PhD Fellowship in Avian Ecology and Conservation - Oklahoma State University

We are recruiting a PhD student to investigate drivers of avian abundance and community structure in the Great Plains. This student will be funded as part of the Dr. Fritz L. Knopf Doctoral Fellowship Program in Avian Conservation, and will be located in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management (NREM) at Oklahoma State University. The start date for this position is January 2022.

Dr. Knopf was dedicated to avian conservation, and this fellowship was endowed to continue this legacy and support promising students with a passion for tackling conservation challenges.

Appropriate research topics would fall under the broad objective of bringing together existing data to answer conservation-relevant questions related to factors that operate at landscape, regional, and/or national scales (e.g., land use practices, climate change, energy development, disturbance regimes). Potential projects include (but are not limited to) evaluating the interaction between climate and disturbance on grassland bird communities across the Great Plains, national scale assessments of bird mortality sources, the role of thermal environments in grassland bird survival, and broad-scale assessment of impacts of agricultural chemicals on birds. The fellow will work with a collaborative group including Drs. Courtney Duchardt, Scott Loss, Craig Davis, Dwayne Elmore, Sam Fuhlendorf, and Tim O’Connell. There will also be an opportunity to conduct collaborative side-projects and to participate in, contribute to, and use data from existing field projects at OSU and to assist in data collection for ongoing projects in the department (examples of existing projects for the above faculty members can be seen on the NREM faculty web page: http://nrem.okstate.edu/people-1/faculty). The fellow will be expected to participate in grant applications, peer-reviewed and popular publications as first author and co-author, presentations at regional and national meetings, and professional organizations.

The funding provides a stipend for 4 years (~$21,000 per year), tuition and fees, health insurance, and a professional development allowance to present at conferences and for short-term research residencies in labs where other Knopf fellows are based. This position will be based in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Oklahoma State University. OSU is located in Stillwater, Oklahoma, on the ancestral lands of the Kickapoo, Osage, Kiowa, and Quapaw peoples. Our collaborative group is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and we are committed to training students to tackle the broad array of conservation issues that arise at the interface of humans and wildlife worldwide. Those solutions require people with different backgrounds, interests, and insights.

QUALIFICATIONS: Fellowship selection will be based on academic merit as demonstrated by: (1) Academic and professional strengths articulated in letters of nomination, (2) Clarity of direction and commitment to avian ecology research articulated in student’s letter of interest, (3) GPA and GRE scores, (4) Demonstration of effective oral and written communication as demonstrated by professional presentations and/or relevant research published in refereed scientific journals; and (5) Demonstrated leadership. Applicants with at least some experience using GIS and statistical analysis will be especially competitive. A master’s degree is strongly preferred but may not be required for students with extensive independent research experience.
TO APPLY: send (to Courtney.duchardt@okstate.edu by AUGUST 25) an application consisting of a single PDF that includes: (1) a statement of interest outlining general interests in avian ecology and specific potential research topics under this fellowship, (2) CV, (3) unofficial academic transcripts, (4) GRE Scores, and (5) contact information for 3 references that are able to write letters of reference upon request. Letter of reference are not required during the initial application process.

Any offer of employment is contingent on the university’s verification of credentials and other information required by law and/or university policies, including but not limited to a criminal background check. Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions.