

Massasauga Rattlesnake Field Technician

Position: Lead Field Technician
Work Week: 20-40 hrs/week
Duty Station: Based in East Lansing, MI. Frequent travel to various counties in the Lower Peninsula.
Duration: May 1, 2022 through August 31st, 2022 (potential to extend to October 1st, 2022)
Salary: \$15.00/hr + travel and lodging as necessary

Description:

One lead technician to assist with field data collection on a research collaboration between Michigan State University, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The goal of this project is to investigate impacts of MDOT road maintenance activities (e.g., right-of-way mowing, culvert replacement, herbicide use for vegetation control) on eastern massasauga rattlesnakes (EMR). Primary duties include conducting surveys to assess EMR occupancy at field sites, tagging (capture and handling) EMR individuals with glue-on transmitters, monitoring movements using radio-telemetry, and following decontamination protocols and state and federal regulations. The lead technician will additionally assist with training, supervise the completion of daily field tasks, facilitate timely data organization and entry, review data entry for accuracy, ensure field protocols and animal safety procedures are followed, maintaining an adequate supply of clean and functional equipment, and maintain regular communication with the crew and project supervisor (graduate student Jillian Sterman).

This position requires driving for a minimum of 2 hours to and from sites daily, parking along and working next to busy highways, and occasional overnight stay near distant field sites. Use of personal vehicle may be necessary depending on University Covid-19 restrictions. Travel expenses and lodging will be covered as necessary. The lead technician will be employed from May 1st, 2022 through August 31st, 2022 (\$15/hr; 20-40 hrs/wk) with the potential to extend to October 1st, 2022 based on needs of the project and availability of the lead technician.

Essential Job Functions:

- Work outdoors in inclement conditions that include walking and searching for EMR through marshy ecosystems while dealing with large swarms of insects, poison ivy and sumac, during potentially hot and humid conditions.
- Work effectively as part of a team, and respect public and project associates. Comfortable with approaching and conversing with private landowners to gain property access and conduct snake surveys.
- Strictly follow safety, decontamination, and animal welfare protocols while conducting research.
- Responsible for aiding in data collection by conducting detection surveys following previously established protocols, wildlife capturing and handling, radio-tagging, and behavioral monitoring of EMR.
- Must be able to drive safely, read maps, and navigate through forested and wetland environments.
- Responsible for following data management and organization protocols. Some data entry and quality control will also be required.

Desired Qualifications:

- Working towards or completion of a college degree in wildlife, ecology, conservation biology, biology, or related field with an interest in applied wildlife science and strong interpersonal skills.
- A valid driver's license.
- At least one year of prior field experience collecting scientific data (preferably with some knowledge of visual surveys, vegetation sampling and identification, environmental data collection).
- Preferred experience with telemetry equipment and data collection, and animal handling experience.
- Ability to exercise good judgement and decision-making abilities to interpret protocol requirements.

Minimum Qualifications:

Working towards a college degree in wildlife, ecology, conservation biology, biology, or related field with an interest in applied wildlife science and strong interpersonal skills.

Timeline:

Position open until March 1st, 2022 or until a suitable candidate is found. CURRENT MSU STUDENTS should apply by sending a cover letter identifying why you are interested and qualified for the position, resume or CV, and three references in a single PDF document to: Jillian Serman, Applied Forest and Wildlife Ecology Laboratory, Michigan State University. stermanj@msu.edu. NON-MSU STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO APPLY THROUGH THE MSU CAREERS WEBSITE, ANY APPLICATIONS SENT TO THE PROVIDED EMAIL ADDRESS BY NON-MSU STUDENTS WILL NOT BE REVIEWED. APPLICANTS WILL BE REDIRECTED TO APPLY THROUGH <https://careers.msu.edu>. We will not contact references without applicant permission.