

Job Title: Senior Research Associate– How do bats respond to forest management?

Institution: University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

Location: Urbana, Illinois, with fieldwork in northeastern Missouri

Salary: \$46,000-55,000, commensurate with experience

Duration of the appointment: Position is funded from May 2025 to May/June 2026.

Start Date: May 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Project description: This senior research associate will work on a Missouri Department of Conservation-funded project to understand how federally endangered Indiana bats (*Myotis sodalis*) respond to forest management practices employed in state-managed conservation areas in northeastern Missouri. Indiana bats are forest obligate species during the summer, spending their days roosting in dead or damaged trees and their nights foraging in small or large openings in the forest. This study is testing the hypothesis that low-intensity forest management creates more roosting and foraging opportunities for Indiana bats, yielding benefits to individuals and subpopulations. The associate will lead a large team, which includes a PhD and MS student, conducting fieldwork near Kirksville, Missouri from May to August 2025. The field season is intense and demanding, so the associate should be comfortable juggling responsibilities, managing competing tasks, and coordinating and supervising multiple team members. The fieldwork includes late-night capture surveys, day to nighttime radio telemetry to locate maternity roosts, evening emergence counts, and acoustic monitoring. Summer fieldwork will also involve coordination with state and federal partners, plus volunteers in the project area. During the following 10 months, the associate will work with the PI and PhD and MS students on the campus of the University of Illinois to collaborate on reports, presentations, and publications to disseminate the results of the study. The project has been ongoing since 2019, yielding a rich dataset on individuals and subpopulations of Indiana bats and three other species that are routinely captured. The associate will be supervised by Dr. Joy O’Keefe in the Human-Wildlife Interactions lab at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign.

Required Qualifications: An MS or a PhD in wildlife biology or a related natural resource field by the desired start date or in a reasonable time frame after that date. Excellent interpersonal skills. Experience leading a team in some capacity and interest in working collaboratively. Demonstrated experience collecting data in the field for ecological studies. Must possess a valid U.S. driver’s license.

Preferred Qualifications: Experience with radio telemetry. Experience with wildlife capture. Data management skills. Technical writing ability and evidence of publishing in peer-reviewed journals.

How to apply: Interested applicants should compile the following materials into a single pdf file: a 1-page statement of interest, a CV that includes contact information for three professional references, and responses to the following queries (<250-word responses for each query):

- 1) What motivates you to pursue the described position, and how will such a position prepare you to achieve your career goals?
- 2) Describe your leadership experience, steps you think are important for team building, and how your experience has informed your approach to leading teams.
- 3) What factors do you think are important to creating an inclusive environment so that team members feel safe and comfortable working in field and laboratory settings?
- 4) What are your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to achieving goals individually and in collaboration with others?

Send applications via email to Dr. Joy O’Keefe (jmokeefe@illinois.edu) with the subject line “Application for senior research associate on bats and forest management.” Application review will begin ASAP and continue until a suitable candidate is hired.

The University of Illinois is a land-grant university in a metropolitan area of approximately 200,000 people with accessible parks, bike lanes, a great bus system, two farmer’s markets, and a vibrant music and arts scene. The Urbana-Champaign campus (illinois.edu) has over 50,000 students and nearly 2,000 faculty members.

The University of Illinois is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action employer that recruits and hires qualified candidates without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, disability or veteran status. For more information, visit <http://go.illinois.edu/EEO>.