

MS Research Assistantship: Canvasback Physiology and Wetland Quality: Illinois

Agency	Western Illinois University
Location	Macomb, Illinois
Job Category	Graduate Assistantships
Website	http://www.wiu.edu/biology/
Salary	~\$11,300/yr + tuition waiver
Start Date	01/01/2017
Last Date to Apply	08/31/2016

Description

A M.S. graduate assistantship is available starting 1 January 2017 in the Department of Biological Sciences at Western Illinois University to study canvasback physiology in the context of wetland quality across Illinois. The overall goal of the study is to further develop plasma-lipid indices for waterfowl (i.e., using canvasbacks) for use in evaluating wetland quality throughout the Upper Midwest as indexed by lipid acquisition, with particular emphasis on traditional canvasback stopover sites throughout Illinois. Primary research objectives include: (1) developing an index to relate short-term mass changes in metabolite levels to free-living wild canvasbacks, (2) evaluating rates of change (i.e., sensitivity) in plasma-lipid indices associated with temporal mass changes in canvasbacks, and (3) assessing habitat quality of traditional stopover sites of canvasbacks in Illinois using plasma-lipid indices. The successful applicant will be hired by 1 January 2017, with field work being initiated during March 2017. The student will receive his/her M.S. in Biology at Western Illinois University. The student will be expected to work closely with other graduate students, full time technicians, Illinois DNR biologists, and Illinois Natural History Survey/USGS research scientists.

Qualifications

Candidates should have (1) a B.S. in wildlife ecology, zoology, ecology, or a closely related field; (2) experience capturing and handling waterfowl; (3) earned GPA >3.0/4.0; (5) GRE scores in the 50th percentile or better; (4) strong quantitative skills; and (5) strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and excellent oral and written communication skills. Applicants should have a valid driver's license and clean driving record, be able to lift 50 lbs., work in waders for extended periods of time under a wide range of weather conditions during winter and spring in the Midwest, and contribute to a positive work environment. The candidate must be able to supervise field crews and work effectively with state and

federal wildlife agencies and numerous volunteers, as well as independently. Essential prerequisites for successful completion of this project include strong self-motivation and a passion for research. Field work will require extensive travel throughout Illinois, though field housing will be provided throughout much of the field season. The student will be required to complete coursework at Western Illinois University.

Application Materials

For more information, please contact potential supervisors Dr. Chris Jacques (cn-jacques@wiu.edu) and Dr. Heath Hagy (hhagy@illinois.edu). Review of applications will begin 1 September 2016 and continue until a suitable candidate is found. Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, CV, unofficial transcripts, GRE scores, and list of 3 references as a single PDF document to Dr. Chris Jacques (cn-jacques@wiu.edu) by 31 August 2016 2015.

Contact Person	Dr. Chris Jacques
Contact Phone	309-298-2155
Contact Email	cn-jacques@wiu.edu (preferred)