



Lead Keeper, The Americas

Organization: Palm Beach Zoo & Conservation Society

Location: West Palm Beach, FL

Job or Internship: Job

The Palm Beach Zoo & Conservation Society is currently seeking a full-time Lead Keeper to provide guidance and animal management of the Florida and Tropics of the Americas precincts. Species of note include Florida panther, jaguar, Baird's tapir, giant anteater, bush dogs, black bears, river otters and many tropical birds. The Zoo staff work in a positive, team-oriented environment to support our mission to inspire people to act on behalf of wildlife. Keepers promote increased environmental awareness and conservation through excellent animal care and management practices, coupled with positive visitor experiences.

The successful candidate will have a well-rounded technical background over multiple taxa, with in depth knowledge of one or more species within the precinct. As this is a lead position, the ideal candidate will be able to teach, mentor and manage six keepers assigned to the area, and share three additional swing keepers with the other Leads. Animal keepers at the Zoo engage visitors on a daily basis through formal and informal animal encounters. The successful candidate will be comfortable providing positive guest's experiences, and have experience training new behaviors using methods that focus on positive reinforcement.

The Lead Keeper plays a role in the evaluation and improvement of husbandry, animal training and enrichment practices, the development of standard operating and safety procedures, records management, exhibit planning and habitat improvements. This position works all sections of the assigned precincts on a rotating basis in order to best understand the needs and workloads of the keepers. The successful candidate will have a passion for animal welfare and behavior management, as well as both staff and program development. As keeper talks and animal encounters are vital to accomplishing our mission to inspire people to act on behalf of wildlife, the person we are seeking is skilled in guest engagement and able to find creative ways to inspire the various people who visit and support the Zoo.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of four years' paid experience in a zoological facility
- Bachelor's degree (Biology, Psychology or a related field is preferred)
- Experience with the husbandry and behavior of many of the species listed above
- Easily navigates computer programs such as Microsoft Office
- Physically able to stoop, bend, reach, lift, carry or push at least 50 pounds in a south Florida climate
- Must have valid driver's license, able to work weekends, holidays and special events as needed

Preferred Experience and Skills:

- Supervisory/management experience in a zoo
- Demonstrated ability to research and write effectively
- Participation in AZA programs and other zoo related organizations
- Use hand and power tools for minor carpentry and habitat modification projects
- Demonstrated initiative and problem solving
- Excellent communication skills with co-workers, managers and veterinary staff
- Be familiar with AZA, USDA and FWC regulations and expectations

Applicants should submit a cover letter, resume and three professional references to Nancy Nill, Associate Curator via email: jobs@palmbeachzoo.org. Please include the name of the applicant and the initials LK in the subject line of the email. The position will be open until filled.