



PhD Graduate Opportunity: Osprey and Prey

The Avian Science Center (ASC; <http://www.cfc.umt.edu/asc/>), part of the Wildlife Biology Program at the University of Montana (UM), invites PhD applicants to understand community interactions associated with raptors in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE). The student will aid in the development of a project that explores the interactions between raptors and their prey, with a special interest in osprey and bald eagle predation on aquatic prey species. The project is in coordination with an additional project looking at freshwater fish dynamics led by a PhD student also at UM.

The student will lead coordination and collaboration with numerous organizations, including the Ricketts Conservation Foundation; US National Park Service; US Forest Service; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Park; Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and other organizations. Applicants must be highly interested in community ecology, science communication, and conservation delivery. In addition to PhD research, the student is expected to participate in a third-party film production of their project. Thus, communication skills and interests are highly preferred. The anticipated start date is Aug 2024. It includes an annual graduate stipend, tuition/fees, and health insurance.

Qualifications:

The applicant must have a Bachelor's degree in wildlife biology, ecology, statistics, or a related field. Strong quantitative skills and programming experience in R (or a strong desire to learn these skills) are highly preferred. Experience working in remote areas and supervising field technicians is also desired. The position requires decision-making and communication skills, as well as the ability to work with multiple natural resource stakeholders.

Diversity Statement: The University of Montana values leadership, engagement, diversity, and sustainability because our institution is committed to respecting, welcoming, encouraging, and celebrating the differences among us. As members of the University of Montana community, we aspire to (1) Respect the dignity and rights of all persons. (2) Practice honesty, trustworthiness, and academic integrity. (3) Promote justice, learning, individual success, and service. (4) Act as good stewards of institutional resources. (5) Respect the natural environment.

The Wildlife Biology Program has adopted a holistic approach to graduate admissions as part of our efforts to achieve a more diverse cohort of graduate students with varied experience, backgrounds, and expertise. Graduate admissions rankings will be based on GPA, demonstrated ability to learn necessary skills, achievements in research, outreach, education, and community activities, strong motivations for the degree, demonstrations of leadership, adaptability, accomplishments, as well as letters of recommendation.

How to apply:

Interested individuals should complete the first step of the application process by emailing the following information as 1 attached file (PDF is preferred) with "PhD Raptors" in the subject line to asc@umontana.edu.

- 1) Cover letter: briefly describe your interest/qualifications for the project described above (max 1 page), including your experience and interest in sharing scientific findings with a general audience.
- 2) Statement of Purpose outlining the following:

- a) *Motivation* - describe your motivations for obtaining this graduate degree and highlight your professional goals. (300-word limit)
 - b) *Accomplishment* - what accomplishment makes you most proud? For example, discuss a challenge you overcame and/or an initiative you led. (300-word limit)
 - c) *Abilities* - illustrate your capacity to learn new skills, adaptability, willingness to challenge yourself, passion, and/or where you have been vital in bringing a project to completion. (300-word limit)
- 3) Resume/CV
 - 4) Names and email address(es) for three references
 - 5) Transcripts (unofficial are acceptable for stage)
 - 6) Any additional information you feel is relevant to this position.

Applications will be reviewed starting March 29th, 2024 and will remain open until filled. Top applicant(s) will be asked to apply to the Wildlife Biology Program within the UM Graduate School as the second step of the process. Application materials may or may not be the same as the first step of the process. This position can only be offered after applicants are accepted into UM's Wildlife Biology Program.