



INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

Field Research

Type	On-site, full-time (32-40 hours/week)
Benefits	Unpaid, no housing. <i>Financial support through grant funding may be a possibility but is not likely and cannot be guaranteed.</i>
Timeline	Any period over 2 months will be considered. Four or five-month internship periods are strongly preferred, but applicants proposing alternate timelines will be considered.
Nationality	Local, Dutch or French, or American applicants preferred due to entry requirements.
Application deadline	Rolling; submit anytime.

1. Background

1.1 Host

The Nature Foundation (NFSXM) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization committed to protecting and restoring the island's diverse natural ecosystems. Established in 1997, we lead interdisciplinary efforts in research, education, environmental management, and policy development. Officially recognized as the marine and terrestrial ecosystem authority of Sint Maarten, we manage protected areas such as the Man of War Shoal Marine Park and advise the government on ecological matters. Our small, dedicated team works closely with local and international partners to advance conservation, promote sustainability, and foster environmental awareness for the benefit of both nature and the community.

Nature is our future.

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✉ info@naturefoundationsxm.org
🌐 naturefoundationsxm.org
📍 Wellsburg Street 1A Unit 25-26, Cole Bay, Sint Maarten



2. Description

2.1 Overview

The Field Research internship is an immersive position that supports the Nature Foundation's ongoing monitoring and outreach programs, contributing to vital research and community engagement efforts. Interns will collect and analyze field data for a variety of ecological studies, including sea turtle nesting, seagrass health, queen conch populations, invasive species management, GCRMN coral monitoring, mangrove assessments, and bird surveys. Monitoring and surveying activities will vary depending on the time of year of the internship and staff support availability. The internship also involves responding to environmental reports and incidents, assisting with management of key sites, and more. This is not a lab-based research role, but a fieldwork-based role engaged in rudimentary data collection.

Preference will be given to candidates holding scuba diving certifications, as certain monitoring activities involve underwater research. A valid driver's license is required.

2.2 Responsibilities

Please note that some monitoring tasks noted below are seasonal and may not align with your proposed internship period.

- **Research fieldwork (50%)**
 - Assist in boat-based or underwater surveys for seagrass, mangroves, coral reefs, conch populations, and more
 - Support monitoring of marine and terrestrial wildlife through sea turtle patrols, landbird monitoring, shark tagging, and more
 - Collect data during site field visits for rapid environmental assessments ahead of proposed developments
 - Execute other monitoring or field research including water sampling, acoustic or bioacoustics monitoring, etc.
- **Miscellaneous (20%)**



- Support additional Nature Foundation activities such as beach clean-ups, shark tagging, site maintenance, and other research programs
- Aid in writing literature reviews, policy briefs, grant proposals, and more
- Assist with routine maintenance and inventory of organizational equipment
- Manage small group of high school interns and other temporary visitors
- **Education and communications (15%)**
 - Improve existing educational and outreach materials for schools
 - Create social media posts and assist with press releases
 - Support school presentations, tours, and other outreach activities etc.
- **Data analysis (15%)**
 - Carry out literature review and summary of previous local studies and reports
 - Assist with input, processing and analysis of collected data using GIS or R/SPSS
 - Draw conclusions in a policy-friendly and publicly accessible report

3. Qualifications

3.1 Age and education

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must be a current student or recent graduate working toward a bachelor's or master's degree, or a recent bachelor's graduate within 1 year, in biology, ecology, oceanography, environmental science, or a related field
- Research can be part of the student's coursework, but they must have access to an external internship coordinator or faculty advisor during the internship period

3.2 Experience and skills

- Experience carrying out fieldwork in moderately difficult terrain and conditions
- Experience in supporting research studies or other data-collecting endeavors
- Enthusiasm for field-based work and a variety of diverse tasks
- Strong interest in or experience with Caribbean marine and terrestrial ecosystems
- Ability to work in fast-paced, dynamic environments
- Self-motivated, reliable, and capable of both independent work and teamwork
- Strong written and oral communication skills



- Experience in community outreach and education is an asset
- Proficiency in data processing and analysis using R or another program is an asset
- Proficiency in spatial analysis using ArcGIS or QGIS is an asset

3.3 Language, nationality, and location

- Oral and written fluency in English
- Ability to legally reside on Sint Maarten for the internship duration
- Local, Dutch, or American applicants are preferred due to entry requirements
- Proficiency in French, Dutch, or Spanish is a plus

3.4 Other

- Valid medical insurance for duration of role is mandatory
- Valid driver's license is mandatory
- Ability to safely lift and move heavy items (up to 20 kg or 44 lbs)
- SCUBA diving certification is highly desirable, with a minimum of:
 - PADI Advanced Open Water certificate (or equivalent) with at least 30 logged dives, OR
 - PADI Open Water certificate (or equivalent) with at least 50 logged dives
- Valid insurance through DAN (Divers Alert Network) for research diving

4. Application process

Students and recent graduates interested in participating should submit their application to info@naturefoundationsxm.org. The application should include the following contents:

- Up-to-date curriculum vitae/résumé (PDF)
- Optional: Cover letter/letter of motivation with available start and end dates (PDF)
- Optional: Maximum 2 samples of work – writing, video, graphic design, etc.

Please ensure that the subject line reads "Application: Field Research Intern." If you do not receive a response that your application has been received within five (5) business days, please send a WhatsApp message to (+1) 721-581-6365 and follow up on its status.