i.e., photos, audio) of opportunistic encounters and aggregates these records over time. The California Giant Salamander is an obscured taxon in iNaturalist, meaning that exact coordinates of each observation are only shared with permission from one user to another user. Retrieving these observations requires some dedicated effort that is much needed to better assess the health of this species on Mt. Tam and support conservation action. Other office work will include data entry, preparing outreach materials, and virtual meeting time.

Although fieldwork will not be the focus of the internship, there will be some opportunities to get outside. Fieldwork will consist of visiting salamander breeding sites and becoming familiar with amphibian and reptile habitat on Mt. Tamalpais. Outreach events will take place virtually or in person throughout Marin or in San Francisco.

The intern will participate in weekly virtual workshops and discussions on the topics of conservation, climate change and social and environmental justice. Interns will work in concert with fellow Park Interns to put what they learn into practice by completing a project to raise public awareness about these critical issues.

Depending on availability and need, the intern may be asked to occasionally assist with fieldwork and program delivery of other One Tam Community Science focus areas.

Description of Duties

Data

- Careful adherence to protocols to ensure excellent data quality
- Connect with iNaturalist users to get exact coordinates for obscured observations
- Annotate iNaturalist observations
- Enter and proof data in spreadsheets and databases
- Learn data visualization and mapping skills using iNaturalist data
- Learn to identify amphibians and associates

Public engagement

- Provide support at outreach events
- Develop content for social media platforms and program newsletters
- Become an active iNaturalist user and engage in community science

Field Research

- Careful adherence to protocols to maintain a safe work environment indoors and outdoors (i.e., COVID-19, communications)
- Careful adherence to monitoring protocols
- Carry out fieldwork with a small team or independently, after trainings are completed
- Take photos in the field
- Safely drive remote roads in Marin County to reach field sites
- Hike to field sites on Mount Tamalpais

General

- Maintain a high standard of safety with oneself and others
- Maintain consistent, timely, professional communication by phone, videoconference, email, and text
- Participate in team meetings on Zoom and Microsoft Teams
- Keep field, lab, and tech equipment in good working condition and proper storage
- Assist with other projects as needed
- Participate in virtual weekly workshops and discussions with the larger cohort. Use one of the park's media platforms to develop a project that raises awareness on the topics of conservation, climate change or social and environmental justice.

Learning Objectives

In this position, the intern will:

- Learn about amphibian ecology and conservation
- Learn about historical ecology and community (citizen) science on public lands
- Gain proficiency in best practices in data collection, data management, and data quality control
- Become proficient in photography for species identification
- Become a community scientist and learn more about community (citizen) science as an area of practice in conservation science
- Practice public engagement in virtual and in-person formats (as public health conditions allow)
- Gain essential skills as a field biologist, including safety, planning, navigation, field communication, equipment management, and protocol implementation
- Build and strengthen field naturalist skills
- Experience working in a modern, dynamic environment with a team that combines in-person work in the field with remote work (i.e., video meetings, phone calls, cloud-based document sharing, etc.)
- Build connections with staff and other interns and learn about career opportunities
- When possible, connect internship to academic coursework and career interests
- As need and time allows, take part in other One Tam Community Science program focus areas
- Learn about the GGNRA, Mt. Tamalpais, and other public lands by participating in cross-training opportunities with other interns

Desired Qualifications

Prior knowledge of salamanders or experience with research and public engagement are **not prerequisites!** Our team needs an intern with the following attributes:

- Basic computer literacy: Microsoft Word and Excel; Zoom; Google Maps. Prior experience with iNaturalist is a plus.
- Good at following directions and willing to ask for support as needed
- Detail-oriented and organized- able to accurately annotate data and keep calendar up to date.
- Conscientious, adaptable, self-starter, quick-learner – able to work independently with little supervision and go with the flow, stay safe, and be creative when unexpected challenges emerge.
- Commitment to the preservation and protection of native plant and wildlife communities on public lands and to community participation, science, and stewardship in public lands.
- Interest in gaining and improving naturalist skills
- Desire to work in a team and to work with a diversity of people with different backgrounds, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, ages, and viewpoints.
- Strong interpersonal and communications skills, in person and through technology- responds to texts and emails in a timely manner
- Cares about own safety and the safety of others
- If possible. a valid California driver's license and clean driving record. This position may use fleet vehicles.

Physical Requirements and Work Conditions

- Remote office work, independent fieldwork, and lab work.
- This position involves indoor work that requires the ability to maintain concentration and focus in office settings for prolonged periods of time.
- This position involves work outdoors in summer and hiking on varied and uneven terrain.
- This position may involve driving on remote, windy roads, independently sometimes

- This position involves following COVID-19 safety protocols and other field and lab safety protocols

Health and Safety

It is the policy of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy to create and maintain a safe and healthful workplace free from recognized hazards that may cause harm to employees and interns, consistent with and in compliance with applicable state and federal laws. Employees and interns will play an active role in creating a safe and healthy workplace and will comply with all applicable health and safety rules. The Conservancy is committed to the goal of implementing an effective health and safety program and an injury prevention program.

Based on the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Parks Conservancy requires all employees, interns, and independent contractors to be vaccinated and to provide proof of such vaccination as a condition of employment, internship, or performing contract work.

Benefits

- Seventy-five dollar (\$75.00) per full day taxable stipend plus academic credit available
- Gain experience in an inter-agency project and applied conservation of a unique endemic salamander
- Grow your skills: this project has elements of data science, fieldwork, community education, and science communication.
- Opportunity to attend Park Academy Classes and participate in virtual workshops with the larger intern cohort. Topics may include resume building & interview skills, park orientation & history, flora & fauna, mapping & monitoring, computer skills, climate change, social justice, and much more.
- Get outside and enjoy the scenery, wildlife, and cultural resources of a spectacular area
- Opportunity to work with staff and volunteers from diverse backgrounds that share a common interest in preserving and protecting our natural lands while engaging the next generation of park stewards
- Opportunity for personal/professional development days to pursue an interest, including training and education days in various departments within the Park Service and Parks Conservancy
- Uniform will be provided

Terms of Position

- **The term for this internship position is Tuesday May 30 - Friday August 4th, 2023 (10 weeks total)**
- In-person and virtual internship: Field and community program delivery portions of the project will be in-person. Some office work will take place remotely and in virtual formats.
- At least 2 full days per week. Exact number of days is negotiable. Full-time, 5 days per week, may be available depending on individual circumstances. Intern must be able to work in half-day or full day increments
 - Possibility for flexible schedule. Each Friday, all interns participating in the Academic Internship. Workshop Series will come together virtually and participate in group learning. Field and lab work can occur on other days of the week. Saturday availability for community programs up to 3 times per month.
- Required attendance at orientation and onboarding sessions (three full days), as well as end of program celebration; Tuesday May 30, Wednesday May 31, Tuesday June 6, and Friday August 4
- Intern must have a Social Security Number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number to receive stipend
- Available only to students currently enrolled at College of Marin, SF State or City College of San Francisco (must be enrolled for spring, summer, or fall 2023 classes to be eligible, open to students in ALL majors)

How to Apply

To apply for this position, please submit an application and send a resume and a thoughtful cover letter to Internships@parksconservancy.org. Please indicate the position(s) that you are applying for in your cover letter. No phone calls please. **Application deadline in Thursday, March 30.**

Information Webinar: Thursday March 23rd, 2:30 - 4 pm, for more details and to register visit www.parksconservancy.org/academicinternships.

The Golden Gate National Parks strive to engage a workforce reflective of the community it serves. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, national or ethnic origin religion, sexual orientation, or physical disability. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply.