

INTERNSHIP POSITIONS: Restoration Ecology

Acorus Restoration is the name of our Native Plant Nursery, located on our 95-acre former tobacco farm in Walsingham, Ontario, Canada. We grow native plants for natural area enhancement projects and consult with groups in the public and private sectors on the positive impact of ecological restoration. Applications are being accepted for our internship programme from people who are keen and physically fit, and interested in participating in an intensive learning experience in the fields of biodiversity, horticulture and restoration ecology. We offer training that will provide you with the basic skills needed to restore a variety of natural areas. Most of the learning will take place in the nursery, where you will gain skills such as native plant propagation, transplanting, plant identification, seed collection, and greenhouse and shade house maintenance. You will also contribute to the ongoing restoration of the farm, including wetland, prairie and Carolinian woodland projects. There may also be restoration and enhancement projects throughout Ontario. We provide shared room in a strawbale cabin and food, and expect that everyone will participate in the daily chores, including cooking, cleaning, animal husbandry and organic gardening.

Interns have played an important role in helping with the ecological restoration of our farm and in the nursery. Since 1997, over 20 interns have lived and worked at the farm. They felt the hands-on experience furthered their education and provided valuable ecological field experience. There is the added experience of rural living and sharing our passion for living in harmony with the environment. Knowledge gained will be equal to the effort made.

Positions Available

2-month Spring Nursery Internship (March-April) – more seeding and farm ecological restoration

4-month Summer Nursery Internship (May-August) – more plant propagation and gardening

3-month Fall Nursery Internship (September-November) – more seed collection and processing

- Applications for the spring position must be postmarked by January 8.
- Applications for the summer position must be postmarked by March 8.
- Applications for the fall position must be postmarked by July 8.

There is more detailed information on our website and an application form under Contact Us:
www.AcorusRestoration.com

Paul Morris
722 6th Con Rd.
R.R. #1, Walsingham, Ontario
N0E 1X0
info@ecologyart.com
Fax: (519) 586-2447

A Labour for Learning Exchange

Acorus Restoration (*Acorus americanus* - Sweet flag, a sweetly aromatic beauty found in rich, moist areas) is the name of our Native Plant Nursery. It is our goal to contribute to the establishment of natural areas across Ontario.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide indigenous plants for restoration projects
- To promote the benefits and use of native plants
- To encourage the conservation and restoration of natural areas
- To research native plants
- To provide information on native plants and restoration
- To educate on conservation and restoration issues
- To lead by example

Most of our work is on farm and related to growing plants for restoration and naturalization projects, planting restoration sites along with maintenance and monitoring. Some of the days may be long and tiring but the results are all rewarding, (seeing plants germinate from dust into a mature plant, to be used somewhere to create habitat). We have a variety of natural habitats on our property: a meandering stream, ravines, swamp, large pond, wet meadow, forest and scrub. Facilities and equipment we have for the nursery and research include: 5 large greenhouses, a small heated greenhouse, a shade house, field ponds and a paddy system. We have the equipment to carry out many ecological and horticultural studies. We try to balance this out with other activities such as swimming, hiking, canoeing, and trips to other parts of Ontario.

GENERAL INTERN DUTIES

- Plant propagation
- Weeding/Watering
- Transplanting
- On and off site planting of restoration projects
- General construction and maintenance (greenhouse repairs, ponds, paddies)
- Experimental design and monitoring
- Seed collection and processing
- Gardening with native plants

INTERN REQUIREMENTS

- Physically fit (lifting and other laborious tasks involved)
- Field hardy (able to endure difficult conditions: rain, insects, heat...)
- Independent and Group worker
- Motivation, Enthusiasm and Desire to work, learn and exchange ideas
- Able to commit to a minimum period of two months
- All volunteers are required to participate equally in domestic duties. e.g. gardening, animal husbandry, grounds maintenance, cooking and cleaning (rotational)

Following is a more detailed description of the various projects that we have undertaken:

A. FARM RESTORATION: Continuing projects: wet meadow, stream, swamp, prairie and woodland. We use a variety of techniques (plugging drainage tile, burning, natural regeneration, seeding, propagation & planting, exotic species removal...). We will also continue to naturalize the areas around the house and bunkhouse to demonstrate and promote the beauty of native plants in backyards.

B. WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS: This winter we built are building a 32 foot yurt for retail and for holding workshops. You will participate in the events going on and help to landscape the new building.

C. TOURS: We may be giving tours of our nursery to groups interested in our work and in restoration (i.e. school groups, Wildflower Society, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment Canada, Conservation Authorities, consultants, etc.). Also, we will be developing workshops on restoration, backyard and farm naturalization and water gardening using native plants.

E. BASELINE PLANT AND INVERTEBRATE SURVEYS: Permanent plots will be set up to monitor community changes in the restored areas of our farm.

