

Animal caretaker internship 2019/2020

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From November 2019 to January, I had the pleasure of doing one of my internships at R3 Animal. I'm studying animal care and the internship is an official part of the education.

During the internship, I was in four of the departments at R3. I was in the animal care department, the laboratory, the monitoring department, as well as the veterinarian department. Most days I started my day at 8:00 AM and ended it at 4:00 PM.

I spent most of my time with the animal care department. Here I helped with all the aspects of the care giving there. I helped with, feeding and cleaning, and I did observation on the animals. I also helped perform physiotherapy and wrote in the feeding protocols on paper and on computer. I also assisted the animal caretakers with the weekly weighting of the animals, as well as assisting with the daily water sampling of the pools. I also did a special project with their brown Booby in how we could minimize the human contact and avoid the Boobys imprinting on humans.

In the vets department, I mostly learned and observed. I helped them holding animals while they did veterinarian care. I also got to perform certain kinds of medical treatment such as giving eye drops, oral medication and giving fluids orally - I did everything under supervision from a least one vet. I also assisted them with caching animals, and moving them in between departments. Working here taught me about different kinds of medical treatments, like nature medication and about different ways to apply bandages. I felt like I learned a lot that was very relevant for my education.

With the departments doing the monitoring, I was so lucky to spend two whole days. I meet them at the center at 6:00 in the morning and then drove out to the beach, Here we put local information like the sea tide, wind, into their tablets. We also kept an eye on the different sea birds/mammals, it was very interesting for me, and I felt like I learned a lot, both about the local area and about how the sea birds behave in the wild. We also took samples of the trash from the beaches. All in all I was very impressed and I found the stuff we did very inspiring, and it made me think a lot about my personal relationship with nature and how I interact with it. I already lived in Florianopolis once before but after this trip I felt like I got a whole lot of new insights in the island.

I also spent two days with the laboratory department. I can honestly say I was blown away with everything they did. They showed me how they did different tests and how they cooperate with the vets regarding different animal samples. It was very interesting and they were very patient, when it took me a little while to understand things.

Looking back at my internship at R3 I am filled with gratefulness. I felt very challenged, I was able to use my knowledge and I learned a lot which I am convinced has made me a better animal caretaker. The team at R3 Animal is very talented and welcoming, not only did I learn a lot about different areas of animal care, I also felt like I grew as a human.