

Cerulean Warbler Field Technician

Purdue University (State) | <https://ag.purdue.edu/department/fnr/index.html>

Details

Application Deadline:

01/31/2026

Published:

01/07/2026

Starting Date:

after 5/10/2026

Ending Date:

after 5/10/2026

Hours per Week:

at most 40

Salary:

starting at \$15 per hour

Education Required:

Some Undergraduate

Experience Required:

none

Location:

5P84+X7 Nashville, IN, USA (Nashville, Indiana)

Tags:

Description

Position Summary: ~4-6 field technician positions are available for early summer 2026 to contribute to a project through Purdue University studying migration ecology in a southern Indiana population of Cerulean Warblers (*Setophaga cerulea*, a state-endangered species). The project is part of a long-term study on Cerulean Warbler annual cycle ecology through the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE; <https://heeforeststudy.org/>), a 100-year study of forest management and its impact on flora and fauna. This is a ~4-wk position that is expected to run from ~ 10 May to ~10 June, with some flexibility in start and end dates. The full field crew will be a team of technicians, an MS student (working on an adjacent project), and a post-doctoral researcher.

Work Duties: Field technicians will help facilitate marking Cerulean Warblers with multi-sensor geolocators to study migration ecology. Technicians will likely be split into two crews: 1) a larger survey team that will search for and mark warbler locations, and 2) a smaller marking team that directly assists in warbler capture, banding, and tag deployment. The survey crew will search multiple study sites for adult breeding male and female Cerulean Warblers, assessing breeding status and marking individual locations with GPS devices. Survey technicians 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. The marking crew will directly assist the post-doctoral researcher with tag deployment, including mist-net setup and capture, and, depending on demonstrated skills, will assist with banding, tissue sampling, and geolocator deployment. Some data entry may be required for all positions. 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:* All applicants must be able to identify both male and female Cerulean Warblers by sight and sound. Must be willing to work potentially long hours in hot, humid, and rugged terrain (e.g., many steep forested hills) with timber rattlesnakes and ticks. Must be able to hike and navigate using GPS. Technicians are expected to provide their own binoculars and field clothing. Must be able to work in both team and individual settings. Must be open-minded, able to follow detailed directions, and have strong interpersonal skills. Valid US driver's license needed.
- *Preferred experience:* Applicants should ideally have some educational experience in ecology, wildlife biology, or adjacent disciplines. Experience independently setting up mist-nets and extracting songbirds from nets 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, resume, and at least two references with contact information as a single PDF document to Silas Fischer at cerw.purdue@gmail.com by **31 January 2026**. Your cover letter and resume should convey your experience and suitability for independent and team-based fieldwork with birds. If possible, please include at least one reference who can directly speak to your mist-netting, bird identification, and/or banding experience. Please write "CERW Tech Application - [your last name]" in the subject line.

Contact: Silas Fischer (cerw.purdue@gmail.com); Patrick Ruhl (pruhl@purdue.edu)

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

Application Deadline: 01/31/2026

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

Ending Date: ~06/10/2026 (some flexibility)

Hours per Week: ~40

Salary: ~\$15/hr

Education Required: Some undergraduate preferred

Experience Required: At least 1 year preferred but not required

Location: Southern Indiana, USA; Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment

Contact

Silas E Fischer

cerw.purdue@gmail.com (preferred contact method)