

Internship Report M1

Wildlife Intern – California Wildlife Center



Lucie GRENET



Summer 2017



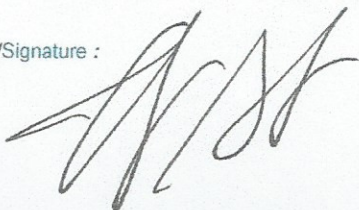
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ORGANISME D'ACCUEIL/HOST INSTITUTIONNom de l'organisme/Name of institution : California Wildlife CenterPays/Country : USAATTESTATION/CERTIFICATE« Nous confirmons que Mme/Mlle /M. Grenet Lucie
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Name and position of the authorised person at the host institutionJennifer Brent, Executive Director

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Document à renvoyer par l'étudiant à la fin de son séjour d'études à la Direction des Relations Internationales et Européennes (DRIE) de l'Université de Lorraine.



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California Wildlife Center is committed to the protection of all native wildlife through medical care, rehabilitation, education and conservation.

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INTRODUCTION

In second year of our engineering education, it is required to do a three months abroad internship. The main goal of this internship is to open the students to other cultures and languages.

To realize this experience, I decide to leave France and stay during three months in the United States of America and especially in Los Angeles in California. I found an internship at the California Wildlife Center, a rescue association of the injured native wildlife. They gave me the opportunity of being part of their team.

THANKS

I want to thank from the bottom of my heart all the team of the California Wildlife Center. They let me be part of this amazing experience and they always supported me in every way. They do an amazing and impressive job with the wildlife.

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1) The California Wildlife Center

a. Purpose

Created in 1998, The California Wildlife Center is an association devoted to native and wild fauna. They rescue injured animals but they also try to keep native fauna wild by rehabilitating them as quickly as possible and releasing them back into their native territory. Animals are accepted 365 days a year from the public or from local animal care centers (vets, pets' centers...).

The mission of the California Wildlife Center is to provide protection to the native wildlife. Indeed, most animals bringing at the center is because of a human negative effect: collision with a car, destruction of the nest, death of the mother during hunting, habitat destruction...

To rehabilitate animal into the wild, the center can count on the different members of staff: technicians, vets, interns and volunteers. They all are completely engaged into the wildlife cause. But to expend this state of mind, the California Wildlife Center has to educate the public about their actions and the importance of respecting animals and their environment. Members of staff try to define best practices for the environment including habitat protection.

The catchword of the center is: « The California Wildlife Center is committed to creating a healthy sustainable planet that values all life ». To accomplish this, the center tries to rescue all kind of animals, from the raven to the fox.

b. Location

The California Wildlife Center is located in the Santa Monica's Mountains, just above Malibu Beach. The area is quiet and covered by a lot of trees to provide shadows for the outdoor enclosures. But the center is close to the city and easily reachable (near to the freeway) to allow people to come and bring injured animals. Being close to the beach is a plus to the marine mammal unit to release easily the animals.

c. Environment and staff

The California Wildlife Center is composed by two sectors:



terrestrial mammals and birds



marine mammals

For the terrestrial mammals and the birds, there are two units: the Baby Care Unit (for the orphans' animals) and the Intensive Care Unit (for emergencies and animals who need daily cares).

Animals can be kept inside in Baby Care Unit (if too young) and in Intensive Care Unit (if daily cares), but they also can be outdoor in the outside enclosures before being released.

Marine mammals have their own enclosures, adapted to their needs.



Figure 1 - The California Wildlife Center (personal source)

There are two kind of staff in the California Wildlife Center:



People working with the wildlife: The California Wildlife Center is a very successful association because of all the members of staff working every day.

- **Vets:** One vet is always at the center, that's why the California Wildlife Center is efficient and autonomous. Dr Duane Tom has worked for the center for ten years. He is the director the « Animal care » unit.
- **Wildlife technicians:** Denys Hemen is the Hospital Manager. He manages all the Wildlife Technicians working in the BCU¹ and the ICU².
- **Interns:** During the high season (end of March to end of September), the California Wildlife Center counts a lot of the interns because of the high number of animals received. The interns work with the wildlife technicians and the volunteers. We'll see later what an intern does during the internship at the California Wildlife Center.
- **Volunteers:** Being volunteer is a weekly commitment. Every day, a lot of volunteers come to help the center: dishes, laundry, mopping, and diet preparation, help the technicians...



