

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Conservation Associate

Working Title: Invertebrate/General Zoologist

Institute: Greening Michigan

BASIC FUNCTION

The mission of the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) is to guide the conservation of Michigan's biodiversity by providing the highest quality scientific expertise and information. MNFI's vision is to be the authoritative source of information on biodiversity that is widely used to conserve Michigan's unique natural heritage for current and future generations.

As part of MSU Extension and the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, the successful candidates will collect, analyze, and communicate information about Michigan's rare and declining animal species and natural communities, help maintain Michigan's Natural Heritage Database, and work cooperatively with other MNFI personnel, public and private agencies, organizations, and individuals to inform and guide decisions that impact biodiversity conservation.

The MNFI is soliciting applications for two zoological positions, one of which will have expertise in invertebrate zoology (terrestrial and/or aquatic) and the other second position will have expertise with one or more invertebrate or vertebrate animal groups relevant to our mission. These positions will have statewide responsibilities and will be housed at the MNFI office in Lansing, Michigan.

Characteristic Duties/Responsibilities

- Plan and conduct field surveys, monitoring, and research of rare and declining animal species, including insects (e.g., butterflies, bumble bees, moths) and possibly other animal groups (e.g., aquatic invertebrates, birds, amphibians, reptiles, mammals);
- Collect, evaluate, analyze, and disseminate animal and ecological information, and manage data within multiple databases;
- Assist with the maintenance and expansion of Michigan's Natural Heritage Database with regard to rare animal species occurrences and support other zoological heritage programming;
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with natural resource managers, researchers, other partners, and stakeholders through collaborations and consultations;
- Create and promote positive public relations for MSU Extension, the Greening Michigan Institute, and the MNFI;
- Provide technical assistance and training using appropriate media methods to communicate current and timely information, research results, and relevant updates on Michigan's rare animal species and natural communities, ecological restoration, and biodiversity stewardship to staff within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, other state, federal, and local agencies, and conservation organizations;
- Recruit, train, and direct seasonal staff;
- Disseminate information about rare animal species and ecosystems through project reports, publications, scientific presentations, and other written and oral communications;
- Assist and/or lead project development, management, and implementation, including the preparation of proposals to obtain funding for projects that further MNFI's mission;

- Serve on internal and external project teams, committees, and working groups as needed;
- Participate in MSU health and safety monitoring programs as necessary;
- Actively participate in professional development opportunities;
- Understand and implement Civil Rights policies and procedures;
- Perform other duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED FROM

Conservation Scientist

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Master's degree in zoology, conservation biology, wildlife ecology/management, fisheries and wildlife, or natural resources must be earned by date of hire;
- Demonstrated commitment to the conservation of biological diversity;
- Experience designing and conducting field-based ecological studies, especially those involving invertebrates or other animal species;
- Experience conducting surveys for rare or declining animal species;
- Familiarity with animal and plant identification keys, specimen preparation, and animal collections;
- Ability to independently conduct long days of strenuous fieldwork under adverse conditions for prolonged periods of time throughout the State of Michigan;
- Ability to navigate in remote areas, including experience using a compass, maps, and GPS technology;
- Strong interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills, good organizational and time-management abilities, and attention to detail;
- Proficiency in use of technology (e.g., web research, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook for mail/calendaring, distance technology, etc.) for day-to-day work, record keeping, reporting, team-based communications, and overall management;
- Demonstrated ability to quickly learn new skills and procedures;
- Self-motivated with the demonstrated ability to work independently without daily supervision and/or coaching;
- Ability to work in teams of diverse people;
- Proven ability in establishing and working with a diverse network of constituents and community members across race, gender, socioeconomic class, disabilities, and other differences;
- Understanding of and ability to implement Civil Rights principles and compliance standards;
- Ability to lift and carry field supplies, educational materials, equipment, etc. up to 25 lbs.;
- Ability to travel throughout the State of Michigan and occasionally out of state, including weekends and extended periods, is required as a regular part of this position;
- Transportation is the responsibility of the employee;
- Other skills and/or physical abilities required to perform duties of this position.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Ph.D. in zoology, conservation biology, wildlife ecology/management, fisheries and wildlife, or natural resources;
- Knowledge of the ecosystems and natural communities of Michigan and/or the Upper Great Lakes;
- Experience developing and implementing monitoring protocols, especially for animal species of conservation concern (e.g., rare/declining species, pollinators, aquatic invertebrates);

- Demonstrated expertise with a group of animals, such as insects, aquatic invertebrates, or vertebrates;
- Knowledge of and/or experience in ecological restoration, invasive species control, and ecosystem management;
- Experience with ESRI GIS software and spatial analysis;
- Demonstrated analytical abilities and experience with statistical software (e.g., R, SAS, SPSS, or SYSTAT);
- Demonstrated record of obtaining extramural funding;
- Knowledge of NatureServe's natural heritage data management methodology and Biotics software.

These are full time, fixed-term, end-dated appointments renewable annually based upon successful performance and continued funding.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT DESIGNATION

This position is exempt as defined under the FLSA.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.