

MS Research Assistantship: King Rail Breeding Ecology

Project Description: A Masters of Science research assistant position is available starting the Spring 2025 Semester at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville.

A detailed research proposal describing objectives, data collection, and analyses as well as a written thesis are partial requirements of the Masters of Science degree.

The project is focused on the King Rail in southeastern Arkansas. The successful candidate will lead a technician in collecting data about nest success and movement ecology of juvenile King Rails, assessing the role water level management plays in King Rail breeding success.

Research activities will be conducted in southeastern King Rail from March-July 2025 and 2026. The student will work closely in collaboration with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission during the field work and throughout the project. Travel costs, including rustic housing, will be provided while in the field.

The student will be advised by Dr. Auriel Fournier (<https://aurielfournier.github.io/>), an Associate Research Scientist and Director of the Forbes Biological Station (<https://www.inhs.illinois.edu/fieldstations/forbes>) at the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS; <https://www.inhs.illinois.edu/>) and Caleb Roberts, Unit Lead of the USGS Arkansas Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at the University of Arkansas (https://livinglandscapes.github.io/LivingLandscapes_Website/). The successful candidate will pursue their degree through the Department of Biology at the University of Arkansas and the candidate must meet the minimum admission requirements of the graduate program (<https://biology.uark.edu/academics/graduate/requirements.php>).

Qualifications: Bachelors degree in Biology, Ecology, Wildlife Science, or related field. Competitive candidates will have an interest in learning or expanding their quantitative skills, an interest in applied conservation and management, and expertise or experience with wetlands, marsh birds, or other avian species. Applicants must also demonstrate both a willingness and ability to work long hours under challenging field conditions. A collaborative, positive attitude and eagerness to learn new skills are necessary for the successful candidate.

Salary and Appointment: This position includes a two-year 50% research assistantship with health insurance and a tuition waiver through the Department of Biology at the University of Arkansas.

Application: Applications should be received by **September 30th, 2024** for consideration. Interested applicants should email a single PDF to auriel@illinois.edu that includes: 1) cover letter stating why you are interested in the position and if/how you meet the qualifications listed above, 2) CV, 3) names and contact information for three professional references, and 4) copies of unofficial transcripts. Please put "KIRA MS Application" in the email subject line and include your last name in all attached file names.

Please also feel free to reach out to Dr. Auriel Fournier if you have additional questions or would like to schedule a conversation. The successful applicant will be expected to formally apply to the graduate program at the University of Arkansas. All admission decisions must be approved by the Graduate School.