

Title: M.S. Graduate Research Assistantship for Nightjar Conservation and Ecology

Agency: Southern Illinois University

Location: Carbondale, Illinois

Job Category: Graduate Assistantships

Salary: 22k/year + tuition

Start Date: Aug 19, 2024

Last Date to Apply: 05/01/2024

Website: [peaselab.com](http://peaselab.com)

### Description

A M.S.-level Graduate Research Assistantship is available at Southern Illinois University starting Fall 2024 for leading research and conservation efforts of nightjars (eastern whip-poor-will and chuck-will's-widow) in southern Illinois. Like most aerial insectivores in North America, both chuck-will's-widow and eastern whip-poor-will are declining, with the former currently listed as state threatened and whip-poor-will currently under consideration for listing. We seek a highly motivated graduate student to lead research on estimating species distribution and abundance in the region, with a focus on identifying key ecological drivers of population change. The research will occur across priority conservation areas and also will work to understand how forest management and restoration efforts impact the recovery of the species. Field work will take place during spring and summer and will include deploying Autonomous Recording Units (ARUs), conducting nocturnal point counts, and vegetation surveys. Additionally, the student will supplement the nightjar monitoring with insect monitoring efforts at select areas. The successful applicant is expected to communicate findings to state agencies and other on-going monitoring efforts. The student will earn a M.S. in Forestry with emphasis in Wildlife Ecology at Southern Illinois University. To learn more about our group, visit [peaselab.com](http://peaselab.com) and [forestry.siu.edu](http://forestry.siu.edu). The student will be co-advised by Drs. Brent Pease ([bpease1@siu.edu](mailto:bpease1@siu.edu); [peaselab.com](http://peaselab.com)) and Dr. Eric Holzmüller ([eholzmue@siu.edu](mailto:eholzmue@siu.edu)) in the Forestry program at SIU.

### Qualifications

The successful applicant will have (1) obtained B.S. degree in wildlife, ecology, biology, forestry, zoology, or related fields; (2) knowledge of regional birds by sight and sound and have experience deploying ARUs and conducting point counts; (3) exceptional quantitative skills and familiarity with occupancy modeling and distance sampling for abundance

estimation; (4) knowledge of program R and spatial software (e.g., QGIS, ArcGIS); (5) a driver's license and ability to conduct independent field work in difficult conditions (e.g., steep terrain, poison ivy, ticks, venomous snakes); (6) ability to work in a team setting and (7) strong oral and written communication skills.

To apply please email a single PDF to Brent Pease ([bpease1@siu.edu](mailto:bpease1@siu.edu)) that includes:

1. A cover letter that describes past experiences and career goals
2. Curriculum Vitae (with GPA and GRE scores included, if possible)
3. Undergraduate transcripts (unofficial is acceptable)
4. Contact information for 3 references

The email subject should be "MS– Nightjar Research". Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. For full consideration, applications must be received by May 1, 2024.

Contact Person: Dr. Brent Pease

Contact Email: [bpease1@siu.edu](mailto:bpease1@siu.edu)