Año Nuevo Island seasonal internship description & application
Application closes February 19th, 2021. Position is April 1 – Sept 1, 2021

Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge seeks one to two highly motivated volunteer interns to work on a seabird conservation science project at Año Nuevo Island, a seabird and marine mammal refuge 20 minutes north of Santa Cruz and 1km offshore. Interns will learn seabird research techniques and science-driven conservation solutions while monitoring the breeding ecology of seven species of breeding seabirds on the island, and contributing to habitat restoration for nesting Rhinoceros and Cassin’s Auklets.

This is a unique opportunity to learn skills such as:
- bird banding and handling
- scientific monitoring of breeding seabirds and intensive data collection
- working effectively with a team in a wild field setting
- habitat restoration technique

As field work is conducted entirely outside and team-members do not live on-site, spring/summer internships in 2021 will be in-person with the expectation that all team members will follow Covid-19 safety protocols. Logistics such as carpooling and overnight trips will be coordinated upon hiring. Intern access to a personal or borrowed vehicle is helpful but not required.

All applicants who are interested in gaining experience in seabird conservation may apply for this internship. We encourage applications from people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, including people of all races and sexual identities, and those from traditionally underrepresented groups in the biological sciences. If enrolled at UC Santa Cruz, interns can receive credit for a 2- or 5-unit internship during Spring quarter. Possibilities for senior exit internships exist as well.

For 80 years, the island was an active Coast Guard Station and hosted a resident lighthouse keeper.
Internship duties include:

- Working on a team of five to monitoring seabird population and reproduction during weekly single day trips (10 hours/week) and 4 – 5 overnight trips during June and July (20 hours/week)
- Taking standardized and rigorous data, checking nests, banding and measuring seabirds, capturing seabirds with mist nets, and field station maintenance and upkeep.
- Performing restoration work such as planting, watering, installing erosion control material, and other physical labor tasks associated with habitat restoration.
- Depending on intern interest, there are opportunities to learn data entry, management, and analysis skills, outreach and fundraising skills, and science writing skills, though these are not required.

Internship qualifications include:

- Enthusiasm for conservation science
- Ability to write legibly by hand and keep organized and rigorous field data
- Ability to do regular heavy lifting
- Willingness to work with wildlife in challenging field conditions: Año Nuevo Island can be very windy, hot, cold, or smelly; during breeding season gulls will dive-bomb, scream, and defecate on you! Ability to keep a positive attitude under these conditions is essential.

Desired skills:

- Degree in or enrollment in degree program in field related to conservation biology
- Basic swimming ability and comfort with riding in small boats on the ocean; transportation to the island is in a small zodiac and launching involves wading up to chest-deep in water on uneven footing.
- Previous field experience working with/handling wild birds
- Skills in art or photography

Duration: We are seeking interns who can commit to the full, six-month breeding season; April 1st - September 1st. Start date is not flexible, end date is potentially flexible. Interns must be able to commit to one full day of field work a week April – mid-June, and approximately five overnight trips during June and July. Trips are always the same day(s) of the week.

To apply, please send a cover letter with a description of why you are interested in the internship, a resume with pertinent school, job, or volunteer experience, and at least one reference to project managers Jessie Beck and Rozy Bathrick. The application window is open from January 18, 2021 to February 19, 2021.

Contact: Jessie Beck, jessie@oikonos.org & Rozy Bathrick, rozy@oikonos.org