

Seeking Wildlife Surveyors (5)

Status: Full-time Seasonal

Research Center Appointment: Center for Conservation and Climate Change

Location: South Dakota and northeastern Wyoming

Work Environment: This is a field position that includes daily field observations and sampling, unless inclement weather is problematic. Lodging may include campers, otherwise will be in hotels or Air BnBs.

Compensation: \$800-900 per week, commensurate with experience, housing and transportation included

Start/End Date: late May - August/September 2024 (end dates TBD and consideration given for students)

Position Overview

Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI) is a scientific nonprofit group dedicated to environmental research and monitoring that supports the protection of biodiversity and ecological health. BRI's mission is to assess emerging threats to wildlife and ecosystems through collaborative research, and to use scientific findings to advance environmental awareness and inform decision makers. Findings from this project will contribute to both BRI's Center for Conservation and Climate Change and to BRI's new Biodiversity Research Program. Successful candidates must possess a genuine interest in supporting BRI's mission and a strong desire to be part of a dynamic and purpose-driven work environment.

BRI, in cooperation with South Dakota State University, is participating in the South Dakota Rangeland Soil Carbon Project that aims to monitor changes in soil carbon storage and biological diversity ('biodiversity') as a result of altered grazing pressure. Biodiversity will be examined with a focus on species richness and diversity indices, examining change in forage quality and quantity (e.g., vegetation cover and species composition), and change in the abundance and distribution of focal taxa over time.

Biodiversity monitoring will focus primarily on quantifying the diversity and abundance of 1) vegetation, 2) dung beetles, grasshoppers, and pollinators, 2) frogs and toads, 3) birds, and 4) mammals (including bats). An a priori emphasis will be placed on taxa that could be most representative of rapid changes in rangeland habitat quality – those taxa could include dung beetles, avian predators (e.g., raptors and shrikes), avian granivores, small mammals, and mammalian meso-carnivores.



**Biodiversity
Research Institute**

**Innovative
Wildlife Science**

Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission to assess emerging threats to wildlife and ecosystems through collaborative research, and to use scientific findings to advance environmental awareness and inform decision makers.

Overarching Opportunities:

- Support climate-change related conservation efforts through research and monitoring activities.
- Assist in efforts to understand biological diversity in the Great Plains
- Participate in the implementation of both traditional ground surveys and passive acoustic survey efforts and developing new machine learning methods for species identification by sound.

Position Responsibilities

Participate in surveys related to biodiversity assessment projects using a variety of field methods to best detect and quantify taxa of interest and to use approaches that can be replicable over time (it is the change of various taxa in response to improvement in grasslands that is of great importance). Field methods will include the assessment of vegetation and habitat, capture of photographs of invertebrates (e.g., dung beetles, grasshoppers, and pollinators), visual observation at point counts (e.g., birds) and transects (e.g., mammals), acoustic recordings in the field (e.g., birds), and digital cameras with bait (rodents, small carnivores, and other mammals). Other duties include:

- Participate in project-required certifications and training;
- Lead or assist with observation and identification of plants, invertebrates, birds and mammals;
- Lead or assist with quality assurance and quality control processes (including species identification or verification) for diverse taxa;
- Work closely in small project teams, including with other BRI staff as well as external colleagues, and maintain friendly and professional relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and colleagues;
- Participate in the collection and recording of field data as well as inputting to relevant databases;
- Participate in the deployment, maintenance, and removal of relevant field equipment;
- Uphold the legal requirements of permits and understand associated and necessary laws; and
- Potentially assist in bird capture using mist nets and other capture techniques using BRI protocols for banding, ageing/sexing individuals, transmitter attachment, and tissue sampling.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience Required

Successful candidates should be detail-oriented and have a track record of excellent interpersonal and communication skills. Must be able to work independently, in small groups and have a valid driver's license. A strong work ethic, professionalism, and sense of humor are a must. Other essential qualifications include:

- Bachelor's degree (or pursuing) in wildlife management or a related field;
- Excellent organizational and logistics skills, including ability to coordinate among collaborators;
- Ability to effectively prioritize and address needs as they arise;
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team, and willingness to work collaboratively with a wide range of colleagues and stakeholders;
- Ability to work a flexible schedule, including regular weekend work or overnight travel.

Other Requirements

Other desired skills include: experience conducting surveys of the targeted focal taxa (e.g., transects, point counts), handling (e.g., trapping, banding) and sampling (e.g., blood, feather) avian species, high level of identification abilities by taxa, experience handling acoustic recording units and/or digital game cameras, identification of bat call recordings, small mammal trapping, and basic orientation skills using maps and charts. **Please highlight these skills if you have them.**

Physical Demands

Must be able to carry > 50 lbs. and walk for several miles per day in potentially rugged terrain and hot weather. This work involves regular travel and long hours outside. Occasional overnights at ranch sites may be required.

Location

For this position, field sites are located in six ranches distributed across South Dakota with one ranch in northeastern Wyoming. The work schedule will maximize the breeding season and activity time period for focal indicator species – June through August. There will be a one-week training period prior to the survey initiation in late May. Surveys will be conducted 5-6 days per week from early June through late August. Down time will likely occur in between ranch sites or during inclement weather. There will be two survey teams – one focused on birds and mammals that will begin before dawn and end in the early afternoon, and one focused on plants and invertebrates that will begin mid-morning and end mid-afternoon. Daily data management and uploads will happen after surveys are completed.

Work Environment:

This is a full-time seasonal position based at multiple field sites in South Dakota or Wyoming. Recognizing that wildlife work often requires intensive field stints, BRI encourages staff to take downtime when the weather precludes optimal work. All travel and lodging expenses are covered by BRI from the home base – that can be either our Portland, Maine office or Rapid City, South Dakota. A food allowance is provided according to the BRI Employee Handbook.

To Apply

Applications should be sent to jobs@briloon.org or mail to Biodiversity Resource Institute, Attn: Human Resources (MPFC), 276 Canco Rd., Portland, ME 04103*, 207.839.7600. www.briwildlife.org

All qualified applicants receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or veteran status
