

# NAC HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM 2024



naturalareasnyc



NaturalAreasNYC



NaturalAreasNYC

Natural Areas  
Conservancy



# WELCOME!



*Trail Maintenance Week  
with Forest Park Trust  
(Summer '23)*

- 6 Week-long paid urban ecology internship program running from July 7th, 2025 through August 15th, 2025 - 9 AM - 4 PM (incl. 1 hr lunch)
  - Locations:
    - Staten Island, Greenbelt Nature Center
    - Queens, Forest Park
- Interns can expect to be outdoors 90% of the time, 10% is remote based depending on weather alerts

# PROGRAM BACKGROUND



- Learn Plant and Invertebrate Identification skills
- Design and conduct your own research project
- Engage with the ecosystems in Forest Park and The Greenbelt through data collection, monitoring, and land stewardship
- Participate in professional development sessions (science communication, college readiness, resume / LinkedIn profile building)
  - Spring PD: City Parks Foundation
  - Summer PD: Irondale
- Connect with peers interested in nature and science in Staten Island AND Forest Park through selected joint activities
- Become a [NYCSRM Consortium](#) member and get access to resources designed to help you succeed
- Connect with professionals in the STEM field
- Field trips to local organizations

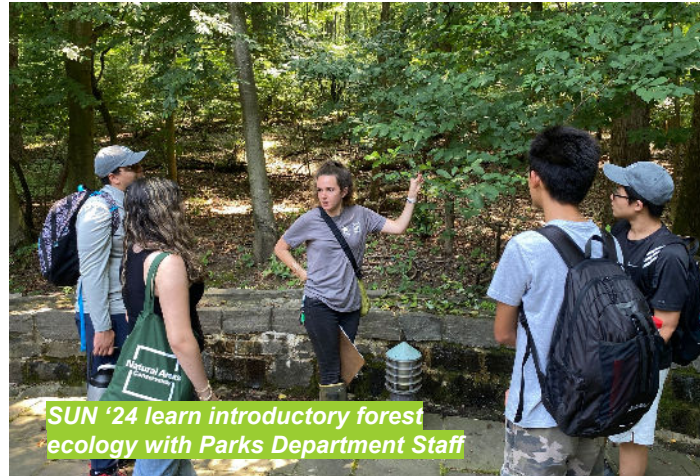


# WEEK 1

- In this introductory week, interns will learn:
  - Introductory Ecology (Wetland, Forest, Grassland)
  - Plant ID and Invertebrate identification
  - Scientific Method and learning to write down Observations
  - Forest Park and Greenbelt Land History
- Interns are introduced to their mentor and their research sites



*SUN '24 Interns learn to identify trees in Forest Park, Queens*



*SUN '24 learn introductory forest ecology with Parks Department Staff*

# WEEK 2 - 4



- **Week 2**
  - Interns will be able to learn how to collect data and how to keep track of their data through data entry forms
  - Interns are introduced to forest monitoring and stream monitoring protocols and will form a hypothesis from their observations of their research site
  - Interns will also begin collecting data
- **Week 3 and Week 4** continued data collection and data entry with the help of the Program Supervisor and an assigned Mentor



# WEEK 5



*HS Interns participating in professional development sessions*



*'24 Staten Island Alumni Panel*

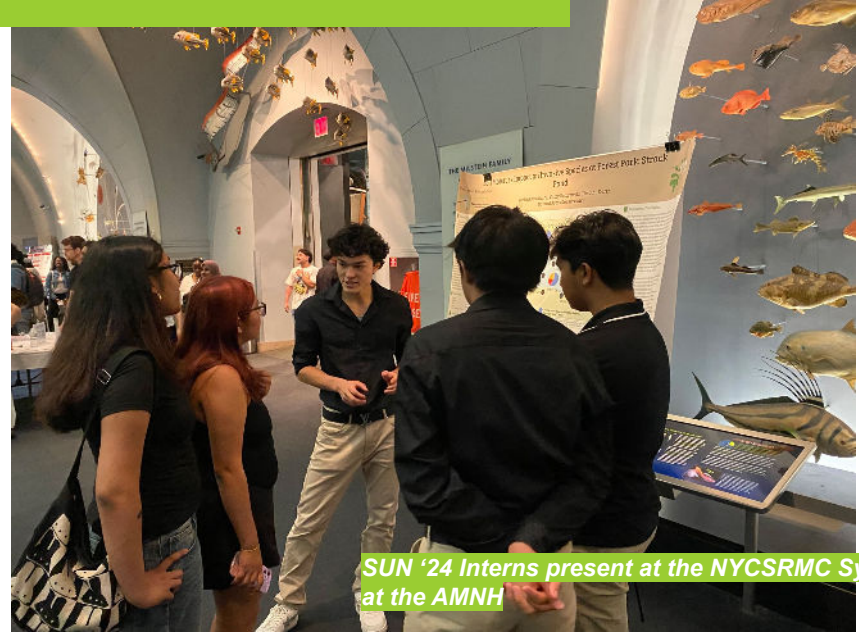
- By **Week 5** interns will have completed data collection and can begin analysis under the guidance of the program supervisor and assigned mentor
  - Interns also prepare their research posters to present at the NYCSRMC Symposium
- In the 5th week we also hold our Alumni Panel featuring past HS interns, college students, and early-career professionals that speak on their journey through STEM fields and how they navigated college and early career spaces



# WEEK 6



*SUN '24 Interns presenting their research projects at the Mini Symposium at the Greenbelt Nature Center, Staten Island*



*SUN '24 Interns present at the NYCSRMC Symposium at the AMNH*

- Our last week, **Week 6**, focuses on:
  - finalizing intern's research posters
  - public speaking practice
  - Mini Symposium with friends and family
  - NYCSRMC Symposium that takes place at American Museum of Natural History



# STEWARDSHIP DAYS AND FIELD TRIPS



'24 SUN interns remove invasive porcelain berry root in Forest Park, Queens

**Stewardship Days**, an important aspect of our HS internship, introduces interns to the importance of land management and trailwork in NYC.

## **What is Stewardship?**

Caring for the land for future sustainable use - learning about introduced species and maintaining forest trails. Interns learn a lot about the importance of stewardship not just for people, but for plants too

## **Stewardship / Field Trip Days include:**

- Greenbelt Native Plant Center, Staten Island
- Freshkills Park Alliance, Staten Island
- Gowanus Canal Conservancy, Brooklyn
- Trail Work / Stewardship Days with NYC Parks Trail Team, NAC Trail Team, Forest Park Trust Trail team



# NEAR-PEER MENTORSHIP

- Near-peer mentorship also plays a big factor in our program. Through the SUN program's partnership with the College-level Intern program, HS interns will have the opportunity to meet and talk to College-level interns, NYC Parks staff, NAC Staff and gain insight on the next steps of college and navigating a path in environmental science from high school to a career.
- Will also have the pleasure of working with near-peer mentor, who will help you with your research projects and offer guidance in both your projects and thoughts on navigating post-high school milestones



*'23 High School Internship Panel with CUNY College Intern Alumni and HS Intern 2022 as Panel Guests*

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Beyond alumni workshops, SUN High School Internship provides..

- A partnership with professional development group Irontdale and **4 full-day sessions** to develop students' science communication and public speaking skills through theater and improv activities
- A partnership with City Park Foundation professional development sessions that address networking, resume-building, college and career-readiness





# PROGRAM RESULTS



## How has our program impacted students in the past?

- Positive trend in students' self-reported skills in ecological knowledge, plant identification, and trail knowledge before and after the internship
- Positive trend in students' identity as scientists, belonging in the field, and confidence reaching out to other scientists before and after the internship

## What have students taken away from the program?

- Ecology fieldwork experience (data collection, site/vegetation/macroinvertebrate assessment, following scientific protocols)
- Communication skills
- Data analysis
- Plant/macroinvertebrate identification
- Scientific poster creation

## What have students said?

*"After this program, I feel more connected with my local park as I now know the efforts that go into maintaining the park. I used to think I was connected with my park but now I acknowledge both its history and the difficulties it faces."*

*(Francisco Reyes, 12th Grade, HS Cohort 2023)*

# INTERESTED? APPLY BELOW

Interested in Nature, Science, or STEM?

Interested in working outdoors for the summer and getting to know your backyard?

Natural Areas Conservancy is having an in-person recruitment fair for both Forest Park and Staten Island program locations. Sign up at the link!



Unable to attend? Online Applications are due January 27th, 2025



[Recruitment Fair Sign Up Sheet](#)





# THANK YOU



*"This was the best possible way I could've spent my summer! I learned so much and contributed to nature in so many ways all while meeting such amazing people!"*  
(Shahzeen Chowdhury, 11th Grade, HS Cohort 2023)