

MS Research Assistantship Available – Waterfowl and Wetlands

Illinois Natural History Survey & Western Illinois University

Project Title: True Metabolizable Energy of Aquatic Vegetation for Ducks

Project Description: Successful applicants will be awarded a research assistantship through Western Illinois University and simultaneously serve as academic hourly employee of the Illinois Natural History Survey through the Forbes Biological Station in Havana, IL (<http://www.bellrose.org/>). Graduate work will entail estimating true metabolizable energy of submersed aquatic vegetation and other aquatic vegetation for mallards, gadwall, and possibly other species. Graduate work will include collecting vegetation, conducting feeding trials and bomb calorimetry, and compiling reports and publications. Concurrent with graduate research and coursework, job duties will include working on a diverse array of waterfowl and wetland projects, possibly including aerial and ground waterbird surveys, marsh bird call-back surveys, experimental collection of waterfowl and diet analysis, collection and processing of core and vegetation samples from wetlands, radio telemetry, wetland vegetation mapping, trapping and banding of waterfowl (e.g., swim-in traps, rocket netting, hand nets), and other duties as assigned. The student will work closely with other graduate students, full time technicians, and full-time INHS staff.

Qualifications: Applicants should have a BS degree in ecology, natural resources, wildlife biology, or a related field before 31 December 2016; demonstrated writing ability; GPA \geq 3.0 and GRE scores in the 50th percentile or better. Preferred candidates will have experience conducting wetland surveys, identifying wetland vegetation, operating ATVs and boats, conducting bird surveys, and analyzing data. Candidates must have a strong work ethic, contribute to a positive work environment, be able lift 50 lbs, work in waders for long periods, work nights and weekends during field season, and generally endure the physical demands of field work during spring, summer, and fall in the Midwest. The individual must be able to supervise technicians, work with private landowners, and work effectively within a team and independently. Self-motivation and a passion for research are critical personality traits for successful completion of this project. The student will be required to complete coursework at Western Illinois University. Field work will require extensive travel throughout Illinois.

Salary and Appointment: The position includes a 25% research assistantship with a tuition waiver through the Department of Biological Sciences at Western Illinois University (WIU) and an academic hourly appointment through the Illinois Natural History Survey (collectively approx. \$20K/yr). Please contact potential supervisors [Dr. Heath Hagy \(hhagy@illinois.edu\)](mailto:hhagy@illinois.edu) and [Dr. Chris Jacques \(CN-Jacques@wiu.edu\)](mailto:CN-Jacques@wiu.edu) for more information. Assistantship and tuition waiver contingent upon admission into the WIU Department of Biological Sciences. The University of Illinois conducts criminal background checks on all job candidates upon acceptance of a contingent offer.

Application: Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until a suitable candidate is identified. Interested students should send a cover letter, CV, unofficial transcripts and GRE scores, and contact information for 3 references electronically in a single document to [Dr. Heath Hagy \(hhagy@illinois.edu\)](mailto:hhagy@illinois.edu) by 15 August 2016.

Illinois is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, status as a protected veteran, or status as a qualified individual with a disability. Illinois welcomes individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas who embrace and value diversity and inclusivity (www.inclusiveillinois.illinois.edu).