Administration people: People who doesn't work with animals are essential too.

- **Jenifer Brent** is the executive director. She is in charge of the communication of the center to the public and Medias.
- **Alyssa Schlange** is the volunteer manager. She has to manage all the volunteers and interns by organize the schedule of everyone.
- **Heather Patrice Brown** is the development coordinator. She has to find partnerships to finance animals' cares.
- **Melisa Hartman** is the administrative assistant and the accounting of the center.

¹ Baby Care Unit

² Intensive Care Unit

2) Missions and activities of the wildlife interns

During my internship at the California Wildlife Center, I worked four days a week, eight hours a day. I was 2 days in BCU and 2 days in ICU. My schedule was:

Monday: PM shift in ICU (11:30am to 8pm)

Tuesday: AM shift in ICU (7am to 3:30pm)

Friday: AM shift in BCU

Saturday: PM shift in BCU

Lunch break was at noon for the AM shift and at 4pm for the PM shift.

Here's a list of a few of the native California wildlife I saw during my internship:

- Raccoon
- Fox
- Deer
- Coyote
- Eastern fox squirrel
- Skunk
- Raven/Crow
- Mockingbird and Dove
- Hummingbird
- Western Gull
- Red-Tailed Hawk
- Finch
- Cliff Swallow
- Rabbit

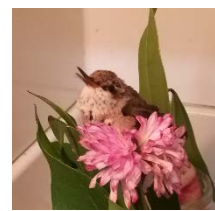


Figure 2 - Native California wildlife (personal source)

a. Intensive care Unit

For the interns, we have to handle two things in ICU:



Help the **volunteers** :

- We have to prepare diet and give it to the animals especially those who are in the outside enclosures
- Dishes and laundry have to be done every day during all the day. Those are the dishes giving to the animals with the diets and the sheets for the enclosures (a lot of pillow cases)
- Cleaning and mopping the floor twice a day



Help the **technicians** :

- Admin new patients: check if the animal needs some medication or special cares. Technicians work alone but if there is any doubt, a vet is always available to help and give some advices. To check an animal for the first time, some exams are always the same: temperature, hydration, wings check (fractures, missing feathers...), take blood from sea birds (the only way for them to see if the hydration is low or not)... Once the examination is done, we have to plan the medical treatment for each animal :
 - Anti-inflammatory (for pain and inflammatory)
 - Antibiotics (for bacteria or infections, for example after a cat caught for a bird)
 - Vitamins
 - Ophthalmology cares

- Different kind of cares can be done :
 - Snowshoes: if a baby bird don't have flat feet, we put a snowshoes on it to prevent from a feet malformation.
 - Wing and body wrap: if a bird have a wing fracture, the wrap maintain the wing right in place.
 - Tail guard : to protect the tail's feathers of the raptors, we have to envelop the tail into a plastic sleeve
- Monitoring the progress of every animals in ICU: give meds and cares every day and note the evolution of the appetite.
- Give meds
- Observe the animal behavior and report to the vet any change.
- Enrichment: To stimulate behaviors the animals would have in the wild, we have to create some toys and games that we leave in their enclosure.
- Rehabilitation of the animals into the outdoor enclosure first and then into the wild when they are ready (according the animal behavior).



Figure 3 - Mockingbird with snowshoes (personal source)



Figure 4 - Hawk with a wing wrap and a tail guard (personal source)



Figure 5 - Enrichment for skunks (personal source)



Figure 6 - Giving meds to a squirrel (personal source)

b. Baby Care Unit

BCU is right next to the reception where people bring new patient. Our job in BCU is to receive the public, enter the information of the rescuer and the animal and then, bring the new patient to ICU.

Working in BCU is very pace because from 7am to 7pm, baby birds need to be fed all day long. Depending of their age, specie and behavior, they are feeding every 30, 45, 60 or 120 minutes. Four timers are running on all day.

Between two feedings, we have to change and clean the enclosures. In BCU, birds are very little so they just need a plastic box with a tissue nest, newspaper at the bottom and a pillow case.

