

**Position Summary:** Undergraduate research technician with focus on Cerulean Warbler (*Setophaga cerulea*, a state-endangered species) breeding demography. This is a ~2 month paid position that is expected to run from the beginning of May through mid-July, with some flexibility in start and end dates. In addition to the field component of this position, this student will also be expected to work with Dr. Ruhl over the next academic year to develop a scientific product (either a poster or research publication) related to data they collected during the summer research experience.

**Work Duties:**

- Facilitate marking Cerulean Warblers with multi-sensor geolocators to study migration ecology.
- Conduct point count surveys for Cerulean Warblers and other breeding birds
- Conduct territory mapping surveys for individually marked Cerulean Warblers
- Assist with deployment and retrieval of Automated Recording Units (ARUs)
- Locate Cerulean Warbler nests using behavioral cues

The undergraduate research technician may have the opportunity to gain experience extracting, handling, and banding birds, mist-netting, tissue sampling, and marking birds with geolocators, depending on work ethic and time availability. Data entry will be required for this position. This position requires early mornings, flexible schedules, strong interpersonal skills, and fieldwork in potentially challenging conditions. Field sites include but are not limited to Morgan-Monroe State Forest, Yellowwood State Forest, and surrounding areas in south-central Indiana.

**Qualifications and Expectations:**

- *Minimum requirements:* Because this position will involve the development of an undergraduate research product, applicants must be freshman, sophomores, or juniors who are currently enrolled at Purdue University. Technicians are expected to provide their own binoculars and field clothing. Valid US driver's license recommended.

Applicants must be able to:

- work potentially long hours in hot, humid, and rugged terrain (e.g., many steep forested hills) with timber rattlesnakes and ticks
- hike and navigate using GPS.
- work in both team and individual settings
- follow detailed sets of directions/protocols

- *Preferred experience:* Applicants should ideally have some educational experience in ecology, wildlife biology, or adjacent disciplines. Experience independently setting up mist-nets, extracting songbirds from nets, identifying birds by sight and sound is preferred. Prior experience resighting color-banded birds, marking birds with color bands, and deploying tracking devices (e.g., geolocators) would be valuable, but is not required. Applicants should have a strong interest in natural history, avian ecology, and field biology.
- Free housing will be provided at the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (<https://heeforeststudy.org/>) Bridge House, a former Girl Scout camp near Nashville, Indiana. Field housing is communal with bunk beds in shared cabin rooms, shared bathrooms, and shared kitchen space.

**To Apply:** Please submit a cover letter and resume to Dr. Ruhl ([pruhl@purdue.edu](mailto:pruhl@purdue.edu)) by **13 February 2026**. Your cover letter and resume should convey your experience and suitability for independent and team-based fieldwork with birds. Please type "Undergrad CERW Research - [your last name]" in the subject line.

**Contact:** Patrick Ruhl ([pruhl@purdue.edu](mailto:pruhl@purdue.edu))

*Purdue is an EOE/AA employer. All individuals, including minorities, women, individuals with disabilities and veterans, are encouraged to apply.*

Summary Details for this position:

Application Deadline: 02/13//2026

Starting Date: ~05/10/2026 (some flexibility)

Ending Date: ~07/10/2026 (some flexibility)

Hours per Week: ~40

Salary: \$15/hr

Education Required: Applicant must be a current Purdue student in their Freshman, Sophomore, or Junior year

Experience Required: Birding experience recommended (Bird week at FNR Practicum is sufficient)