

Ph.D. Graduate Research Assistantship: Utah State University, Department of Wildland Resources and Ecology Center

Project: Population ecology of mammalian carnivores in Utah.

Description: In collaboration with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), Dr. Julie Young at Utah State University is seeking applicants for a Ph.D. project within the overall framework of determining which population survey techniques and analyses options provide UDWR managers with the most accurate and cost-effective information to enhance their ability to manage carnivore populations and monitor diseases and pathogens in accordance with the state's management goals. Focal species include cougars, black bears, and bobcats. Specific project objectives are to (1) test alternative population-estimate techniques to identify the most accurate and cost-effective method to estimate mammalian carnivore populations in Utah, and (2) provide baseline data on carnivore community foraging patterns, population estimates, and health indices. Within this framework, the student will be able to ask additional questions from the data collected.

The successful applicant will be involved in establishing this new project and tasked with designing their dissertation within the parameters of the two project objectives. The student will be expected to spend substantial time in the field in the Nebo unit of Utah, working in coordination with at least one other graduate student and other researchers associated with Brigham Young University. The student will attend coursework on the campus of Utah State University in Logan, Utah.

Qualifications: Candidates from underrepresented groups in STEM are strongly encouraged to apply. Utah State University does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, status as a protected veteran, or any other status protected by University policy, Title IX, or any other federal, state, or local law. Minimum qualifications: Candidates must have a B.S. degree in ecology, biology, wildlife, zoology, or a related field. Relevant field experience showing an ability to work in a remote setting, hike long hours over difficult terrain, and problem-solve. Must be able to work well with others who may hold differing views and be able to supervise field techs. Previous experience managing and analyzing data, and writing. Clean driving record for using a state vehicle. Preferred qualifications: M.S. degree in relevant field. Strong ability to communicate well with diverse stakeholders. Previous experience capturing and handling large carnivores, running camera trap or hair snag grids, and/or working with scat detection dogs. The candidate should also have excellent organizational, writing, and quantitative skills, along with evidence of this in a scientific publication.

Stipend and funding: The project is funded by the UDWR, with support from Utah State University. A monthly stipend starting at \$2000/month will be provided for five years. Tuition and university-student medical insurance are covered by project funds, along with supplies for field work. The candidate will be encouraged to apply for additional funding to supplement the project and develop grant-writing skills.

Utah State University: The student will be housed in the Department of Wildland Resources within the Quinney College of Natural Resources, and is encouraged to apply to the Ecology Center degree program. QCNR and the EC offer a vibrant and interdisciplinary, intellectual community. Utah State University is a Research I land-grant institution with 42 departments, 8 academic colleges, and diverse research programs. The main campus is located in Logan, Utah. Cache Valley, where Logan is located, is a semi-rural mountain basin with nearby ski resorts, lakes, rivers, and mountains providing many recreational opportunities. The area has a relatively low cost of living and provides a high quality of life.

To apply: Please send one pdf via email, saved as YourName_NeboPhDapplication, that includes: (1) letter of interest, (2) CV or resume, and (3) contact information for three references (no letters needed yet) to Julie Young (julie.young@usu.edu).

Closing: Until filled, preferably July 1. Applicants will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning June 17, with the top applicants being contacted for a virtual interview.

Start date: Fall semester 2022. New WILD graduate students attend a camping retreat on August 23-25, and classes start the following Monday.