

# **Vancouver Aquarium Marine Mammal Rescue Internship Program Outline**

Vancouver Aquarium

December 2009



# Marine Mammal Rescue Internship Program

**Mission Statement of the Vancouver Aquarium:** The Vancouver Aquarium is a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, education, research, and direct action.

## About the Tropical Waters Department

One of the Vancouver Aquarium's direct action programs, the Marine Mammal Rescue Centre, works to rescue, rehabilitate and successfully release abandoned, injured, or stranded marine mammals. Approximately 15 minutes east of the Vancouver Aquarium, patients are brought to the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Mammal Rescue Centre's (VAMMRC) hospital facility from all over the B.C. coast and cared for until they are well enough to be released into the wild. Since the Aquarium started helping injured marine mammals in the 1960s, VAMMRC has treated elephant seals, sea otters, Steller sea lions, harbour porpoises, common dolphins, and killer whales. Harbour seals are the most common patient at the facility and can care for over 100 animals at a time.

## Marine Mammal Rescue Internship Program

The VAMMRC Internship is an unpaid internship. It will provide students with hands-on experience in marine mammal rescue, rehabilitation and the conservation of marine life. Students will engage in laboratory procedures, rescue techniques and help with the veterinary care of stranded marine mammals.

VAMMRC presents a unique internship opportunity for:

- Pre-veterinary students enrolled in biology or similar university program
- Veterinary technician students
- Veterinary students

## Requirements:

Successful candidates will be:

- Full-time students enrolled in, a college or university in a zoology, marine biology or related animal science, or completed all or part of course study in veterinary technology from a recognized institution
- Interested in career as a veterinary technician, veterinarian or marine biologist
- Extremely self motivated with a desire for continuing education
- In good academic standing
- Experienced in the animal care field either paid work or volunteer

- Able to submit a letter of interest and resume outlining why you are interested in the program, your availability, educational background and where you heard about the program
- Able to provide 2 letters of reference
- Able to secure the necessary funds for relocation, accommodations and living expenses for the entire placement
- Lift 20kg, be in good physical shape and be able to work both inside and outside in various weather conditions

Intern shifts will be a minimum of 8 hours long, 5 days a week for a total of 40 hours per week. Work schedules may include week-ends, evenings and holidays.

**Responsibilities** (applicant responsibilities may include, but are not limited to):

- Food preparation and animal feeding
- General cleaning duties and animal habitat maintenance
- Receiving animals when rescued including ability to weigh, assist in physical examinations, and animal record keeping
- Assisting the veterinarian and staff in surgical and medical cases when required
- Assist in researching information to aid in animal care
- Limited laboratory procedures
- May assist with rescues and releases

