Mount Pisgah Arboretum is a 209-acre nonprofit nature education facility located in the popular Howard Buford Recreation Area just outside of Eugene. The Arboretum hosts over 400,000 visitors per year, and offers numerous programs to reconnect people with nature.

As part of Mount Pisgah Arboretum’s new interpretive program, we will be providing visitors at each of our eight planned outdoor exhibits with access to additional in-depth natural history information via webpages transferred to smart phones by Near Field Communication. These will be pages of detailed and locally relevant information which will expand the learning opportunities well beyond what we can fit on a sign. We are building a digital library of information which will be useful both for casual naturalists and as a launch-pad for students conducting research. Interns will have a direct role in helping to develop some of this material. See an example attached below.

We can provide for 1-4 credit hours of work per term. We are able to offer a workspace at certain hours during the week, and have a lending library of relevant books. Interns may also work remotely if preferred, but must check in regularly with the project advisor.

**Primary Responsibilities:**
- Develop information pages for highlighted species of plants and animals.
- Present concise and accurate information.
- Conduct independent research primarily utilizing publicly available resources.

**Required Skills and Abilities:**
- Some knowledge of Willamette Valley ecology is helpful.
- Excellent expository writing skills.
- Strong research skills.
- Ability to be self-motivated and work independently.

Send resumé, brief cover letter, and a relevant writing sample to August Jackson at interpretation@mountpisgaharboretum.org.
As late summer turns to early fall, a young western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*) begins her overland trek uphill to find a spot to hibernate. She’ll dig a shallow hole in a sunny, open area to spend the cool winter months, occasionally emerging on warmer days to move about, bask, and feed again in the pond. She entered her eighth year last July, and come spring, she is ready to find a mate. She will dig a deeper hole for her nest, and lay as many as thirteen eggs. Survival is unlikely for even a single of her hatchlings, but now that she is an adult, she has decades of reproduction ahead of her. With luck, she will emerge on a warm day in February to find one of her offspring already occupying her favorite basking log.

**Description:** The western pond turtle has a smooth, dark olive carapace (upper half of its shell) with a maximum length of about 20 cm. The plastron (underside of its shell) is a pale yellow color. The skin of the turtles is a dark gray, and males usually have pale yellow on their neck and chin.

**Habitat:** The western pond turtle makes use of both permanent and ephemeral water sources including slow-moving portions of rivers and streams, marshes, ponds, and lakes. Hatchlings may utilize seasonal seeps and puddles. Basking areas such as partially submerged logs and boulders are necessary for temperature regulation in cooler months, or among cooler waters. Western pond turtles also require suitable terrestrial habitat for nesting and hibernation. This habitat must be near water, with good solar exposure and limited vegetation.

**Range:** The western pond turtle can be found from northwestern Baja California to the Puget Sound in Washington, generally west of the Cascades and Sierra Nevada mountain ranges, though with populations in the Klamath Basin.

**Diet:** Western pond turtles are omnivorous and opportunistic in their foraging habits, occasionally adding carrion to their diet. Small aquatic invertebrates make up most of their diet, with plant materials, tadpoles, and small fish also present.

**Conservation:** The western pond turtle is listed as critically threatened in Oregon. Low reproductive success, and concentration in population centers west of the Cascades makes this species vulnerable to decline. Habitat loss is a significant threat to western pond turtles, especially in the Willamette Valley, where about 96% of land is under private ownership. Hatchling predation by introduced species such as bullfrogs is thought to be a significant concern, though there is little evidence for this occurrence.

**Sources and Further Reading:**