

Desert Tortoise Research Technician, U.S. Geological Survey (GG-0404-05)

Job Description:

The U.S. Geological Survey is recruiting field technicians to assist with research projects investigating desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) ecology, physiology, demographics, and disease dynamics. Our research group is based in Henderson, NV, but field work will take place throughout the Mojave Desert. Duties will primarily be fieldwork based and will include, but are not limited to:

- Using radio telemetry to monitor tortoise movement and behavior
- Searching for unmarked wild tortoises to incorporate into study populations
- Attaching, removing, downloading, and troubleshooting radio transmitters and data loggers
- Collecting tissue samples (e.g. blood, oral swabs, scat) and morphological measurements
- Conducting health assessments
- Performing vegetation surveys to characterize habitats
- Using Excel, relational databases, ArcMap, and R to enter, organize, QA/QC, and analyze data
- Assisting with the day-to-day operations of field research (e.g. preparing supplies, vehicle and equipment maintenance)
- Participating in other research projects as assigned

The data that are collected will be used to better understand tortoise population trends, movement patterns, diet, and home range characteristics, as well as aid in the understanding of how environmental parameters influence health, gene expression, the incidence and transmission of disease, population connectivity, and genetic diversity.

We are seeking applicants in great physical condition and capable of hiking long distances over rugged desert terrain in 110°F+ temperatures, all while carrying a 30-lb pack. Experience using ArcGIS, a positive attitude, flexibility, attention to detail, interest in ecological research, the ability to strictly follow data collection protocols, and the ability to work well both independently and as part of a team are also requirements. Experience with radio telemetry, Mojave Desert plant identification, analysis of remotely sensed data, and data analysis in R is preferred.

Schedules are highly variable, can change with little notice, and will sometimes require early morning (3 AM) start times, long days, and a few weekends of work. Primitive car camping in remote locations will be required an average of 5 days per month.

This temporary position will begin in mid-October and extend for up to 180 working days (approximately 9 months). Extensions are possible, contingent upon performance and funding availability.

Qualifications: 3 years of college with courses related to biological sciences (equivalent to 90 semester/135 quarter hours) plus 3 months of lab or field work experience; or 9 months of field experience; or 3 years of sub-professional experience. A valid U.S. driver's license and a pre-employment physical are required. All applicants must be U.S. citizens.

Salary: \$16.46 hourly, plus paid vacation and sick days.

Application instructions:

For each position on your resume, please be sure to include the number of hours worked per week, as well as exact start and end dates (month/day/year).

E-mail resumes and the contact information for at least three references to amcdonald@usgs.gov by 11:59 PM PDT on Wed, Aug 14, 2019. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

If claiming 5 point veterans preference, a DD-214 showing character of discharge is required. If claiming 10 point veterans preference, a SF-15 with proof of claim is required.