In BCU, the interns have to take care of other things:

- Crowtopia: a space is especially dedicated to Crows and Ravens. They have to be fed every 45 minutes and the enclosure have to be cleaned two times a day (because Ravens can be very messy). They need special meal with protein and the enrichment have to change every day because crows and ravens are very smart and can be bored easily.
- Finch Nations: Finches are stressed bird. That's why they need to be isolated. They are feeding every 45 minutes too, with a formula and a syringe. They need to be cleaned only once a day.
- Swallows: The swallows are in an outdoor enclosure. The interns have to watch them every hour and look if they eat well.



Figure 7 - Feeding Finches (personal source)



Figure 8 - Feeding a crow (personal source)

3) Personal balance sheet

My internship at the California Wildlife Center was amazing. I learnt a lot about different levels. First, my English is better now. I feel more confident talking in English and I have no problems in a discussion. I know now that I can work in English.

Then, being in California during three months allow me to discover fully the American culture. It wasn't my first time in United States of America, but stay as long was perfect to know how the Americans talk, work, what they do during days off and everything else. I enjoy knowing that.

This internship was a great opportunity of discover a lot of things and especially my capacity. I discovered that I can be very autonomous for example. I learnt how to be responsible, how to be organized (find a place to live, buy a car...). This experience was absolutely open minded and it enforces my love for this country.

Furthermore, it was the first job I've ever had. It teaches me rigor, adaptability and autonomy. Staff from the California Wildlife Center gave me responsibility and at the end, I could work alone. They trusted me a lot and it was very rewarding. I learnt how to work in team, how to organize my work day and how to be on time.

Finally, this internship was an achievement for me. Indeed, I've always wanted to do volunteering. This experience allows me to know more about animals and I have the feeling I did something useful for the wildlife. This internship enforced my passion for the wildlife and I know that I want to work with.

4) Glossary

English	French
Administer	Administrer
Bibber	Biberon
Bleach	Javel
Bruise	Bleu, contusion
Clavicle	Clavicule
Deer	Cerf
Dove	Colombe
Enrichment	Enrichissement
Finch	Pinson
Flank	Flanc
Gloves	Gants
Gull	Mouette
Hawk	Faucon
Hay	Foin
Hemostat	Hémostatique
Hummingbird	Colibri
Hydration	Hydratation
Ice Tray	Bac à glaçons
Intramuscular	Intramusculaire
Jay	Geais
Keel	Bréchet
Mockingbird	Oiseau-moqueur
Mop	Serpillère
Pillow case	Taie d'oreiller
Raccoon	Raton laveur
Raven	Corbeau
Skunk	Moufette
Subcutaneous	Sous cutané
Swallow	Hirondelle
Tail	Queue
To soak	Tremper
Towhee	Oiseau chanteur d'Amérique du Nord
Tray	Plateau
Wound	Plaie

Annexe : Recherche de stage

J'ai trouvé mon stage sur internet. Je savais que je voulais travailler aux Etats-Unis et dans un centre de réhabilitation de la faune sauvage. Il y avait beaucoup de choix mais j'ai pu recentrer les choix en fonction de la période et de la durée des stages proposés. J'ai dû faire un entretien téléphonique avec le manager.

Pour entrer aux USA, il n'y a pas besoin de visa si on reste moins de 3 mois donc ceci facilitait les démarches.

J'ai dû penser au logement (dans un premier temps un Airbnb proche de mon lieu de stage, puis une location chez un particulier hors Airbnb après). J'ai également acheté une voiture sur place. Ceci était bien plus rentable que de louer une voiture (car en dessous de 25 ans, les jeunes conducteurs sont soumis à de très grosses taxes). A la fin de mon stage, j'ai pu revendre la voiture à un prix égalant mon achat d'origine. Bien qu'en Californie ceci n'est pas obligatoire (ce n'est pas le cas dans tous les états), j'ai quand même fait faire mon permis international (gratuit et valable pendant 2 ans) à la préfecture avant le départ.

Avant le départ, j'ai souscrit à une assurance maladie via la LMDE (40 euros par mois) et j'ai également souscrit à une offre spéciale étudiante à ma banque (LCL) afin de faciliter les virements et les retraits depuis l'étranger.