

Job Title: Primate and Avian Research Assistant

Job Type: Volunteer Position

Opportunity location: Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea, Africa

Closing date (if specified): 01 August 2018

Opportunity Description:

Start date: November 2018; 5 months commitment.

The Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program (BBPP) is seeking volunteers to assist with data collection primarily on the ecology and microbiome of primates and immune response of avians on Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea. BBPP will engage field assistants for a period of 5 months during the upcoming dry season, beginning in November and lasting through March. Field assistants are expected to devote at least 40 hrs/week to the project, but due to the nature of the project and living conditions, hours will likely be considerably more.

Field assistants work under the supervision of BBPP Research Camp Managers, Drexel & UNGE Researchers, the BBPP In-Country Manager, Drexel graduate students and Dr. Mary Katherine Gonder (BBPP Director). They are encouraged to participate in all aspects of field research during their stay on Bioko Island with potential opportunities to participate in other BBPP activities such as biomonitoring surveys of primates, nesting ecology of sea turtles, educational outreach in schools as well as training exercises with local wildlife patrols.

Primary research activities include conducting large mammal biomonitoring surveys, fecal collection of primates and duikers for microbiome analyses, habitat assessments in the Gran Caldera Scientific Reserve. Primate surveys will be conducted during the day for 2 weeks each month along established BBPP transects together with a trained team of local survey workers. Sampling of primate and other mammal feces will also be conducted during the day but will occur off-trail with the use of a handheld GPS unit. Habitat assessments consists of setting up vegetation plots in the forest, identifying species present, tree cover, availability of fruits and flowers, and checking these plots on a weekly basis. Participation in other research projects are possible and encouraged.

Avian research activities include mist-nest capture of birds, species identification and processing (i.e. banding, recording morphological measurements, blood sampling and ecto-parasite collection) and data entry. Avian research will be conducted throughout the dry season at various field locations on the island including Pico Basilé National Park, Moka Wildlife Center, Gran Caldera Scientific Reserve, the Luba/Ureca road and Moaba/Moraka beach camps. Length of sampling efforts will range anywhere from 2-14 days depending on the amount of data needed from each site. Mist-net surveys will begin promptly at 6:30 am and continue until 12:30 pm unless otherwise specified by the research supervisor. Mist-netting and bird handling/sampling experience is preferred however training in these techniques will also be provided on site.

Research assistants will be stationed at our research center in Moka. The center has basic amenities, electricity, internet, a bed, running water ect...However, due to the nature of this work the research assistant is required to travel to our field sites on a regular basis. Our field sites are in remote areas with no road access. Researchers and field assistants must hike in and out of the field site(s) when necessary along extremely rough terrain. Researchers and field assistants will be living in tents, cooking over fire, and using water from nearby streams. Field assistants are also required to participate in daily upkeep and maintenance of the camp, including preparation of meals. The diet is very limited due to lack of electricity/refrigerators. There is no internet connection, but cell service is available yet unreliable. A satellite phone will be available in case of an emergency. The camp does have generators to charge research equipment, which may be used for occasional personal items.

This is an unpaid (volunteer) position. However, BBPP will provide housing (tents), food and local transportation. You are expected to provide international transportation to and from Malabo, Equatorial Guinea (± \$2000 for a round trip flight from US), medical and evacuation insurance, appropriate immunizations (yellow fever) and medications (anti-malarial medications). Non-US citizens will need to apply for a visa to enter Equatorial Guinea. We will try to obtain a letter of invitation through the local university in Malabo but cannot guarantee a visa.

More information about BBPP's research, conservation, education, and ecotourism activities can be found at www.bioko.org

Qualifications:

- Field assistants are expected to be at least 21 years old.
- Field assistants are **REQUIRED** to have:
- B.A. or B.S. in biology, ecology, environmental science, or related disciplines
- Spanish language proficiency (Spanish is the national language of Equatorial Guinea).
- Prior field experience in biology, ecology, environmental science, or related disciplines.
- Physical fitness and a positive attitude towards physically exhausting work in a hot and humid climate. All assistants should be prepared for demanding and time-consuming work.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have experience in remote locations in developing countries and experience camping and hiking in wilderness areas.
- A desire to pursue a career in conservation biology/ecology is preferred.

Applications:

Please send a cover letter, CV and contact information for 3 references to Steve Miller at scm97@drexel.edu. The cover letter and/or CV should clearly detail applicants' level of Spanish proficiency.