



Summer Environmental Education Intern 2026



About The Ridges Sanctuary

The Ridges Sanctuary mission is to protect the Sanctuary and inspire stewardship of natural areas through programs of education, outreach, and research. The Ridges was established in 1937 after Albert Fuller, then Curator of Botany at the Milwaukee Public Museum, began spending a significant amount of time surveying the landscape. Fuller spearheaded a grassroots movement to protect this incredibly diverse property and establish Wisconsin's first land trust. The Ridges now protects over 1600 acres comprising fifteen discrete plant communities, 475 inventoried vascular plants, a Boreal Forest glacial relict and twenty-six of Wisconsin's forty-nine native orchids. The Ridges has also established popular early childhood education programs, a nationally recognized Orchid Restoration Project, and welcomes over 35,000 visitors to our Nature Center each year.

Position Summary

The Ridges Sanctuary is looking to hire a motivated Summer Environmental Education Intern to fulfill duties in the areas of environmental education, land preservation, and research. This is a paid position averaging 40 hours a week from the end of May through August, including most weekends. The primary responsibilities will be developing and leading educational programs for The Ridges Backpack Adventure Camps, leading guided hikes for adults and families, and assisting visitors at the Nature Center and along the trail. Other experiences include weekly immersion into the operations of the organization, including the Orchid Research Project, Land Management, and other special projects throughout the summer. This position will report to the Director of Operations.

Tentative position dates are May 18 - August 21. Schedule is subject to flexibility.

*Affordable Housing is available for this position.

Duties & Responsibilities

Education Programs

- Assist with developing lesson plans and leading Backpack Adventure Camps for children ages 4 to 11.
- Lead Sanctuary Guided Hikes, teaching visitors about The Ridges.
- Assist with group tours as needed.
- Participate in special events.
- Assist in developing brochures, programs, and activities to enhance the visitor experience.

Visitor Services – Reception Desk

- Interact with visitors daily and answer questions about The Ridges, the Nature Center and Door County.
- Manage daily operations for visitors and members to include program registration, customer service, store sales, and other needs.
- Help answer incoming phone calls.

Internship Project

- Develop an independent project pertaining to an area of interest at The Ridges Sanctuary.
- Create an educational component based on the internship project to be utilized by Ridges visitors, staff, or volunteers.

Other duties as assigned.

Required Dates

The Summer Environmental Education Intern position tentatively starts on May 18 and ends on August 21. Interns will be expected to work some evenings and weekends throughout the summer. There is some flexibility in weekly scheduling except for the dates below, on which the Summer Naturalist Intern must be present.

- Festival of Nature: May 21-25
- Backpack Adventure Camp: Monday, June 22 – July 31
- Annual Meeting: August 1

Candidate Profile & Qualifications

- Experience in developing and delivering environmental education and/or camp programs.
- Lifeguard Certification and Experience is a plus
- Energetic and enthusiastic personality to help motivate children and collaborate with co-workers.
- Knowledge of local natural history is preferred.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to manage a dynamic work schedule.
- Withstand the physical demands of work which involve lifting, carrying, bending, and hiking across uneven terrain.
- Must pass a criminal background check.

How to Apply

Please send a cover letter and resume electronically to anna@ridgessanctuary.org with the subject line "Summer Environmental Education Intern Application" by January 30, 2026. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

The Ridges Sanctuary is an equal opportunity employer and considers applicants for all positions without regard to race, color, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other legally-protected status.