Ph.D. Position Studying Raptor Predator-Prey Interactions in Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Species inhabiting dry forest ecosystems are increasingly threatened by severe wildfire, drought, and other stressors owing to interactions between climate change and past management practices. I am seeking a graduate student to join a long-term spotted owl research project testing the broader hypothesis that forest conditions, wildfire, drought, climate change, and management have altered predator-prey interactions to the detriment of predator populations. The student would lead a multi-year field study in Yosemite National Park, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park, and adjacent National Forests investigating interactions between spotted owls and their prey. The study will leverage new technologies in GPS tracking and nest video monitoring to characterize predator-prey interactions in different environmental contexts. The project is funded by a strong public-private partnership and is expected to directly inform management planning and practices in an ecologically sensitive and high-profile region.

The PhD student would enroll in the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Wildlife Ecology graduate program and be advised by Dr. Zach Peery (https://peery.russell.wisc.edu/). The Peery Lab currently is composed of 10 graduate students, 6 full time research scientists, and multiple alumni who have chosen to remain involved in collaborative projects with current graduate students. The large lab fosters an active, collaborative, and supportive research atmosphere.

The position ideally would start in September of 2021 but could begin January 2022 if necessary, with field work beginning in April of 2022. Four years of funding are available primarily through research assistantships including an annual stipend, tuition remission and health care benefits – and supplementary supports via teaching assistantships.

Applicants with a MS degree in wildlife, ecology, conservation biology, or other related disciplines are preferred, but exceptional applicants with a BS degree will be considered if they have relevant experience. A solid knowledge of avian ecology, population dynamics, spatial modeling, and statistics is preferred. The preferred candidate will also have previous experience capturing and handling wild birds and collaborating with natural resource agencies. Excellent English writing and verbal communication skills are essential.

Review of applicants will begin immediately, but the position will remain open until a suitable candidate is found. The University of Wisconsin-Madison is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. We promote excellence through diversity and encourage all qualified individuals to apply. The position is open to both US citizens and international candidates.

UW-Madison has a long history of excellence in ecology, conservation biology, remote sensing, and geography. The university ranks consistently among the top research universities in the United States. Total student enrollment is 43,000 of which approximately 12,000 are graduate and professional students, and there are over 2,000 faculty. UW-Madison is an exciting place to learn and conduct research! The city of Madison ranks as one of the most attractive places in the U.S. to live and work. For information about campus and the city, please see http://www.wisc.edu/about/

To apply, please email the following to Anu Kramer (hakramer@wisc.edu): 1) a cover letter summarizing research interests and experiences; 2) curriculum vitae; 3) contact information for three references; and 4) an unofficial list of coursework (undergraduate and graduate). After reviewing all applicants, we will ask for reference letters from top candidates.