F. RESEARCH: Since little is known about native plant propagation, we will be doing experiments to determine: seed storage, viability, germination techniques, and growth rates. Other research areas may include nutrient uptake, toxicant breakdown and tolerance, planting techniques, sediment holding ability, herbivory tolerance and many other population and community studies.

G. ORGANIC FARMING: We have chickens, horses and a large garden that is grown organically.

LOCATION

We are located 10 minutes north of Long Point and one hour south of Woodstock, Ontario. The Long Point wetlands have been recognized internationally as a RAMSAR site, globally significant Important Bird Area, and as a UNESCO Biosphere reserve. Over 360 bird species have been recorded in the area. A visit during the early spring will provide outstanding opportunities to observe thousands of waterfowl and other early migrants. We live on a 95-acre former tobacco farm in Walsingham, in a very rural location. This is the heart of the Carolinian zone, which is estimated to support approximately 40 % of Canada's species. There are many conservation areas and parks near us (Backus Woods (Carolinian), Turkey Point (oak savanna), Long Point (marsh, swamp, sand dune;). Port Rowan is the closest small town 15 km south, which offers the basics, but no "night life" to brag about. Simcoe is 40 km east, and we generally make a weekly trip there for groceries, etc.

TRAVEL: Travel to our farm will be at your own expense. We may be able to pick people up in Toronto (airport, bus, train station) but prefer it if you can make it to Tillsonburg or Simcoe. We will use our vehicles to travel to various sites. You may need medical or travel insurance, especially if you are from another country.

ACCOMODATION: We have a wood heated strawbale cabin available for shared accommodation. The bunkhouse has its own shower/bathroom and a full kitchen.

FOOD: We have a large garden. Also, our local area has a wide assortment of vegetables and fruit available as pick your own. We eat a variety of foods - without meat. We provide some staples (rice, grains, in season vegetables...) and give \$50/person/week for extra food, snacks, etc.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

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- Applications for the spring position must be postmarked by January 8.
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PLEASE FILL OUT THE APPLICATION FORM BELOW:

Thank you for your interest in our farm. If you have any other questions do not hesitate to e-mail or write us.

Paul and Stephanie Morris, Daniel, Keegan, Zoë and River

References

Please give the enclosed reference forms to two people who know you well enough professionally, personally, or academically to evaluate your willingness and ability to produce quality work. List below their names, addresses and phone numbers.

A. _____

B. _____

(name)

(address)

(phone number)

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Why are you applying for this internship? What particular learning experiences are you looking for?
2. How would you describe yourself and the strengths, professional and/or personal, you feel you would bring to this internship.
3. What horticulture experiences would you bring to the internship? Other education or experiences that you consider relevant? Please include work with landscaping or nursery operations, garden design, data management, writing, public information work, sales, etc.
4. Please explain why you are particularly interested in the nursery internship you checked on the previous page. Please indicate order of preference if you have checked more than one.
5. How does this internship fit into your career plans?
6. Shared intern housing is in a strawbale cabin. List three qualities you would look for in a roommate.
7. How did you hear about our internship program?

Mailing Instructions

Send this Application form and your resume to Acorus Restoration Native Plant Nursery. Have your 2 reference forms sent independently before the application deadline.

- Applications for the spring position must be postmarked by January 8.
- Applications for the summer position must be postmarked by March 8.
- Applications for the fall position must be postmarked by July 8.

Mail to: Internships - Acorus Restoration Native Plant Nursery
 722 6th Con Rd. RR #1
 Walsingham, ON
 N0E 1X0

Phone (519) 586-2603
 Fax (519) 586-2447
 Email info@ecologyart.com

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

INTERN PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION REQUEST

Please return to: Internships - Acorus Restoration Native Plant Nursery
722 6th Con Rd. RR #1
Walsingham, ON
N0E 1X0

Phone (519) 586-2603
Fax (519) 586-2447
Email info@ecologyart.com

Applicant's name _____ (please print or type)

To the reference: The program requires individuals who are mature, responsible, able to work at times independently and other times under supervision, and able to live in a group situation with little space for privacy. Your assessment of this applicant's qualifications will be helpful in guiding us to select applicants best suited for this experience. Thank you.

1. How long have you known this applicant? _____ In what capacity?

2. Describe the applicant's greatest strengths.

3. Describe the applicant's greatest weaknesses.

4. Do you feel the applicant is capable of carrying out semi-independent projects?

(continued on back)

5. Please rate the applicant on a 1-10 scale (10 being the highest):

Learning new information and skills _____	Verbal skills _____
Effective use of time and opportunities _____	Analytical skills _____
Initiative and responsibility _____	Organizational skills _____
Following instructions carefully _____	Maturity and social skills _____
Follow through on projects _____	Ability to live/work with others _____
Writing skills _____	Attitude and enthusiasm _____

6. Do you foresee any problems the applicant may have in our program?

7. Is there anything you would like to add?

Reviewer Signature _____ Date _____

Reviewer name (please type or print) _____ Position _____

Address _____