



WILDLIFE PRESERVATION CANADA

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Position: Research Assistant
Project: Ojibway Prairie Reptile Recovery Program (OPRREC)
Location: Windsor, ON
Type of Position: Full-time (37.5 hr. /wk.), 10 months (extension subject to funding availability and performance review)
Rate of Pay: \$21.00/hr., plus 4% vacation pay
Anticipated Start: June 2025
Hours of Work: Flexible daily and weekly schedule to suit project needs and weather conditions. Working weekends and holidays will at times be required.

[La version française est disponible en contactant jchoquette@wildlifepreservation.ca. Pour plus d'informations sur notre organisation en français, veuillez visiter notre site web: www.wildlifepreservation.ca/fr/retablissement-des-reptiles-de-la-prairie-ojibway]

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Wildlife Preservation Canada (WPC) is seeking a Research Assistant to support the implementation of activities related to the OPRREC program (wildlifepreservation.ca/ojibway-prairie-reptile-recovery/). The ultimate goal of this program is to recover the Ojibway Prairie population of Eastern Massasauga rattlesnakes, while providing recovery benefits to a suite of other species at risk (SAR), with a particular focus on the Butler's Gartersnake and Blanding's Turtle. This position offers a unique opportunity to work hands-on with endangered snakes, gain experience in population recovery techniques, and conduct field work within a future National Urban Park.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Working under the direction of the Lead Biologist, the Research Assistant will conduct field work, data analysis, and writing tasks related predominantly to the following components of OPRREC: 1) snake population augmentation. The position will be based out of downtown Windsor, with field work occurring at the Ojibway Prairie Complex and Greater Park Ecosystem (OPCGPE) in Windsor and LaSalle. Supervision will be provided on-site by the Lead Biologist, based on an initial orientation and training session, followed by weekly meetings to discuss progress and problem-solve.

Specific duties will include:

1. Assist with post-release monitoring, data entry and management, statistical and spatial analyses, and writing related to a post-doctoral study on Massasauga conservation translocations (60%).
2. Assist with completion of data analysis, writing, and publication of manuscripts related to a doctoral thesis on Massasauga reintroduction biology. Specific project topics include: modelling and evaluating competing release strategies, small population demographics and decline, and reproductive output in captivity (30%).
3. Participate in a variety of other projects and duties as needed (e.g., population monitoring of Eastern Foxsnake, Butler's Gartersnake, and Blanding's Turtle, environmental data collection, habitat enhancement, temporary captive husbandry, outreach, etc.) (10%).
4. This position will require using some or all of the following equipment:
 - a) Venomous snake handling tools (snake hooks, tubes, and tongs)

- b) Reptile monitoring devices (PIT tags and automatic and handheld reader, VHF radio transmitters and receiver)
- c) Electronic data-recording equipment (hand-held GPS, digital camera, borescope camera, laptop computer, automatic data logger, water level meter, and/or trail camera)
- d) Hand tools (lopper, pruning saw, rake, shovel, auger, hammer, etc.)

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Post-graduate degree in biology or related field (e.g., Master's of Science; exceptional candidates with a bachelor's degree will also be considered).
- Experience conducting snake surveys/inventories, and skilled at safely identifying, capturing, handling, and processing snakes, including Eastern Massasaugas (or other vipers).
- Experience conducting radiotelemetry and using venomous snake handling tools.
- Solid educational and/or experiential background collecting, managing and analyzing wildlife-related data.
- Experience writing technical reports/manuscripts as a lead or supporting author.
- Skilled in the use of Program R to conduct various statistical analyses on biological datasets.
- Skilled in the use of mapping software (ArcGIS, QGIS) to import, analyze and display spatial data.
- Strong organizational and written communication skills.
- Strong work ethic (focus, professionalism, punctuality, honesty, and attention to detail).
- Strong interest in conservation biology, herpetology, and biology-based research.
- G-class driver's licence and access to a vehicle.
- Physically able to: a) Lift heavy objects (e.g., woody debris and small logs), and b) Work safely outdoors on your feet for extended periods of time, in poor weather (e.g., rain, extreme heat) and/or in challenging habitats (e.g., thorns, thickets, & biting insects).

ASSET SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Experience as a published author on a peer-reviewed publication in a topic relevant to biology or herpetology.
- Experience conducting demographic modelling using readily available software (e.g., Vortex).
- Educational and/or experiential background in field-based population monitoring and management techniques, husbandry practices and captive breeding programs, reintroduction and translocation techniques and practices, and small population management.
- Proficiency in oral communication and technical writing in both official languages (English and French).

TO APPLY

Please send a cover letter and resume to: Dr. Jonathan Choquette, OPRREC Lead Biologist, jchoquette[at]wildlifepreservation.ca. **Please submit your application as a single PDF or MS word file and include the email subject heading “OPRREC – Research Assistant”**. Applications will be assessed as they are submitted, and the position will be filled as soon as a suitable candidate is found.

Saving endangered species is strengthened by and requires contributions of people of diverse backgrounds, heritage, knowledge, experiences, and identities. WPC values the diversity of the people we employ and that we work with. We strive to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in our workplace. We are committed to selecting and developing employees to create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable organization and therefore encourage applications from all qualified individuals.

We thank all who apply, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.