



Research & Conservation Internship

Native Orchid Research Assistant - Position Description

Duration: 12 weeks (June-Aug)

Rate: \$520/week (\$6,240 stipend, housing is included)

Riveredge Nature Center was established in 1968 and is located in Newburg, WI, a rural northeastern Wisconsin community. The sanctuary includes 379 acres, consisting of a 47-acre Riveredge Creek and Ephemeral Pond State Natural Area, over 1.5 miles of frontage along the Milwaukee River, 37 acres of prairie establishment, beech-maple forest, and pond, swamp and fen communities. Prized by educators, naturalists and biologists for its exceptional biotic diversity, Riveredge is a regional resource for scientific research, hosting more than 40 studies, projects, inventories, monitoring programs, surveys, and other types of scientific investigations to date. It is protected habitat for endangered and threatened species such as the swamp metalmark butterfly, forked aster, goldenseal and the Red-shouldered hawk; It is host to many more Species of Local Conservation Interest (SLCI).

Position Background Purpose

Native orchids are under severe threat due to loss of habitat or changing habitat conditions and many species are likely to become extinct unless action is taken to conserve them and their fungal partners. Promoting efforts to conserve habitats and to restore native orchids where populations have declined will be essential to the future of these fascinating plant species. Native orchids are known to occur at Riveredge and nearby Cedarburg Bog State Natural Area. This is a long-term project, but 2019 internship support will focus on investigating the biological requirements of several orchid species by collecting baseline information at reference sites where they occur; assisting with hand pollination; and identification of suitable sites for future outplanting of lab propagated seedlings. Field work will occur at Riveredge and other sites in adjacent counties.

Responsibilities

- Design, implement, and write a scientific report on the research project stated above under the supervision of the Director of Research and Conservation
- Follow field collection protocols set forth by the Chicago Botanic Gardens and Riveredge
- Work in the field independently and with other interns
- Assist with RNC's volunteer stewardship program
- Maintain research equipment and supplies
- Assist with other duties related to the mission and research goals of Riveredge Nature Center
- Present research project at Riveredge's annual Student Research Symposium in November

Preferred Qualifications

- A Junior or Senior at a college/university or has obtained a Bachelor's degree in natural resources or related field
- Experienced in field of Geographic Information Systems
- Entry level field botany course or equivalent knowledge base
- Experience with data collection, research methods, and scientific writing
- Proficient in Excel, or alternative statistical software
- Good communication skills, punctual, creative and energetic
- Ability to work as a team member as well as individually

To Apply

Please send resume, cover letter and contact information for three references electronically (in PDF or Word.doc Format) by **March 1st** to: Matt Smith, Land Manager; msmith@riveredge.us.