

**Field technician for coastal waterbird surveys and/or
sample collection at shellfish aquaculture sites**

University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
Salary: \$15/hour, full-time or part-time positions

Description: The University of Rhode Island seeks two or more highly motivated research technicians to assist on a study investigating the potential effect of waterbirds on water quality and disease risk at three floating oyster farms in southern Rhode Island and Massachusetts. This can be two full-time positions that include both waterbird surveys and sample collection (~40 hrs/week), or can be split into several part-time positions where one person is responsible for waterbird surveys and the other person is responsible for sample collection (see details below). Reimbursement for travel is provided. Housing is not provided.

Waterbird surveys will include surveying the number and species composition of birds on six floating oyster farms in southern RI and MA from 1 July – 15 November. Surveys will be conducted from the shoreline, as well as from boats and kayaks. Each site will be surveyed twice every five days– once at low tide and once at high tide.

Estimated hrs/week: 15-20

Sample collection at oyster farms will include collecting water, oyster, and avian fecal samples from floating oyster cages. This requires coordinating with oyster growers to schedule dates/times to ride with them in their boats to access the oyster farms. At certain sites, the use of kayaks will be necessary to collect samples. Samples will be collected every 10 days from the same six floating oyster farms, between 1 August and 15 November, following specific time-sensitive protocols. Samples also need to be recorded, labeled, stored on ice, and delivered to laboratory facilities that will process them.

Estimated hrs/week: 20-25

Qualifications:

Waterbird surveys:

Must possess or be working toward a Bachelor's degree in wildlife sciences, ecology, natural resources, environmental science or closely related discipline. Must be able to identify summer coastal waterbird species, especially gulls, terns and cormorants, but also shorebirds, wading birds and waterfowl. Prior field experience involving bird surveys preferred. Must be self-motivated, responsible, and able to work independently. Must have a car that can transport a kayak (carrying rigs for kayaks will be supplied), valid driver's license, and clean driving record.

Sample collection:

Must possess or be working toward a Bachelor's degree in wildlife sciences, ecology, natural resources, environmental science or closely related discipline. Must be self-motivated, detail-oriented, responsible, well-organized, and able to work independently. Must possess strong interpersonal and organizational skills. Prior boating experience and interest in shellfish aquaculture preferred. Must have a car that can transport a kayak (carrying rigs for kayaks will be supplied), valid driver's license, and clean driving record.

Review of applications will start on 5 April and continue until the positions are filled. Early application is encouraged.

To apply, send an email containing a resume, brief cover letter, and contact information for 3 references in a single PDF to Dylan Bakner (dylan.bakner@uri.edu). Please write: "Waterbird Aquaculture Field Technician 2024" in the subject line of your email.