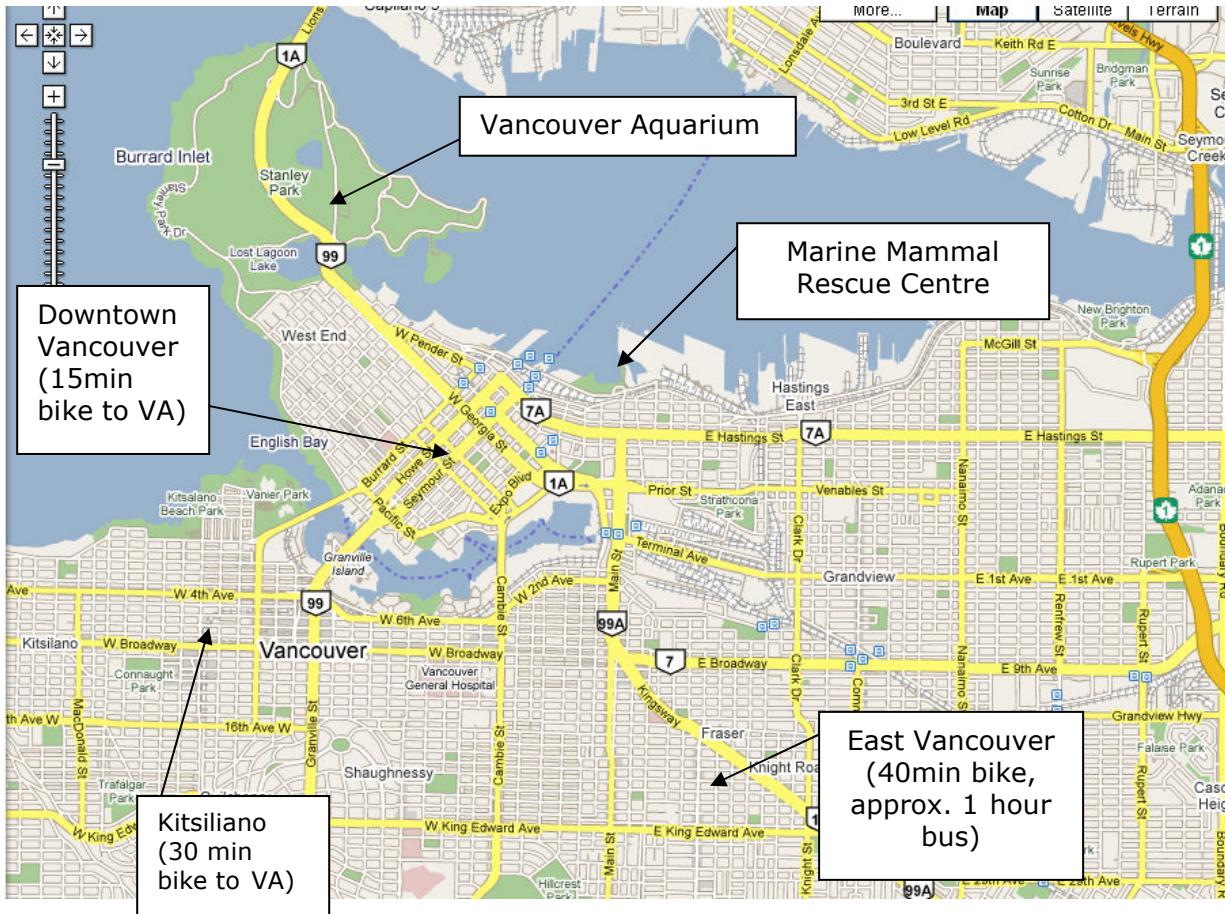
### **Research Project**

Interns are also responsible for researching and presenting a project on a topic based on their experience at VAMMRC. Topics may be relevant to marine mammal conservation or veterinary medicine. Interns will present either a short oral presentation or poster to VAMMRC staff and volunteers before the end of their internship. Topics may include:

- Marine mammal husbandry for animals in captivity
- Infectious diseases
- Nutrition
- Zoonotic diseases
- Marine mammal anatomy or physiology
- Marine mammal conservation

### **Accommodation**

All candidates are expected to find their own accommodations in Vancouver. For more information on accommodation and maps, please request the "General Information on VanAqua and Living in Vancouver" from [rescue@vanaqua.org](mailto:rescue@vanaqua.org).



**Link to Google Map of Vancouver**

<http://maps.google.ca/?hl=en&ie=UTF8&ll=49.281468,-123.107815&spn=0.078947,0.154495&z=13>

**Placement dates and application procedures:**

There are eight (8) internship positions over the summer. See below for start and end date options.

All internship placements applications are due on February 15, 2009. Telephone interviews will be held between March 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> with notification dates between March 20<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

Placement	Number of interns	Length of placement
June 23 – September 3	2 unpaid	10 weeks
June 23 – August 11	2 unpaid	7 weeks
July 20 – September 3	2 unpaid	7 weeks
July 20 – September 29	2 unpaid	10 weeks

\*Dates subject to change

Applications will be processed by the VAMMRC Coordinator and Manager. Please send resume, letter of intent and two references either by email to [rescue@vanaqua.org](mailto:rescue@vanaqua.org) with VAMMRC Internship Application in the subject line or by mail to the attention of VAMMRC Internship Application, Vancouver Aquarium, PO Box 3232, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3X8.

Please note, only successful applicants will be contacted.

At successful completion of the internship, students will receive

- Performance review and Completion Certificate from the VAMMRC Internship
- Formal letter of reference for both scholastic and career endeavours
- Free admission to the Vancouver Aquarium during placement
- Discounts at Vancouver Aquarium Gift Shop and Cafes during placement

#### **INTERN CHECKLIST**

- Read the VAMMRC Internship Program Outline
- Ensure requirements are met
- Choose a placement: either early summer, late summer or full summer
- Compile resume, letter of intent, 2 references
- Send to [rescue@vanaqua.org](mailto:rescue@vanaqua.org) or address mail to the attention of VAMMRC Internship Application, Vancouver Aquarium Box 3232 Vancouver, BC V6B3X8.

Good luck to all our applicants.

Thank you for your interest in the Vancouver Aquarium's Internship program.