

Seeking Postdoctoral Researcher for white-tailed deer integrated population modeling

Researchers from Auburn University's College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR), are seeking a postdoctoral researcher to assist with development of a novel white-tailed deer population modeling and management framework. This collaborative project seeks to identify common challenges and questions associated with effective deer management, construct a suite of modeling tools for evaluating management options, and then use those tools to provide actionable and defensible information to agency biologists. The postdoc will work closely with faculty, graduate students, and ADCNR personnel to develop models that integrate heterogeneous data sources (e.g., harvest records, citizen science observations, deer-vehicle collisions) to improve estimates of deer population parameters. The selected candidate will have substantial freedom to explore options for identifying and modeling data sources as long as the ultimate goals of accurately estimating demographic parameters are kept in focus.

The researcher will be supervised by Drs. Jonathon Valente (<https://valentelab.auburn.edu/>) and Aniruddha Belsare (<https://cfwe.auburn.edu/profile/aniruddha-belsare/>). The position will ideally begin in the fall of 2026 (August-October) and is fully funded for up to 2.5 years at a starting salary of \$60,000 plus benefits. Prospective candidates should be highly motivated, interested in quantitative ecology, and have a strong background in ecology, biology, zoology, wildlife management, population modeling, or a related field.

Required qualifications

- PhD in Wildlife, Biology, Ecology, Zoology, Statistics, or another closely related field
- Strong communication skills in oral and written English
- Ability to work independently and as part of an interdisciplinary team
- Self-motivation, a positive attitude, and strong interpersonal skills
- Experience presenting and publishing peer-reviewed research
- Experience with the R statistical programming language, GIS software, and population modeling.

Desired qualifications

- Experience with integrated population modeling, species distribution modeling, Bayesian data analysis, machine learning, artificial intelligence

- Experience working with agencies to meet applied management priorities

To apply, email BOTH Dr. Jonathon Valente (jjv0016@auburn.edu) and Dr. Aniruddha Belsare (avb0033@auburn.edu) with the subject line “Deer Population Postdoc.” Combine the following into a single PDF and attach it to your email: (1) a cover letter that states why you are interested in and qualified for the position; (2) a CV; (3) unofficial transcripts; and (4) contact information for 3 references. Applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis and continue until suitable candidates are found. Please feel free to email Dr. Valente with any specific questions in the meantime.

About Auburn: Auburn was named by Forbes Magazine as one of the state of Alabama’s best employers, with employees staying an average of ten years! Learn more about Auburn’s impact, generous employee benefits, and thriving community by visiting aub.ie/working-for-auburn.

It’s a Lifestyle: The Auburn/Opelika area is a page right out of Southern Living magazine with an idyllic small-town feel, perfecting a unique balance between a close-knit community and driving consistent growth and development. Paralleling the exponential growth of Auburn University, the Auburn/Opelika area boasts services and amenities that cater to any interest. We’re proud of our top school systems, city services, award-winning restaurants, and the infectious spirit of life in a college town. You can find us nestled halfway between the beach and the mountains in a lower-cost-of-living area, two hours outside of Atlanta or Birmingham. If you’re new to Auburn, we’d love to introduce you. If you’re already acquainted with Auburn, we’ll keep it simple: it’s time to come home!

Our Commitment: Auburn University is committed to a diverse and inclusive campus environment. Visit www.auburn.edu/inclusion to learn more about our commitment to expanding equity and inclusion for all.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY IS AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. It is our policy to provide equal employment opportunities for all individuals without regard to race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification protected by applicable law. Moreover, the Valente and Belsare labs are committed to creating and maintaining a diverse, positive, and inclusive environment. We listen to, learn from, and support all voices in our labs and expect other members of our lab groups to do the same.

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Jonathon J. Valente

Assistant Unit Leader, Assistant Professor

U.S. Geological Survey

Alabama Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

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