



Zoological Operations Internship

Amber Fleming
Busch Gardens Williamsburg
Williamsburg, VA
May 2022- August 2022



About Busch Gardens Williamsburg

A Brief History:
Busch Gardens Williamsburg opened in James City County, VA under the operation of Anheuser-Busch in 1975 under the name *Busch Gardens: The Old Country*. In 2009, the park was sold to the Blackstone Group along with Busch Gardens Tampa Bay and SeaWorld parks and formed SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment.

- Fast Facts!**
- ❖ SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment operates eight theme parks and four water parks across the United States.
 - ❖ SeaWorld and Busch Gardens rescue teams have helped over 40,000 animals in the past fifty years.
 - ❖ The SeaWorld and Busch Gardens Conservation Fund has donated about \$16.5 million and supported over 1,200 animal conservation projects across all seven continents.



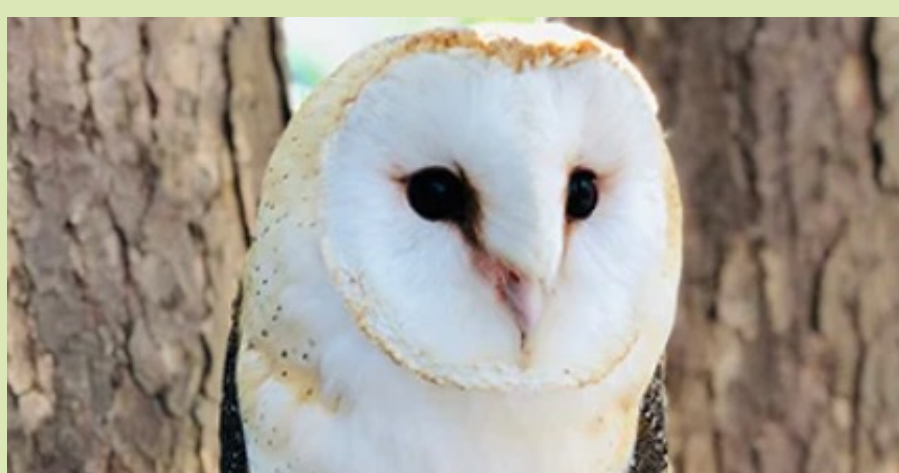
Animal Locations at Busch Gardens

- ❖ Eagle Ridge
- ❖ Wolf Valley
- ❖ Lorikeet Glen
- ❖ Highland Stables
- ❖ Italy Pastures



Animals at Busch Gardens

- ❖ Clydesdale Horses
- ❖ Gray Wolves
- ❖ Black Face Sheep
- ❖ Reptiles
- ❖ Birds of Prey
- ❖ Bald Eagles
- ❖ Scottish Highland Cattle
- ❖ Border Collies
- ❖ And More!



Photos from buschgardens.com

Summer Leadership Internship Program

Overview
The Summer Leadership Internship Program provides the opportunity for interns to gain critical work experience in various sectors of the theme park and hospitality industry. Interns also attended weekly seminars presented by park leaders in different lines of business in the park to allow for a greater understanding of how they all work together to operate the park.

Jobs
Interns were placed in various lines of business within the park including human resources, ride operations, finance, guest relations, and zoological operations. I was a zoological intern with the Clyde Barn team. Interns worked at least forty hours per week, any day of the week.



Seminars
Interns attended weekly seminars presented by different leaders in the park. Each week, leaders from different lines of business discussed how they operate in the park. The leaders also told their personal experiences working in the park and how they earned their positions.

Project
All interns completed a business case project, where they selected a business issue they came across while working in their roles and presented a solution to park leadership.

- Important Dates:**
- May 15, 2022 Check into intern housing and paperwork processing
 - May 16, 2022 First Impressions Course
 - May 19, 2022 First day of work
 - August 3, 2022 Zoological Intern Business Case Presentation
 - August 10, 2022 Business Case Presentations cont.
 - August 12, 2022 Last day of work

Clyde Barn Team

Zoological interns worked as a part of the Clyde Barn team. This team manages the Highland Stables, home to two sheep paddocks, a cattle habitat, an owl habitat, and a photo area that allows guests to meet and take photos with the horses. The Clyde Barn team also cares for various bird species in the Lorikeet Glenn Aviary. Here guests can walk through and feed nectar to birds.



- Clyde Barn Team's Animals:**
- ❖ Six Clydesdale horses
 - ❖ Two Scottish Highland Cattle
 - ❖ Five Scottish Blackface Sheep
 - ❖ One European Barn Owl
 - ❖ Three Border Collies
 - ❖ Rainbow Lorikeets



Daily Responsibilities

Responsibilities and duties varied day to day depending on what you are assigned to do. Typical responsibilities included daily husbandry, preparing diets, cleaning habitats, and monitoring guest areas.

Every morning before the park opens, four Clydesdale horses are walked across the park from the Italy pasture to the Highland Stables where they are viewable by guests, and then they are walked back to their pasture at night when the park is closed.

Much of our day involved taking the Clydesdales to Clyde Photo, a photography location where guests can meet the horses and take photos with them. This is an enrichment experience for the horses, and we get to have conversations with people about our horses and other animals. This is a popular interactive experience for the guests.



An example of the photos taken with our horses at Clyde Photo

- General Opening Shift Schedule**
- 6:00-8:00 Feed animals and clean horse pastures, walk horses to Highland Stables
 - 8:00- 10:00 Groom horses, clean sheep paddock, feed and clean other barn animals
 - 10:00-11:00 Break
 - 11:00-2:30 Rotate handling horses at Clyde Photo, feeding animals at Italy pasture and barn, and monitoring aviary

- General Closing Shift Schedule**
- 1:30-4:30 Rotate between handling horses at Clyde Photo, speaking and educating guests at the stables, and monitoring aviary
 - 4:30-5:30 Break
 - 5:30-9:00 Rotate between handling horses at Clyde photo, speaking with guests, cleaning, and feeding animals
 - 9:00-9:30 Park closes, clean all horse stalls, take trash out, prepare barn for the next day
 - 9:30-10:00 On select nights- monitor animals during fireworks presentation
 - Walk horses back to Italy pasture, properly lock all gates, and check waters



Photo from buschgardens.com

Business Case Project

The issue within the zoological line of business we chose to address in our project was that many of our animals do not have habitats in the park, and we have limited staff to do consistent presentations. We also presented ideas to promote the Conservation Fund and encourage donations.

ZOOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT BUSINESS CASE
By: Amber Fleming, Jordan Strickland, Mary Shelly, and Courtney Crossdale

BUSINESS PROBLEM
We currently have many animals at Busch Gardens that are not being used for guest interactions as they could be. This is largely because we do not have any in-park habitats that allow guests to view certain animals. This is a major problem we want to address.
Our goal is to promote the Busch Gardens and SeaWorld conservation fund, while also providing a new multi-use habitat in the park to showcase some of our animals that do not currently have an exhibit.

SIGNAGE
• Signs for Multi-Use Habitat
• Advertisements for rounding up at cash registers

ROUND UP FOR CONSERVATION
Maryland Zoo's Logo for Round Up for Conservation Program

PARK AWARENESS
MERCHANDISE
Idea for merchandise in the park

STORES
SeaWorld Rescue Store in SeaWorld Orlando

- Key Points:**
- ❖ New signs for the park to promote rounding up for donations and to learn about the animals
 - ❖ Introduce merchandise into the park that would donate portions to the Conservation Fund
 - ❖ Advocate for new animal habitats to allow for more animals to be visible to guests

GOALS FOR THE HABITAT

- Usable for Multiple Animals
- Allows on-stage presentation of multiple animals
- Easily visible location for guests and ambassadors

KEEP PARK GOALS HIGH

- Multi-Use Habitat:**
- ❖ A habitat that is big enough and built specifically for multiple animals to be able to live in.
 - ❖ Provided dimensions for our animal with the largest habitat requirement, our Eurasian Eagle Owl
 - ❖ Placed in a prime location that was visible and accessible to guests
 - ❖ Themed and structured to match the Wild Reserve

Conclusion

I've been interested in working at Busch Gardens since I was in high school, and I'm so glad I had the opportunity to do so. This experience gave me a fantastic introduction to the zoological industry, and I feel fortunate that I got to work with animals I have gained experience caring for in classes at school.

The internship project encouraged me to think critically about my work environment, and I appreciated that we were able to choose what we considered a pressing concern in the park. This allowed us to dive deep into our topic and provide the best solution we could. We received positive feedback and even got to discuss our project with the president of Busch Gardens.

I improved my customer service skills, public speaking, and ability to work with a team. I believe this work experience will greatly benefit me in my future career.

Questions?

Do you have any questions about our animals?

Busch Gardens?

The Internship Program?

Please ask me!

Contact:
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