

Description of the WDP Internship Program

The Wild Dolphin Project (www.wilddolphinproject.org) is the longest-running underwater dolphin research study in the world. Since 1985, WDP has studied two resident communities of Atlantic spotted dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*) and bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) in the northern Bahamas. During the summer field season we are offering a limited internship program, open to U.S. college undergraduates, graduates, and high school juniors and seniors.

Internship spaces are limited for this field season. Please contact our office at fieldwork@wilddolphinproject.org or 561-575-5660 if you have any questions. This is an unpaid internship. The cost of the internship program can be found on our website (www.wilddolphinproject.org). The cost covers food and housing for a 10-day live-aboard research trip in the Bahamas. A deposit of is required to secure your spot. Trip Applications will be emailed to you when you reserve your spot/pay in full and you will have **7-10 days to mail them back to us completed** (no scans/faxes accepted). Spaces may be added later in the summer, and will be announced on our website; stay in touch if you are not able to book one of the above dates. Please contact us to be added to the waiting list for this season or the notification list for next season.

All trips leave from West Palm Beach on a Tuesday morning at 9 AM and return 10 days later on a Thursday morning around 10 AM, depending on customs. If space allows, students may apply to do the two trips back to back in May to maximize their experience. Students who do not live locally are responsible for their travel costs and housing on land before and after each trip as needed. Information on local housing options is available from WDP if requested.

Interns will assist in collection of data in the field, photo identification processes, data entry, and specialized projects as available. Students must be currently registered in a relevant university or high school program, have swimming and snorkeling skills (and equipment), and be willing to be at sea for 10 days at a time. High school students (age 16 and up) or others under age 18 also need written parental permission as part of their application. Please let us know if this is the case so that we can also send you the medical release form to be submitted with the application.

Intern responsibilities in the field:

1. Help with daily dolphin watches, log data, and help with in-the-water underwater photography.
2. Process dolphin photographs for photo identification during daytime when schedule allows.
3. Review underwater video in the evenings and help log individuals and behavior.

Daytime hours: are typically spent looking for, or working with, the dolphins. Observations occur both from the surface and in the water. Observations are made from our 62-foot research vessel or in our inflatable boat.

Evening Hours: Lectures on dolphin identification, biology, behavior, and acoustics will be given in the evenings or during the day if weather conditions permit. Areas of interests for students include behavior, acoustics, or ecology and can be accommodated for focused projects while on board.

Lectures are given by Dr. Herzing, scientific colleagues, or current graduate students working with WDP in their area of specialty. A reading list can be downloaded from WDP website in the “Library” section. Students can check at their own universities to receive credit for projects specified by their advisor if desired.

Skill sets required:

1. Ability to live in small quarters, at sea, for 10 days.
2. Strong swimming and snorkeling skills are required (no scuba diving).
3. Skills in photography, media processing, and data processing are a plus.
4. Must be willing to work in a team and safely in the water, and on a boat, under the instructions of researchers and graduate students.
5. A working knowledge of biology, evolution, and life sciences is helpful and encouraged.

Requirements for Internship Program

Students must:

1. Verification that you are currently a student (i.e. student transcripts, student ID card, etc.) is required for all internship applicants when they place their deposit/reserve their spot.
2. Currently be enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program, with an emphasis or interest in biology, psychology, or environmental studies. **Juniors or seniors in high school age 16+ are allowed with the written permission of parents and letters of recommendation from two current instructors.**
3. Proof of health insurance (valid outside the U.S.) is required, and/or DAN (Divers Alert Network) insurance is highly recommended for all participants. **Written parental permission is required for participants under age 18.**
4. A current passport is required to enter the Bahamas and to re-enter the U.S. on our research boat.